

Learning as Central to Being and Becoming:

**expert teachers' personal professional
development and learning**

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to all who negotiate the disruptive dissonance of their own learning and who bravely share the journey of their developing expertise. I applaud their ongoing commitment that endows us with the creation of new knowledge and celebrates the understanding of self in sharing experience with others.

To Brian, who has helped me to see differently and has forever altered my capability for critique.

Certificate of Authorship

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature are indicated in the thesis.

Signature of Student _____

Date:

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Abstract

This thesis explores the development and learning experiences of secondary school teachers who have been identified by their colleagues for their teaching and learning expertise. The thesis employs a dual methodological approach – narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry – to present unique interpretations of the personal professional learning journeys of five teachers. Viewed through the lens of hermeneutic phenomenology these compatible dual methodologies reveal complementary hermeneutic understandings of the five teachers’ personal professional development and learning. This constructivist study employs qualitative research methods that include criterion sampling, a snowballing process for the nomination of teachers by their colleagues, and a process of three interviews with each teacher across a time period of several months.

By interrogating expert teachers’ personal professional learning the thesis uncovers new understandings about the development of expertise. Narrative analysis of the teachers’ stories reveals both post-reflective understandings and the pre-reflective sense contained within their experiences. In analysing the teachers’ constructions of meaning, the thesis posits the centrality of personal professional learning within the lifeworld of expert teachers. Four of the five journeys emphasise the contextual factors that have shaped their personal professional development: a belief in risk-taking for developing expertise, a lifelong learning attitude, and a dynamic approach to change in personal professional development. Applying phenomenological analysis reveals the distinctly different lifeworld experience of the fifth teacher and allows the study to distinguish teacher insight from experience.

The thesis also argues that a phenomenological constituent of 'disruptive dissonance' is necessary for the ontological third space within the personal professional development of expert teachers. This thesis theorises that third space thinking is necessary to negotiate the problematics essential for the development of teaching expertise. This thinking is evident through a philosophy of openness, which encourages the creation of communicative, collaborative pedagogy and the avoidance of professional isolation; a confrontation of uncertain challenges to realise these as developmental opportunities; and a developmental awareness of prevailing through becoming an expert while accepting the acknowledgement of being an expert.

The thesis concludes by proposing that three professional learning principles are essential for the development of teacher expertise. These are sharing the language of teaching and learning through storytelling; living with the uncertainties of being and becoming while rejecting the dichotomy of expert versus non-expert; and promoting professional learning communities that encourage the linking of theory and practice, the resonance between individuality and collegiality, and the mutuality of being and becoming.

Glossary of Terms

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL): “The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) came into being on 1 January 2010 ... AITSL has responsibility for: rigorous professional standards fostering and driving high quality professional development for teachers and school leaders working collaboratively across jurisdictions and engaging with key professional bodies” (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), 2014). The AITSL website has been developed in collaboration with Education Services Australia (2014), which is the legal entity for the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC) (2012).

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers: In Australia, the National Professional Standards for Teachers were endorsed by Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) in December 2010. The National Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2012) replace the previously formulated state- and territory-based standards from disparate professional associations and government bodies. The standards provide a basis for professional accreditation and present a framework for professional learning to enable teacher self-reflection and self-assessment.

Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL): English as a Second Language is synonymous with English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and refers to English as taught to non-English speakers in a country where English is a native language, such as Australia, the United States of America or England. ‘ESOL’ was introduced after ‘ESL’ but came to be regarded as too limiting. TESOL is now used as it includes non-native speakers of English who speak more than one other language (Association for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (ATESOL), 2012).

Coordinator, head teacher and other promotional classifications within Australian schools: ‘Head teacher’ or ‘coordinator’ is a promotional classification of special responsibility within a school as stipulated within the relevant employment award or workplace agreement (Catholic Commission for Employment Relations, 2011; Industrial Relations Commission of New South Wales, 2009; The Association of Independent Schools of NSW Ltd, 2012). Aligned terms include school principal or school head teacher, deputy principal or deputy head teacher, subject area head teacher or subject coordinator, and year group coordinator or pastoral care coordinator. The levels for leadership or coordination role responsibilities are stipulated within each school system and are referenced using various terms. For example, teachers in government secondary schools are classified at specific pay levels, e.g. Schedule 1 Common Incremental Salary Scale, and extra coordination or leadership responsibilities are designated as higher duties, e.g. Schedule 2 Allowances (Industrial Relations Commission of New South Wales, 2009). The designated role responsibility of a head teacher i.e. listed in Schedule 4 Salaries - Promotion Classifications in the Teaching Service (Industrial Relations Commission of New South Wales, 2009) in a non-government secondary school is comparable to the Leadership Level 2 i.e. listed in Table 5 Other Allowances (Association of Independent Schools of NSW Ltd, 2012) as well as the Coordinator 2 level i.e. listed under Promotion Positions (Catholic Commission for Employment Relations, 2011) in non-government secondary schools. These may then be colloquially referred to as a two-point coordinator.

Higher School Certificate (HSC): The Higher School Certificate (HSC) is a locally, nationally and internationally recognised qualification for students who successfully complete senior secondary education in the Australian state of New South Wales (NSW Government, 2012b). For senior secondary school students, the preliminary course is completed in Year 11 and the HSC course culminates in examinations at the end of Year 12.

HSC performance bands: “HSC marks for each course are divided into bands and each band aligns with a description of a typical performance by a student within that mark range. The performance bands and descriptions give meaning to the HSC mark. For a 2 unit course, Band 6 indicates the highest level of performance” (NSW Government, 2012c).

Independent Schools Teacher Accreditation Authority (ISTAA): The ISTAA is an independent schools organisation that is “responsible for the accreditation of teachers at the levels of: Proficient Teacher (ACT Teachers, ACT Preschool Teachers & NSW Preschool Teachers); Experienced Teacher (NSW & ACT Teachers and Preschool Teachers); Professional Excellence (NSW Teachers and Preschool Teachers); Highly Proficient Teacher (ACT Teachers and Preschool Teachers)” within the Australian state of NSW (Independent Schools Teacher Accreditation Authority (ISTAA), 2011).

Key Learning Area (KLA) within the Australian curriculum: Key Learning Area (KLA) is an identifier for the specialist content area of the relevant NSW syllabus (New South Wales Government & Board of Studies NSW, 2012a). Each learning area is under ongoing development at a national level within the Australian curriculum (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), 2012a).

Middle school years within Australian schools: The middle school years span childhood to adolescence from age 10 to age 15 (The Middle Years of Schooling Association (MYSA), 2012). In Australia, a middle schooling program specifically caters for students from Years 5 through to 8. A middle school structure aims to transition Year 7 students from their primary school class, with one main teacher of core curriculum, to two teachers sharing a class in teaching across the core secondary curriculum. These schools are not common within the government school system in Australia and are represented mostly within independent schools of the non-government school sector.

My School website: “My School enables you to search the profiles of almost 10,000 Australian schools. My School is an Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) information service. ACARA is an independent authority with functions including the publishing of nationally comparable data on all Australian schools” (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), 2010).

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN): In Australia, students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 are assessed on the same days annually using nationally developed tests in “reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy” (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), 2012b). This annual assessment is colloquially referred to as NAPLAN.

National Curriculum Statutory Assessments: In the UK, these are national assessments at the end of each key stage, which are identified as: Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (age 5); Key Stage 1 (KS1) tasks and tests during Year 2 (usually age 7); Key Stage 2 (KS2) National Curriculum tests in English and Maths taken at the end of Year 6 (usually age 11); and Key Stage 3 (KS3) teacher assessment judgments at the end of KS3 (usually age 14) (UK Department for Education, 2012; UK Government’s Digital Service Directgov, 2012a).

New scheme teacher: A person who has not taught in NSW prior to 1 October 2004 or a person returning to teaching in NSW after an absence of five or more years (NSW Institute of Teachers, 2004).

New South Wales (NSW): The Australian state of New South Wales (NSW) (NSW Government, 2012a).

NSW Institute of Teachers accreditation and standards: The NSW Institute of Teachers is the Teacher Accreditation Authority (TAA) for teachers employed within the Australian state of New South Wales (NSW Institute of Teachers, 2004). A teacher in Australia gains accreditation through the relevant Teacher Accreditation Authority (TAA) for their state or territory. The NSW Institute of Teachers professional standards map to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, which identify the four career stages for teacher accreditation as: Graduate; Proficient; Highly Accomplished; Lead (NSW Institute of Teachers, 2012). From 2014, the functions of the NSW Institute of Teachers became part of the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) (NSW Government, 2014).

Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED): In the UK, OFSTED reports directly to Parliament as an independent and impartial body. It is responsible for inspection and regulation of "services which care for children and young people, and those providing education and skills for learners of all ages" (Office for Standards in Education Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED), 2011). It provides the framework used to conduct school inspections and publish the results in reports online.

Record of School Achievement (RoSA): In NSW, attainment of a School Certificate formerly marked the end of the key curriculum stage for the completion of junior secondary school in Year 10. "From 2012, eligible students who leave school before receiving their Higher School Certificate will receive the NSW Record of School Achievement (RoSA)" (New South Wales Government & Board of Studies NSW, 2012b).

Standardised Assessment Testing (SAT): A standardised assessment test in the United States of America that allows high school students to complete common entrance examinations that are recognised by all tertiary institutions. "The SAT is a globally recognized college admission test that lets you show colleges what you know and how well you can apply that knowledge. It tests your knowledge of reading, writing and math — subjects that are taught every day in high school classrooms. Most students take the SAT during their junior or senior year of high school, and almost all colleges and universities use the SAT to make admission decisions" (The College Board, 2010).

United Kingdom (UK) AS and A levels or vocational level qualifications: In the UK, A and AS levels are among the main routes into tertiary education. Vocational entry-level qualifications provide preparation for further learning and work, while level 3 qualifications are equivalent to A levels (UK Government's Digital Service Directgov, 2012b). This level may colloquially be referred to as the traditional 'sixth form', which can be completed at a secondary school, college or similar institution.

Chapter 1

Introduction

In this thesis I explore the development and learning experiences of five teachers identified by their colleagues for their teaching and learning expertise. The thesis is not attempting to produce an exclusive definition of an 'expert teacher', yet the term expert used in relation to the teaching profession necessitates a discussion of the teaching expertise criteria I have used for the thesis. This chapter provides this discussion - outlining the rationale and significance of my research, setting the scope of the thesis and presenting an overview of each chapter.

1.1 Rationale for my research

In the Australian context, the development of teaching expertise is framed within the national professional teaching standards. Within New South Wales (NSW), teachers are encouraged to demonstrate higher levels of expertise by seeking accreditation at career stages designated as Highly Accomplished or Lead (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), 2012). This thesis is not aligning teaching expertise with an accreditation level or a career stage. Rather, I am concerned with developing our understanding of how teachers learn and continue to develop their expertise within different contexts - as influenced by place, time and perception of experience.

This thesis explores the understanding of developing expertise and teacher learning using the concept of lifeworld. Our lifeworld (Lebenswelt) is intersubjective, in which “the fundamental structure of its reality is that it is shared by us” with a “common frame of interpretation” on our lived experience as being in the world (Schutz & Luckmann, 1974, p. 4). A description of an individual’s lifeworld focuses on “(phenomena or the essential structures of consciousness) as one experiences them” (Schwandt, 2007, p. 225) and so focuses on the meaning of experience as lived towards and through by the individual (Kvale, 1983, p. 174). The ontological focus of lifeworld makes visible “the horizons and background assumptions involved in all acts of understanding and interpreting” (Moran, 2000, p. 13). This thesis explores the experience of developing expertise within the lifeworld of teachers.

This thesis asserts the ontological centrality of self-understanding within the development of teaching expertise. In the thesis I use the term ‘personal’ to characterise the uniqueness of experience for both the professional development and the learning represented within the lifeworld of secondary school expert teachers. I interpret the personal professional learning narratives of five teachers and analyse the meaning representations the teachers give to their personal professional development.

A focus on the ‘personal’ relies on the concepts of being and becoming. Being is derived from the term Dasein for ‘existence’ or ‘being in the world’ in which experience and being unite object and subject (Schwandt, 2007, pp. 136, 156-157). Human meaning and significance stem from engagement in the world and this interaction is linked to the notion of ‘becoming’. Becoming essentially requires encounters with self and others so that “concentration and fusion into a whole being can never be accomplished by

me, can never be accomplished without me. I require a You to become.” (Buber & Kaufmann, 1970, p. 62). Therefore, I explore the notion of learning within the being and becoming of teachers by considering: What contributes to teachers’ expertise? How do teachers nourish their expertise? And how do expert teachers value the meaning associated with their expertise and their own learning?

My own professional learning experiences provided the motivation for this research. My experience as a secondary school teacher was the impetus for representing the constitutive meanings created by expert teachers through their unique experience of personal professional development and their unique approach to their own learning. Furthermore, my consulting experience within the corporate learning and development field was the incentive for wishing to understand the distinctive experiences of teaching and learning professionals within secondary schools.

My justification for attempting to develop an understanding of the lived experience of learning for expert teachers comes from the literature critiqued in Chapter 2. There is, it seems, confusion around the term ‘expertise’ within the teaching profession, and an unwillingness to acknowledge teaching expertise is apparent in teachers’ reluctance to identify themselves as experts. There is little understanding of how an expert teacher learns. This thesis distinguishes the learning experiences of expert teachers and illuminates a mode of learning that occurs at higher levels of expertise. Significantly, the unique understanding of expert teachers’ learning found in this research suggests that nurturing professional learning principles is essential for the development of expertise in teaching and learning.

1.1.1 Research questions

My research questions centre on expert teachers' ongoing perceptions of personal professional development and the influences on their attitudes and beliefs concerning their own learning. The overarching research question is:

- How do expert teachers construct meaning from their personal professional development and their approach to their own learning?

There are also three subsidiary research questions:

- What are the factors that expert teachers recognise as shaping their personal professional development?
- What are expert teachers' attitudes towards and beliefs about their own learning?
- How does an expert teacher's approach to their own learning influence their personal professional development?

1.2 Significance of the research

The significance of the central themes explored throughout this thesis is highlighted in the following three sub-sections. These themes are woven through my review of the literature, my analysis of findings and their implications for my research conclusions.

1.2.1 What constitutes teacher expertise?

My use of the term 'expert' in my research questions requires a description of what constitutes an exemplary level of expertise within school teaching. Anecdotally, there is a common assumption of a correlation between many years of teaching experience and expertise. Another assumption is a correlation between expertise and demonstrated adeptness in competency-

based subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical skill. Chapter 2 discusses these problematic assumptions.

This thesis investigates the difficulties for personal professional development and learning through the dichotomous use of the terms expert and non-experts and the interchangeable use of the terms experienced and expert for teachers. Exploring the concepts of being and becoming in relation to learning focuses on the development of expertise as pertinent to the individual's context. Chapter 10 discusses the implications for developing expertise as applicable for the individual as well as utilising the contextual source of the relational and communicative spaces for their ongoing learning.

1.2.2 What is 'personal' about teacher professional development and learning?

Of specific concern is the development of self-understanding as it affects the professional learning of expert teachers. The interplay of teacher status and the measurement and assessment of quality teaching makes for a more complex situation than can be addressed simply through an accreditation system. Importantly, the various models for the certification of teachers who exhibit more advanced levels of teaching expertise highlight the personal nature of their professional development and learning. The representation of meaning constructed from personal professional development by the expert teachers in the research provide the foundations for a proposed set of professional learning principles that could foster exemplary practice and allow for the retention of this expertise within the profession.

I maintain that accreditation processes alone do not address the complex situation of expert teachers' personal professional development, nor of their unique learning needs. The current research literature deals predominately

with professional development of teachers designated as pre-service or novice and of those in leadership roles. The focus is on teaching practice and the alignment of competency standards and accreditation. This thesis emphasises that individual needs and the unique contextual nature of learning needs to be balanced with this focus and requires the 'personal' to be fore fronted. Chapter 2 reveals how my research builds upon the research literature on teachers' personal professional development and learning. Importantly, my research aims to bridge a gap by presenting new knowledge on expert teachers' views. Exploring the teaching and learning experiences of the five teachers enables the development of professional learning principles for guiding and supporting the developing expertise of teachers.

The concepts of personal professional development and personal professional learning developed within this thesis characterise the uniqueness of the lifeworld experience of teachers. Chapter 10 discusses the implications of more fully understanding the meaning constructed by expert teachers about their personal professional development and considers how their understanding influences their approach to personal professional learning.

1.2.3 Why use a dual methodological approach?

Of significance to my research questions is how personal professional development for expert teachers is contingent on their own meaning-making. Critically, creation of meaning is open to significant change due to both external factors, such as societal factors, and internal factors, such as self-understanding (Bruner, 2009; Egan, 1997). Garnering meaning from personal professional development and learning requires an understanding of teachers' thoughtful reflection on practice and individual reasoning and beliefs.

The dual methodological approach of this thesis employs narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry through the lens of hermeneutic phenomenology as theorised in Chapter 3. The compatible methodologies of narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry allow access to complementary hermeneutic understandings of the unique needs of expert teachers' development. The thesis centres on the multifaceted nature of expert teachers' construction of meaning from their personal professional development. Using ontologically focused methodologies, it explores the unique lifeworld experience of the five teachers in the research. The privileging of the attitudes and beliefs of the teachers about their own learning highlights the distinctiveness of their approach to personal professional development. My ontological focus investigates being and becoming in the lifeworld of expert teachers. My research also questions the predominance of an epistemological focus of current policy and practices for teachers' personal professional development, and explores an ontological focus for fostering self-understanding.

My research methods required representatives to nominate teachers they believed demonstrated expertise in teaching and learning. These teachers were able to refer to a set of teaching expertise criteria (Appendix B.1) that I developed from the literature as discussed in Chapter 2. The five teachers selected from those nominated from both government and non-government schools then provided their own interpretations of their expertise through semi-structured interviews. The teachers recounted their experience through a narrative oral history of their personal professional development and learning. After a timeframe of several weeks to a few months for reflection, they then provided their thoughts on suggested aspects of a phenomenological lifeworld as representative of their emotional and intellectual meaning-making. My analysis of the teachers' views focuses on

the context that each unique human experience presents - capturing what expert teachers explicitly articulate as well as searching for deeper meaning often embedded at an implied level. Therefore, my methodological approach, as described in Chapter 3, explores the individual experience of the five expert teachers through their post-reflection as story and their unique pre-reflective perspective on their lifeworld experience.

My research makes an original contribution to knowledge by conceptualizing the significance of the personal for professional learning and positing the uniquely insightful development of expertise. The discussions within Chapter 3 recognise the universality of human experience and acknowledge the qualitative rigour that allows for transferability of findings rather than generalising from the stories of the five teachers. Chapter 10 discusses the implications of methodological concepts for understanding phenomena in our lifeworld and the hermeneutic understandings afforded on the personal professional development and learning of expert teachers.

1.3 Scope of the thesis

This thesis discusses teacher self-understanding within professional development as a component of professional learning. The thesis does not examine identity development as a separate construct but refers to the aspect of self-understanding as it pertains to professional learning. The thesis does not differentiate andragogy for adult teaching and learning, but draws on the term pedagogy to encapsulate all learners and so uses pedagogical learning literature that focuses on the implications for teacher learning.

1.3.1 Structure of the thesis

As noted above, Chapter 2 explores how my research builds on, contests or meets a gap in the literature in regard to teachers' personal professional development and learning, and the notion of developing expertise. The

central concepts from the research literature that contribute to my research are illustrated in Figure 1 and are re-visited within the discussions that conclude Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. Chapter 3 explores the theoretical compatibility of using dual methodologies for gathering and analysing multiple complementary hermeneutic understandings. Procedures for selection of expert teachers are illustrated in Figure 2. An overview of the participants is provided in Table 1. The iterative nature of the research process is shown in Figure 3.

Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 present my interpretation of the personal professional learning journeys of the five teachers. Each chapter presents a teacher's experience through a structured story sequence comprising abstract, orientation, complicating action and evaluation, and coda. Following the story in each chapter is a context analysis in which three modes are interrogated: ideational, interpersonal, and textual or spoken. Each chapter discussion then critiques the teacher's experience against the research literature and attempts to describe the unique focus of each teacher, as reflected in each chapter title.

Through phenomenological inquiry, Chapter 9 examines the centrality of learning within the lifeworld of expert teachers. I interrogate how the perspectives of empathetic understanding and non-competitive collegiality are essential to the development of teaching expertise. The exploration then turns to an ontological third space that enables expert teachers to create meaning. Here I present my interpretation of 'disruptive dissonances' as a phenomenological constituent of expert teacher's lifeworld. The teachers negotiate the 'disruptive dissonances' as three problematics in their personal professional development. My phenomenological inquiry highlights the use

of third space thinking as central to being and becoming in the development of teaching expertise.

Chapter 10 summarises the findings and implications of my research. This final chapter revisits the methodological responsiveness needed for my research, summarises the findings in relation to the narrative inquiry and the phenomenological inquiry of the study, and argues for an ontological focus for professional learning through the use of professional learning principles for the development of expertise. A conceptualisation of the intertwined nature of my research findings, implications and conclusions are visualised through Figure 4, Expert teachers' personal professional development and approach to learning.

1.4 Chapter discussion

This chapter has outlined the rationale for my research. It has indicated the contested nature of understandings about expert teachers. I provide an argument for the differentiation of this research from studies on accreditation. The following chapter underpins the central themes of the thesis as outlined in this chapter.

Chapter 2

Notions of developing expertise and personal professional learning

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I review the literature relevant to my research and identify how my research builds on, questions or bridges a gap in the literature. An exploration of the distinctions between teaching experience and teaching expertise within the milieu of professional teaching standards and accreditation, and professionalism and learning, provides the context for answering my overarching research question. Figure 1 on page 12 illustrates the central concepts from the research literature that have contributed to my investigation of the unique nature of teachers' personal professional development and learning.

This chapter outlines the aspects of my research that contribute to, contest or create new connections within the relevant literature and which therefore highlight the significance of my research findings for expert teachers' learning. The chapter firstly distinguishes between experience and expertise as discussed in the research literature. In particular, it considers the teacher expertise criteria used for my research, the perceptions of expertise in teaching, metacognition and deliberate practice of experts, and expert teachers as learning professionals. The chapter then explores the research

literature relating to teachers' personal professional development and learning, and in so doing identifies the links between my research and the research literature. I identify how my research aims to contribute to an understanding of the significance of self-understanding in the development of teaching expertise with respect to teachers' approaches to their own learning, and I point to new understandings of the unique development needs of expert teachers as addressed through transformative learning. Finally, I contest aspects of current policy and practice for teacher personal professional development and call for the creation of Australian guiding principles for expert teachers' personal professional learning.

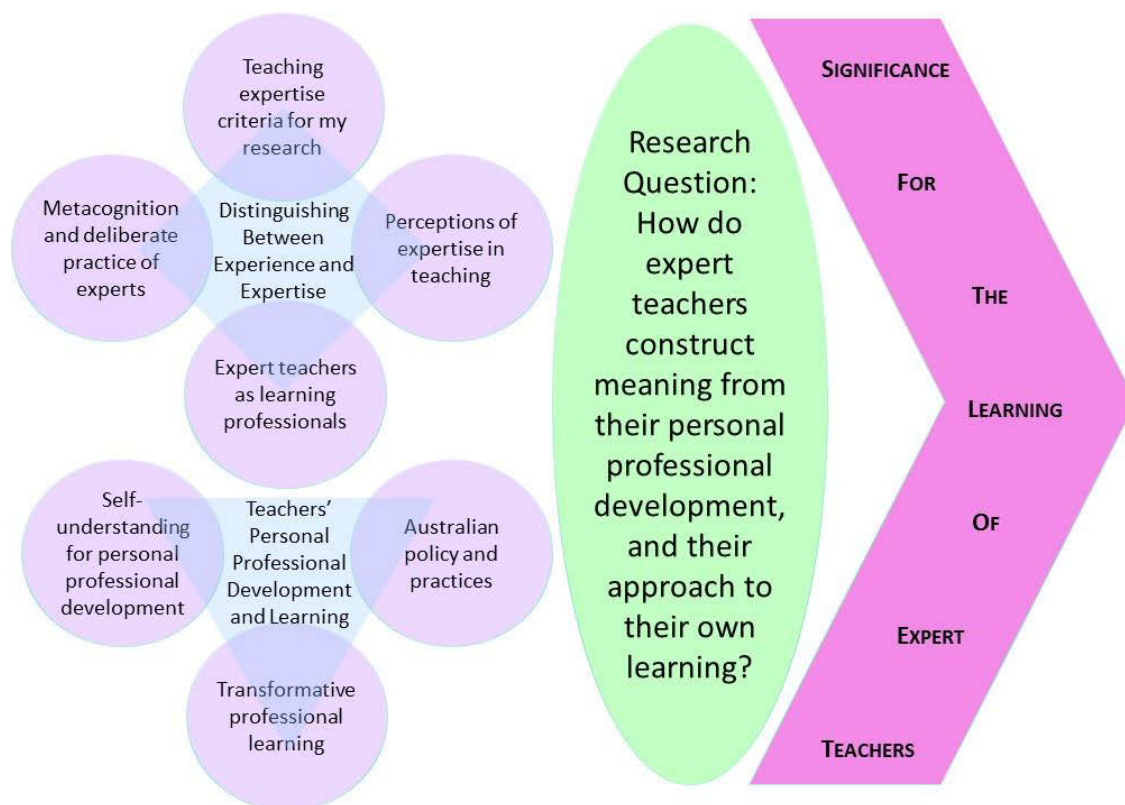


Figure 1: Central concepts from the research literature.

2.2 Distinguishing between experience and expertise

In this section I discuss representations of various levels of expertise as identified within the literature, namely 'expert', 'accomplished' and 'exemplary'. The understanding of these concepts is distinguished from

terms such as 'non-exemplary', 'experienced' and 'non-expert' for representing pedagogical practice within context and over time. I begin by discussing the expert teaching criteria I developed for use in my research with regard to the literature and professional teaching standards.

2.2.1 Teaching expertise criteria for my research

The teaching expertise criteria I developed (refer to Appendix B.1) draw on descriptors from the literature and from the standards as developed by the teaching profession. The criteria include several descriptors of exemplary practice for teachers, as indicated across professional teaching standards for various international teacher accreditation processes (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), 2012; National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2007; NSW Institute of Teachers, 2005; Scottish Executive, General Teaching Council for Scotland, The Educational Institute of Scotland, & Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, 2002).

Internationally, the development of teaching standards within the profession has the goal of supporting professional learning. Since the 2003 implementation of the Chartered Teacher certification (Scottish Executive et al., 2002), the research on Scottish teachers indicates a positive influence on teachers' professional learning and reputation from obtaining the Chartered Teacher status (Connelly & McMahon, 2007). Wolf and Taylor (2008) cite the increase of a self-reflective perspective and more collaboration with colleagues as positive effects from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) experience in the United States of America. Additionally, research literature highlights the importance of illustrative and contextual examples in the feedback received by teachers throughout the certification processes (Wolf, Davis, & Borko, 2008). The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) maintains that Australia's

National Professional Standards for Teachers provide a framework for teachers to “recognise their current and developing capabilities, professional aspirations and achievements”, to “judge the success of their learning and inform their self-reflection and self-assessment” and to “inform the development of professional learning goals” (AITSL, 2012, p. 2). For example, one level of expertise within the Australian standards is described as follows:

Highly Accomplished teachers are recognised as highly effective, skilled classroom practitioners and routinely work independently and collaboratively to improve their own practice and the practice of colleagues. They are knowledgeable and active members of the school. (AITSL, 2012, p. 6)

The descriptors for each focus area within the Australian standards also provide the nomination and judging criteria for annual awards (AITSL, 2013). These descriptors are reflected in the 10 attributes of exemplary teachers identified in awards from the Australian College of Educators and the NSW Department of Education and Training (now the Department of Education and Communities). These attributes relate to competency-based subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical skill and relational descriptors. These awards seek to recognise teachers who demonstrate “a refusal to let anything get in the way” of learning, and a “moral leadership and professionalism, in that they exemplify high values and qualities and seek to encourage these in others” (Dinham, Ingvarson, & Kleinhenz, 2008, p. 12). The teaching expertise criteria I developed for my research also draw on these characteristics.

Within the research literature, characteristic criteria of expertise within a specific social and cultural context are widely recognised. Ferrari (2002a)

concludes from the findings of several studies that the development and assessment of expertise is based on sociocultural context and represented through “categories or stories” (Ferrari, 2002a, p. 229). For my research I asked teaching colleagues to identify the expert teachers among them, using my teaching expertise criteria as a guide. I presented the criteria as functional descriptors open to extension and modification through individual interpretation. I relied on the interpretation of teaching colleagues within each teacher’s learning community taking into account the conclusion that:

excellence is intimately tied up with narrative, categories, and rhetoric about what is excellent that are provided by our community; ideas that we must interpret and endorse in light of our own experience.
(Ferrari, 2002a, p. 231)

It is also characteristic of the teaching profession itself to question the nature of an ‘expert’ label. I refer to Dewey’s (1963) theory of experience to recognise this questioning of expertise within the profession. He purports that experience enables problem-solving in which “growth depends upon the presence of difficulty to be overcome by the exercise of intelligence” (Dewey, 1963, p. 79). Intrinsically, a perspective of learning as ongoing and never finished makes teachers reticent to identify themselves as expert in a fully formed summative state. Expert teachers do not perceive that they are operating at other than an expected level and so they usually do not accept the accolades or labelling of ‘expert’. Conversely, a teacher may experience self-doubt that hinders the recognition of their expertise. In both earlier and later stages of their career, teachers may experience self-doubt when assessing their abilities as well as their suitability for teaching (Huberman, 1989). Teacher profiling of professional learning orientations shows that

teachers may continually question their developmental achievements (Pedder & Opfer, 2012). Therefore, the teaching expertise criteria developed for my research were designed to be representative of teaching and learning expertise as experienced and interpreted by the profession.

2.2.2 Perceptions of expertise in teaching

The use of the term 'experienced' often equates to a higher or exceptional level of expertise. The 2012 *Education at a Glance* report includes the notion that an 'experienced teacher' has the capabilities to assist both novice and other experienced teachers (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2012, p. 492). This notion assumes that years of experience afford an implicitly advantageous expertise, that an identifiable 'instructional expertise' is readily accessible to other teachers, and that the pedagogical learning occurs only for the recipient teacher. My research questions each of these assumptions. The perception that years of experience is a predictor of exemplary practice and ongoing professional learning is challenged through the work of Berliner (1991, 2004) and Shulman (2000). In this thesis, the research sampling of participants, as outlined in Chapter 3, focuses on expertise in teaching and learning and not necessarily on years of teaching experience (refer to Appendix B).

Discussions on the broader view of a 'good' teacher reveal the common use of dualistic or simplistically restrictive terminology. However, notions of good/bad, experienced/non-experienced and expert/non-expert, as represented by psychology-based prototypes (Sternberg & Horvath, 1995), do not incorporate the contextual experience of developing expertise. Furthermore, articulating the development of expertise is often aligned to schedules of competencies. Korthagen (2004) suggests that it is teacher beliefs that are meaningfully linked to teacher competencies and behaviours.

The perception of a continuum for developing expertise, with experience seen as subjective across different places over time, is supported by Moore's (2004) emphasis on context:

[F]rom a discursive perspective the concept of the good teacher cannot sit 'outside' or untouched by the larger social conversations, situations, ideologies and purposes within which it is situated: it cannot easily, therefore, make claims to 'universality', despite what documents such as lists of required 'standards', from which temporal and ecological issues and concerns are deliberately omitted, seem to suggest to the contrary. (Moore, 2004, p. 36)

Moore's (2004) continuum reveals the limitations of restrictive terminology. He argues that three broad perceptions of 'good' teachers as 'charismatic subjects', 'competent craftspersons' or 'reflective practitioners' all limit the notion of developing expertise, and that each presents specific difficulties (Moore, 2004). Firstly, when teachers are viewed as 'charismatic' there is an indefinable degree to which their attributes are privileged as magically attainable. Secondly, viewing teachers as 'competent craftspersons' standardises individual teaching efforts as separate from the context in which they occur. Thirdly, a restricted view of 'reflective practitioners' suggests the undertaking and applying of reflections on practice are readily attainable despite time and context restrictions. My research explores the ontological gap apparent in the limitations proposed by these three perspectives, with the aim of contributing to the understanding of teachers' meaning-making within their personal professional development. In so doing, my research supports Moore's discursive perspective of teacher meaning-making. Berliner (1987) explains this perspective as reflection and examination within 'teacher thinking'.

Darling-Hammond (1997) advocates such a perspective through strategies for teacher learning that are contextual, experiential, problem solving and collaborative. Additionally, a discursive perspective of teacher learning explores the inter-personal nature of development within an 'emotional practice' (Hargreaves, 1998) and embraces care for self and others in balancing personal and professional development (Agne, 1999). Moore (2004) encapsulates this discursive perspective with the term 'reflexive turn'. His description of a reflexive approach for teacher learning indicates the value of personal self-understanding and the encouragement of individual development within "changing situations and circumstances" and emphasises professional "accommodation rather than assimilation" (Moore, 2004, pp. 142-143). The challenge for developing self-understanding through reflexivity is managing the resilience necessary for self-critique. However, empowerment is possible through collaborative learning within professional communities. My research endeavours to provide the participating teachers the opportunity to explore their unique personal professional development and approach to their own learning. In this way it connects with Moore's supposition that the teacher education agenda should be based on "the personal, the emotional and the critical/political" (Moore, 2004, p. 162). My investigation of how expert teachers approach their learning builds on the existing understanding of teachers individually framing their professional development throughout their teaching experiences. In an Australian study, Turner (1995) established that teachers perceived as exemplary believed they needed longer timeframes to develop their expertise than did their non-exemplary peers. This timeframe was found to allow for the ongoing creation of more complex knowledge schemata that in turn "assisted them in responding to the many challenges, demands, disappointments, and achievements encountered in their teaching careers" (as cited in Berliner,

2004, p. 201). My research extends these notions by investigating how the expert teachers have gained their unique understanding despite varying years of teaching experience. It also examines the personal professional meaning they have created from their experiences.

Broader community appraisal of expert teachers' work includes demonstrations of accomplishment across various types of student achievement. Expert teachers demonstrate accomplishment within their professional practice, with student achievements often linked as a linear causal relationship. Results of student performance, from either developmental diagnostic tests or statutory examinations for certification, support learning outcomes as one measure of teacher accomplishment. Some research presents these results in order to support competency certification of teachers (Hattie & Clinton, 2008; Smith, Baker, Hattie, & Bond, 2008). However, the impacts of such diverse factors as resource availability of teachers and materials, teacher-to-student ratios, extracurricular time and resources to support out-of-school student research and study, and socioeconomic contexts beyond the control of the teacher, acknowledge the fraught nature of student achievement as a sole measure of teaching expertise (Australian Parents Council, 2010). These views suggest that the attainment of student-specific learning outcomes and accreditation within a professional standards framework is a component of teachers' professional learning but not the sole indicator for developing expertise. Significantly, my research extends these notions by contributing to the understanding of how relationships within the learning process and feedback from both students and peers contribute to crucial meaning-making for teachers in their personal professional development.

2.2.3 Metacognition and deliberate practice of experts

Early concepts of expertise considered different capability and knowledge domains of expert achievements across the fields of science, arts and sports (Chi, Glaser, & Farr, 1988; Dreyfus, Dreyfus, & Athanasiou, 1988; Ericsson & Smith, 1991). Research on outstanding performance of individuals ranges in focus from domain specific abilities to general personality or intelligence traits and take into account specialised training or general life experience (Ericsson & Smith, 1991, p. 3). From this initial focus on cognitive psychology and human intelligence, the notion of expertise developed to include understanding of individual interactions with their environment and the support provided by others, as well as the individual agency apparent in the development of expertise (Ericsson, 1996; Glaser, 1996). Encapsulating these notions, Sternberg's (1998) model emphasises individual abilities as differentiated through thinking, knowledge, metacognition and motivation, and further purports that unique learning and development from novice to expert is possible in a variety of domains. Subsequent investigations by several authors supported the notion that expertise is the combination of individuals' attributes within a particular social and cultural context, at a particular point in time (Ferrari, 2002b; Gardner, 2002; Smith, Baker, et al., 2008; Sternberg, Grigorenko, & Ferrari, 2002; Tsui, 2009; Zimmerman, 2002).

Gardner (2002) identifies three essential metacognitive practices of 'extraordinary individuals' across various contexts in arts, politics, religion and the sciences. These metacognitive practices involve reflecting on goals and achievements through continual reappraisal, leveraging strengths to forge areas of expertise, and framing personal experience to learn from mistakes and failures (Gardner, 2002). According to Gardner, the development of expertise requires an ongoing motivation after failures and an inclination to continually experiment and put expertise to the test.

Sternberg et al. (2002) found, in a comparative study across several research areas, that experts engage in deliberate practice to enhance their individual abilities. This confidence in their abilities in turn provides fulfilment and a motivation to continue developing their expertise (Sternberg et al., 2002). In another examination of excellence at an individual level across a variety of disciplines, Zimmerman (2002) articulated the characteristics continually demonstrated by experts as self-regulated learning, maintaining motivation, and persistence in deliberate practice. Self-regulation is apparent when the learner controls their learning environment, where monitoring, instruction and management do not require the external support of others. Self-regulation thus illustrates an individual's agency for learning (Glaser, 1996).

Smith et al. (2008) identify characteristics that distinguish between teachers as expert and the experienced, non-expert. Expert teachers characteristically demonstrate learner-centred practice, with goal-setting for diverse learners, awareness of classroom climate, multidimensional perception and sensitivity to context (Smith, Baker, et al., 2008).

Additionally, Hattie and Clinton (2008) hold that expert teachers exhibit diverse improvisational abilities at levels beyond those of a novice or other experienced teacher. These capabilities allow the development of unique approaches to dealing with the diversity of "content and pedagogical knowledge, beliefs about student learning, in problem solving, efficiency and management, affect, and learning outcomes" (Hattie & Clinton, 2008, p. 341). In this thesis I investigate the degree to which the expert teachers in my research recognise that persistence, resilience and self-regulation form their approaches to their professional learning.

2.2.4 Expert teachers as learning professionals

One aspect of the literature on teacher expertise focuses on teachers as learning professionals. It presents understandings on teacher practical knowledge (Elbaz, 1983; Lortie, 1975), the application of content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and curricular knowledge (Shulman, 1986) and the learning necessary for effective reflective practice (Schön, 1987). More recently, international studies of teaching expertise have delved into the metacognitive and motivational characteristics of expertise as well as the technological imperatives for teacher development (Carroll, 2009; Hattie & Clinton, 2008; Kershner, Pedder, & Doddingon, 2012; Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2009; Mishra & Koehler, 2006, 2009; Tsui, 2009). The insights and frameworks from research guide the ongoing development of professional learning for teachers and provide a basis for teachers in approaching their own learning.

Studies in both classroom and university teaching provide understandings of teacher expertise and how teachers approach their professional development and learning. Elbaz (1983) identifies a number of ways in which teachers orientate their knowledge to their practice through: situational experience, personal responsibility and interpersonal contacts, social purpose, experiential reflection, and theoretical application. The personal nature of professional knowledge is shown by Gudmundsdottir (1990) where individual values of expert school teachers influence the development of pedagogical content knowledge and application to practice. Shulman & Colbert (1989) demonstrate how experienced school teachers share individual accounts of their practice using research-based case materials. Conversations between secondary school mentors and novice teachers demonstrate that a pedagogical approach to subject-matter knowledge may be made explicit, presented indirectly with assumed

understanding or ignored (Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1990). Fenstermacher (1994) illustrates that a teacher's practical knowledge encompasses the specifics of situation, place or time. The unique experience of developing expertise is thus represented through a teacher's 'personal practical knowledge' (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999).

The expectation that teachers "contribute to the development of their occupational knowledge" was advocated by Lortie (1975, p. 244) in acknowledging the qualifications and expertise apparent within the profession. Since his call, a plethora of new technologies have become part of teaching and learning. One framework for understanding the implications of technological advances for the development of teacher expertise is conceptualised by Mishra and Koehler (2006, 2009). They present the pedagogical and content knowledge articulated through Shulman's (1986) initial work as intertwined with knowledge about technology. The technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) is illustrated as three overlapping circles in which the central intersection of TPACK represents "an emergent form of knowledge" in which the three components and the intersections between them "exist in a state of dynamic equilibrium" (Mishra & Koehler, 2006, p. 1029). Importantly, expert teachers demonstrate "a deep, pragmatic, and nuanced understanding of three knowledge bases" when solving "complex, dynamic problems of practice" (Mishra & Koehler, 2009, p. 17). The dynamic and nuanced nature of the TPACK framework shows that a unique version of professional learning may be enacted by teachers as they develop expertise.

Tsui (2009) found that expert teachers are able to contextualise and continually challenge their expertise in order to 'problematise the routine'. Hattie and Clinton (2008) validated problem-solving as an attribute evident

for expert teachers. Carroll (2009) maintains that expert teachers advocate for teaching as a learning profession, exhibiting proficiency at learning and coping with change, and determining for themselves what they should integrate, modify or reject as part of their practice. My research into the experiences of five expert teachers aims to understand the meaning of their personal professional development that fluctuates between acceptance of their highly accomplished practice and a drive to be open to challenges.

Lieberman and Pointer Mace (2009) reinforced the importance of collaboration for learning professionals, and of the provision of avenues for sharing findings and allowing critique of learning by peers. Teacher expertise is manifest in the continual interaction of accomplished practice and professional learning that addresses unique personal professional development needs. Expert teachers:

can deconstruct their practice, explain it to others, and in the process learn how to facilitate learning for (and with) their peers. These conversations between colleagues can be transformative learning opportunities. Accomplished teachers don't lead by exhorting their colleagues to 'do what I say'; they invite them into dialog around 'see how we teach'. (Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2009, pp. 459-460)

Carroll (2009) characterises expert teachers as learning professionals who use their teaching and learning expertise to promote research on their own practice and so create new knowledge within their teaching and learning.

The above discussion shows that the development of teaching expertise is closely tied to how teachers perceive and approach their own learning. The snowballing process used in my research method, as outlined in Chapter 3, enabled the five teachers to be identified as experts by peers. These individuals were identified as expert learners and teachers, displaying the

characteristics of learning professionals who take responsibility for their learning as well as the learning of others (refer to Appendix B.1).

2.3 Teachers' personal professional development and learning

In this section, I firstly critique the ontological significance of self-understanding within the development of teaching expertise. I then discuss the importance of integrating theory and practice as apparent in the notion of transformative learning. Finally, I identify the connections between my research on expert teachers and the policy and practice of personal professional development and learning.

2.3.1 Self-understanding for personal professional development

Research into teachers' personal professional development reveals a need for teachers to develop self-understanding about the unique nature of their learning (Kelchtermans, 2009; Korthagen, 2004). My research recognises the importance of self-understanding in teacher development through an ontological analysis of expert teachers' meaning-making of their own learning.

Research into individual learning highlights the unique nature of a teacher's personal professional development. For example, a study by Elbaz (1983) investigated the practical knowledge of one individual teacher. The study identified the orientation of a teacher's knowledge to their practice as important in the following contexts: situational, personal, social, experiential and theoretical. Developing self-understanding is significant in each context, such as the personal orientation evidenced by taking responsibility for and valuing their learning, and the experiential orientation that relies on self-awareness for ongoing experimentation. In all contexts, the expert teacher acknowledges their unique personal development needs (Elbaz, 1983). Kelchtermans (1993) also recognises the individuality of a teacher's

development, with self-understanding allowing the development of a unique philosophical approach to learning. Ongoing research on a teacher's 'subjective educational theory' through stories highlights the importance of an individual 'biographical perspective' for recognising the self-understanding required for a teacher's professional learning (Kelchtermans, 2009; Kelchtermans & Vandenberghe, 1993, 1994). Researchers concerned with narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007; Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2011) argue that story processes within professional learning promote teacher inquiry into their individual experience. Creating new knowledge based on experience as "lived and living" is perceived as "fundamentally concerned with both being and becoming" (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2011, p. 66). Developing professional self-understanding enables new possibilities for perceptions of the self as teacher. This self-understanding also creates opportunities for re-creating the self as teacher and for new meaning-making within personal professional development. This ontological focus on learning through narrative allows for the existential responsibility of self-study (Feldman, 2005) and the possibility of changing dominant "taken-for-granted social, cultural, and institutional narratives" (Clandinin & Murphy, 2009, p. 601). Self-study requires reflective practice by the teacher (Korthagen, 1995; Korthagen & Verkuyl, 2002) that draws on their individual context for constructing their own understanding (Flessner, 2014). My research interprets the personal professional learning journeys of five teachers in order to create new connections between the development of teaching expertise and narrative and the development of self-understanding within professional learning. My research methodology focuses on the ontological meaning-making necessary for these expert teachers' personal professional development and for each one's unique approach to their learning.

The research literature highlights personal identity and vision as central components of learning within professional development activities. Korthagen (2004) contends that understanding teachers' beliefs and identities is pertinent in addressing their personal professional development and learning needs. Korthagen and Verkuyl (2002) created a framework for reflection for pre-service teachers on both positive and negative experiences. This reflection encourages teachers to grapple with personal professional development issues and to develop insight into how individual identity influences classroom practice. Teachers were then able to determine the level representative of their specific issues from the following six levels:

1. Environment (What do I encounter?);
2. Behavior (What do I do?);
3. Competencies (What am I good at?);
4. Beliefs (What do I believe in?);
5. Identity (Who am I?);
6. Mission (or spirituality) (Why do I exist? What greater entity do I feel connected with?) (Korthagen & Verkuyl, 2002, p. 267)

The first three of these levels – environment, behaviour and competencies – are often perceived as integral to teacher practice, as evidenced in the previously mentioned frameworks for professional teaching standards. Other researchers have identified the fourth and fifth levels, beliefs and identity, as important; Connelly and Clandinin (1999), for example, acknowledge that a sense of 'public duty' and teaching as a 'calling' is significant for self-understanding, and Hamachek (1999) recognises self-understanding as central to developing teaching practice. The sixth level,

mission or spirituality, is debateable in terms of the traditional separation of church and state within government-operated education organisations. This level may be more aptly stated as 'What is my purpose?' Alternatively, the idea of spirituality integrated into a personal mission could align with current organisational practices that provide vision and mission statements to guide corporate governance. Additionally, the emotional aspects identified at this level within teaching may be perceived as a type of spirituality that is separate from beliefs and identity. This spirituality may entail an essential component of pastoral care and provide a sense of teaching as a vocation (English, Fenwick, & Parsons, 2004). The overarching strategies and specific practices of pastoral care aim to "support the welfare, well-being and development" of the learner, and may be perceived as separate as well as intertwined within the academic pursuits of teaching (Calvert, 2009). Hargreaves (1998) recognises the pastoral care aspect of personal mission in his proposal to publicly acknowledge and create an emotional reform agenda for the teaching profession. He suggests this reform agenda should focus on the emotional dimensions of a teacher's practice, as uniquely linked to their personal professional development.

Supporting this agenda, Mayes (2001, p. 491) advocates the use of a personal model of reflexivity in order to support the spiritual dimension of a teacher without advocating any "particular religious commitments". Moreover, the recognition of teaching as a 'values-orientated' profession influencing a societal greater good (McGettrick, 2005) may address questions such as 'What do I believe in?', 'Who am I' or 'Why do I exist?' for teachers, though whether these form part of the beliefs, identity or mission/spirituality levels proposed above remains debateable.

In terms of this thesis, the six levels that Korthagen and Verkuyl (2002) identify are relevant to my examination of the professional development experiences of the five expert teachers. Traditional professional development practices focus on teacher interaction within a contextualised environment, at the more tangible levels of behaviour and competency. Korthagen and Lagerwerf (1996) contend that, from the beginning of a teacher's career, professional development activities require deeper reflection associated with personal professional experiences in order to enable guided reinvention for individual learning. Fraser et al. (2007) support the creation of opportunities and avenues for all teachers to consider ideas fundamental to their development. Furthermore, Loughran (2010) argues that it is essential for expert teachers to confront relevant and challenging content for linking practice to theory, addressing both personal and professional dimensions. Along this line, my research explores how expert teachers' learning influences the learning of students, as well as of their novice and experienced colleagues. My research also investigates teacher development practices focused on beliefs and purpose that allow for the sharing of new learning as well as a contextualised application of this learning.

My dual methodological approach, as outlined in Chapter 3, recalls the "subjective educational theory" articulated by Kelchtermans (1993, 2009) and Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe (1993, 1994). My research focus considers the notion of how expert teachers question the applicability of approaches and learning strategies within different circumstances and challenge their own developmental capacity to evolve with changing teaching and learning demands. My ontological focus aims to contribute to an understanding of the uncertainties of being and becoming within the complexities of teaching and learning. This approach aims to align with research that will "enable us to better grasp what it means to learn professional ways of being" (Dall'Alba,

2009, p. 38). The essential tension for teachers' professional learning is "how far, and in what ways, a person is prepared to change as a teacher" (Patrick, Forde, & McPhee, 2003, p. 249). My investigation into the views of expert teachers presents a complex analysis of the interaction of the influences on expert teachers' personal professional development. The ontological focus of my research aims to contribute to an understanding of the open-ended nature of how these expert teachers approach their learning.

2.3.2 Transformative professional learning

The following discussion indicates that changing from traditional transmissive modes of professional learning to transformative learning requires interactive and reflective personal professional development. My research highlights the significance of transformative learning in the personal professional development of the five expert teachers.

Fraser et al. (2007) identify a continuum from traditionally dependent transmissive learning to more transitional learning modes, which then extends to transformative learning. Examples of transitional modes are mentoring of individuals and sharing collegial expertise through collaborative learning. Lieberman and Pointer Mace (2009) argue that teacher inquiry into one's practice with colleagues fosters collaborative learning within the profession. They found that transitional learning activities central to expert teachers' practice included collaborative reading and writing, individual journal reflection, video recording of practice, and the opportunity to move into learning leadership roles. This type of teacher inquiry encourages more than the transmission of the knowledge and skills for competency benchmarking. Collaborative inquiry into practice harnesses the self-sufficiency of teachers, reduces the isolation often associated with the classroom teaching, and aims to address some of the limitations in

traditional practices (Lieberman & Pointer Mace 2009). Another transitional leaning mode for the sharing of expertise occurs when a mentor with expertise facilitates and supports the personal and professional development of a novice mentee (Roberts, 2000). This mentoring process is a “resonating phenomenon” when novices become mentors, and when the learning, self-understanding and professional development of both mentee and mentor is positively influenced (Roberts, 2000, p. 160). However, Ulvik and Sunde (2013) argue that mentor preparation is lacking for mentoring within secondary schools. Their findings are pertinent to expert teachers as both mentees and potential mentors in that the appointment of individual mentors should draw on suitability and experiences, and also that mentoring should be integrated within the culture of the school.

Several research studies support transformative modes of learning indicative of professional learning communities (PLCs) that draw on both individual and collective abilities of teachers. These activities thrive in schools that typically present a counter culture to the traditional professional learning strategies as evident in various approaches: “critical friends’ groups (see National School Reform Faculty 2010), instructional rounds (City et al. 2009), lesson study (Stepanek et al. 2007), collaborative action research (Gordon 2008) and PLCs (Dufour and Eaker 1998)” (Nehring & Fitzsimons, 2011, p. 528). Substantively, professional learning communities develop when the teaching and learning environment embraces collaborative action research by teachers on their practice (Edwards Groves & Rönnerman, 2012). Aubusson et al. (2009) support action learning as a framework for encouraging teacher professional development within a professional learning community. Indicative of action learning are regular small-group activities where “reflection, sharing, action [and] feedback” are entrenched within the learning process (Aubusson et al., 2009, p. 16). Action learning

requires interaction and deliberation with colleagues in order to address the unique contextual needs of the teacher. Schuck, Aubusson and Buchanan (2008, pp. 224-225) found that self-study by teachers, involving peer observation and discussion, allowed for collaborative critical reflection on their teaching and made their learning “intensely personal”. This type of action learning highlights the overlap from the transitional to the more transformative mode of learning as identified by Fraser et al. (2007).

Based on a two-and-a-half year research project, Grossman et al. (2001) proposed a model indicative of transformative learning. The study enabled teachers to collaboratively research, read and reflect on their learning. Secondary teachers from various faculties took part in book-club-type activities, researching resources and reflecting on resource use from both an intradisciplinary and interdisciplinary perspective. The format of this professional learning allowed relationships to develop across the various areas of expertise which had not previously been offered nor sought. The opportunity for new learning and intellectual reflection, as well as discussion of differences on epistemological and sociological issues, provided a source of tension throughout the learning activities yet also represented rewarding learning for the teachers. Grossman et al. (2001) present this model of transformative learning as supporting the creation of a professional learning community. Significantly, they recognise that:

Of all the habits of mind modeled in schools, the habit of working to understand others, of striving to make sense of differences, of extending to others the assumption of good faith, of working towards the enlarged understanding of the group – in short, the pursuit of community – may be the most important. (Grossman et al., 2001, p. 1000)

Through an exploration of the five expert teachers' approaches to learning, my research builds on the notions of collaboration and collegiality within transformative learning. I explore aspects of professional learning in order to understand the ontological focus that expert teachers bring to their learning leadership with colleagues, as well as in the teacher learning modelled for students.

Research into transformative professional learning highlights the formative nature of teacher personal professional development, relying on professional dialogue and allowing teachers to direct the nature of their collaborative learning. Patrick et al. (2003) caution that school improvement solely focused on teacher assessment within certification processes may negatively impact professional learning practices. They advocate that a certification regime should not outweigh the need for "individual development and empowerment of teachers" (Patrick et al., 2003, p. 250). EAUDE (2011) also argues against professional compliance for teachers and advocates enhancing professional confidence by exercising professional judgement through the creative and innovative sharing of pedagogical practice. Hardy (2008), in an Australian-based study, found that professional development mainly took the form of traditional workshops. His findings highlight the need for a more democratic voice and more active role for teachers in terms of their learning needs, with an ability to influence practices over an extended period of time (Hardy, 2008). Further studies support the need to encourage partnerships with academics involved in schooling. Schuck and Russell (2005) and Schuck et al. (2008) advocate fostering critical friendships among teacher educators. These critical friendships entail observing and deconstructing teaching practices and reframing their experience in order to promote unique professional learning. Swaffield (2008) also supports dialogue and appropriate learning conditions

within critical friendships in order to foster the professional collegiality and empowerment needed to address individual professional learning needs. These studies concur with Fraser et al. (2007) in that they support the notion that transformative learning should provide more politically empowered activity and allow for critical reflection in a broader context. My research explores the experience of expert teachers in demonstrating their accomplishments, including having opportunities to share findings from professional learning with colleagues and teacher leaders.

Transformative learning emphasises teacher ownership of their learning through the identification, creation and evaluation of new knowledge and practices. The phenomenon of teachers actively directing their own learning occurs when they undertake action learning (Aubusson et al., 2009) or are responsible for action research into teaching practice. McNiff and Whitehead (2006) recognise teacher empowerment and ownership as significant aspects of practitioner action research. The authoring and publishing endeavours of teacher research provides a transformative learning mode and enables the promotion of teaching as a learning profession. Enabling the interplay of practice and theory is central for transformative learning which involves the:

internalisation of concepts, reflection, construction of new knowledge and its application in different situations, and an awareness of the professional and political context. (Fraser et al., 2007, pp. 159-160)

Mezirow (2009) highlights the highly individual and intuitive nature of transformative learning, contending that:

Transformations may be epochal – sudden major reorientations in habit of mind, often associated with significant life crises – or cumulative, a progressive sequence of insights resulting in changes in point of view and leading to a transformation in habit of mind. Most

transformative learning takes place outside of awareness; intuition substitutes for critical reflection of assumptions. (Mezirow, 2009, p. 94)

My research investigates a notion of transformative learning that relies on emotional aspects not articulated within certification processes. Mezirow (2009) describes transformative learning as requiring insight into individual imagination and intuition, involving the solving of contextualised problems, social empowerment for democratic action, and reflective pedagogy that enhances self-understanding. My research interrogates the experiences of expert teachers in line with the transformative learning principles. Mezirow (2009) advocates that adult learners require opportunities to:

seek the meaning of their experience – both mundane and transcendent; have a sense of self and others as agents capable of thoughtful and responsible action; engage in mindful efforts to learn; ... engage in reflective discourse to assess the reasons and assumptions supporting a belief to be able to arrive at a tentative best judgement ...; imagine how things could be different; [and] learn to transform their frames of reference through critical reflection on assumptions, self-reflection on assumptions and dialogic reasoning, when the beliefs and understandings they generate become problematic. (Mezirow, 2009, p. 104)

My exploration of the development of expertise analyses the ways in which expert teachers are actively engaged in these types of professional development activities. The ontological focus of my research methodology aligns with Jarvis's (2009) recognition that transformation of a person occurs through learning. He concludes that:

Philosophically speaking, I only am at the moment 'now' and since I cannot stop time I am always becoming; paradoxically, however, through all that becoming I always feel that I am the same self. Being and becoming are inextricably intertwined, and human learning is one of the phenomena that unite them, for it is fundamental to life itself.

(Jarvis, 2009, p. 30)

My interpretation of expert teachers' development of expertise over time and through different contexts highlights the formative nature of transformative learning.

2.3.3 Australian policy and practices

Significant for policy and practice related to teachers' personal professional development is the promotion of transformative learning for encouraging collaborative reflection and enhancing self-understanding. Within Australia, McCulla et al. (2007) recognise that the quality teaching debate continues to influence the education policy agenda and the funding of aligned practices and programs for the continuing learning of teachers. Kennedy (2007) contends that comparable global political and economic influences produce similar conditions for modes of learning available within schools internationally. My exploration of the developmental experiences of expert teachers contributes to policy and practice in providing alternatives for addressing the unique learning needs of expert teachers.

A linear sequence of set stages within frameworks of professional teaching standards provides the basis of an accountability model (Yinger & Hendricks-Lee, 2000) but does not adequately envision teacher learning practices focused on individual need. Huberman (1989, p. 53) identifies career stages as "modal sequences". However, this does not provide a

sufficient depth of analysis for the complex nature of personal professional development. My research exploring the personal professional learning journeys of five expert teachers contests notions of set sequences for expert teachers' personal professional development, arguing that they may not be linear or truly cyclic but may have stops, starts, digressions and regressions at various times. Short-term, isolated interventions are constrained through the inability of these learning practices to assist teachers' investigation of their ongoing personal professional development. Moss (2008) contends that the "hit-and-run" nature of these interventions does not address the need for a nurturing community or the identity-formation necessary for teacher learning. She believes that this "validates why learning must continue to reach for deeper analytical frames and offer differing methodologies" (Moss, 2008, p. 354). My research heeds this call by investigating the structure and substance necessary for expert teachers' professional learning.

An economic approach to teacher development practices tends to align professional learning with performance management practices. Menter et al. (2004) identify that an economic focus aligns with the more traditional competency-based outcomes for measurable learning. This creates an essential tension between the external accountability imposed on teachers' professional learning, structured within accreditation frameworks, and teachers' internal drive to harness learning for their unique personal professional development needs. Usher (2009) argues for experiential learning beyond the sole focus of individualistic and pedagogical concerns, emphasising the importance of:

exploring how and why we theorise experience and critically examining the influence on experience of contexts, cultures and discourses in the past and for the future. (Usher, 2009, p. 182)

My exploration of how expert teachers create meaning from their personal professional development and approach their own learning provides an ontological focus for understanding how teachers interpret their experience. My analysis of expert teachers' personal professional learning journeys distinguishes their experience from the insights that are possible. My methodological approach, as outlined in Chapter 3, also allows for the interpretation of phenomenological constituents as pre-reflective insights on experience.

Lortie (1975) highlights the need to improve teacher autonomy and the intrinsic 'psychic rewards' available to teachers outside the classroom context. My research recognises this ongoing challenge in addressing the personal professional constituents of expert teachers' development, as well as the transformative learning opportunities available for expert teachers. Fraser et al. (2007) uses a 'triple-lens framework' to encapsulate the sociocultural aspects within the broader conception of teachers' professional learning. They identify formal and informal learning opportunities that enhance social and personal aspects of development as important elements within continuing professional development (CPD) (Fraser et al., 2007). Hardy's (2008) study of Australian educational policies examines the spectrum of professional development (PD) from 1996 to 2008. He argues against a performative focus in favour of recognising the significant influence of transformative learning practices for a teacher's personal professional development. He concludes that:

from a normative position, more neoliberal and managerial systemic parameters, which frame teachers only as the objects of narrowly conceived PD developed elsewhere, need to be challenged. Such regimes not only reinforce existing conservative learning approaches,

but also actively inhibit broad-based, genuinely student-oriented, collaborative and resolutely active teacher PD. (Hardy, 2008, p. 287)

This offers an emphatic direction for an examination of the possibilities for teachers' ongoing learning. My research focuses on expert teachers' attitudes and beliefs about their learning, and the factors they recognise as shaping their personal professional development. I explore the opportunities for transformative learning and for demonstrating the personal nature of professional development within the experiences of expert teachers. My research aims to contribute to the literature by exploring the contextualised learning principles necessary for ongoing policy and practice of continuing learning for expert teachers.

2.4 Chapter discussion

This chapter has identified the central concepts in the research literature relating to the learning and development of expert teachers. It has also touched on the aspects of my research that contribute to, contest or create new connections within the relevant literature.

Firstly, I critiqued the distinctions between 'expert' and 'experienced' with regard to teaching expertise, and I identified potential contributions of my research to the research literature, including:

- Proposing teaching expertise criteria that rely on standards developed by the teaching profession and the research literature: my research highlights that developing teaching expertise criteria requires continual revision in concert with the profession and researchers.
- Contesting assumptions of more experienced teachers as experts within the broader social perceptions of expertise in teaching: my

research addresses the ontological gap in the understanding of expertise by investigating expert teachers' meaning-making from their personal professional development.

- Building on ideas of metacognition and deliberate practice of experts: my research aims to contribute to an understanding of ways in which personal and emotional factors such as persistence, resilience and self-regulation constitute expert teachers' approaches to their professional learning.
- Proposing expert teachers as learning professionals: my research aims to contribute to an understanding of the need for challenges within personal professional development in order to create new knowledge.

Secondly, I identified the links between my study and the literature on teachers' personal professional development and learning, including:

- Building on self-understanding as a critical aspect of personal professional development: my study points to new connections in understanding the significance of self-understanding within the development of teaching expertise through a methodological focus on ontological meaning-making.
- Bridging a gap in addressing the unique needs of an expert teacher's development through transformative learning: my research aims to contribute to an understanding that collaboration and collegiality are central to an expert teacher's learning.
- Questioning the gap in Australian policy and practices for addressing the unique personal professional development and learning needs of expert teachers: my research methodology aims to create new connections through an ontological analysis of expert

teachers' meaning-making from their personal professional development and approach to their learning.

In the next chapter, I present the dual methodologies and supporting philosophical framework of my research and outline the methods used in my research.

Chapter 3

Compatible dual methodologies and complementary hermeneutic understandings

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the theoretical basis for my choice of research methodologies and the associated methods I employed in my study. The two methodologies under scrutiny in this chapter are narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry.

Firstly, I interrogate the philosophical underpinnings that frame the use of dual methodologies. I consider the ontological relativism and pragmatism existing within a constructivist perspective. Through consideration of the shifting nature of time, context and relationship to others I decided to undertake both a narrative inquiry and a phenomenological inquiry. This dual methodology is helpful in understanding the meaning constructed by each expert teacher, as is explained in the next paragraph.

Narrative inquiry allows for interpretation and explanation of each unique experience. This enables an approach in which expert teachers can disclose unique attitudes and beliefs about their own learning and the influences they recognise as shaping their professional development. Phenomenological inquiry then aims to elucidate the interrelationship of universal constituents of lived experience within the teachers' experiences of

teaching and learning. Using these two methodologies in the one study allows for both interpretation of the individual story and understanding of the universal experience.

Secondly, I focus on language as a means for interpreting life experience, and examine the meaning of this experience through the theoretical lens of hermeneutic phenomenology. My thesis creates one version of this theoretical lens in using narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry as compatible methodologies. I argue that these are compatible methodologies that draw on related methods for gathering and analysing meaning representations and provide a vehicle for creating complementary hermeneutic understandings. Central to this dual methodological approach is the rigour supported by the qualitative principles of verisimilitude, appetency and transferability.

Thirdly, I describe my procedures for selecting the expert teachers and the gathering of meaning through interviews. I then discuss my method of narrative analysis, using an identifiable story structure and a contextual mode of analysis. I also acknowledge the challenge of presuppositionlessness (Kvale, 1983) and the impossibility of total reduction within my phenomenological analysis.

3.2 A constructivist perspective

I have based my investigation of complementary understandings on a pragmatic and relativist ontology. A constructivist perspective informs my understanding of the complex phenomena within my research. This theoretical stance provides the foundation for my choice of research methodology (Crotty, 1998). I use the dual methodologies of narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry to understand how expert teachers

construct meaning from their professional development experience and how they approach their own learning.

Bruner (1986) describes a constructivist perspective as attributing the construction of our world to the products of the human mind. Eisner (1988) expands this notion by drawing on Nelson Goodman's transformative versioning of individually constructed worlds. Eisner (1988) further acknowledges that the revision of previously made worlds with subsequent versions is necessary to meet the specific purposes of an individual context. This notion also attributes a relative nature to our understanding based on our historical and sociocultural contexts. The temporality of context impacts on the construction and continual reconstruction of reality. Guba and Lincoln (2005) argue that this reality "is created by means of a community narrative, itself subject to the temporal and historical conditions that gave rise to the community" (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 204). The construction of reality through the narrative of an individual illustrates the 'radical relativism' or 'universal perspectivism' outlined by Schwandt (2007, p. 262). Schwandt's (2007) definition of this 'universal perspectivism' emphasises its role in the distinctly different conditions throughout human history as "a dynamic force that enters into all efforts to understand" (Schwandt, 2007, p. 139).

My study relies on both the pragmatism of a universal perspectivism to represent the reality of expert teachers and the relative nature of a shared sociohistoric context. Bruner (1986) proposes that:

The moment one abandons the idea that 'the world' is there once for all and immutably, and substitutes for it the idea that what we take as the world is itself no more or less than a stipulation couched in a

symbol system, then the shape of the discipline alters radically.

(Bruner, 1986, p. 105)

My pragmatic approach enables inquiry into the representation of reality as unique to the time and context of an individual's experience.

My inquiry also necessitates an understanding of being and belonging with others through a relativist ontology. Acknowledging the plurality of understanding places my research within an ontological relativist reality. Schwandt (2007) defines ontological relativism as an engagement with different understandings through language or conceptual schemes; we share our pragmatic ontological being through representations of experience. Dewey (1963) and Dewey and Archambault (1964) argue that this pragmatic ontology relies on sharing understandings through the interactions and situations of our experience. My investigation uses dual research methodologies to access the understandings of these experiences for the expert teachers in my study. Generating a range of complementary understandings is possible through the ontological pragmatism represented in the dual methodologies I use, and draws on the compatibility afforded by the philosophical foundation that I later discuss under 'The lens of hermeneutic phenomenology'.

My constructivist perspective draws on the social and collaborative creation of meaning within a societal or communal group. The creation of human practices occurs within a societal context, transmitted through existing cultural symbols of language and behavioural norms and then developed or re-created within these boundaries. Crotty (1998) summarises this perspective by suggesting that an individual's construction of meaning is dependent on human interactions. The interplay between expert teachers' and society's constructions of meaning about their personal professional

development is central to my research. Expert teachers' personal professional development is contingent on their own individual meaning-making, as well as being reliant on their societal context. Geijssel and Meijers (2005) identify a distinct educational change process that assists teachers' self-understanding, in which social interaction is significant: "Identity learning involves a relation between social-cognitive construction of new meanings and individual, emotional sense-making of new experiences" (Geijssel & Meijers, 2005, p. 419). I analyse expert teachers' views for the relative meanings of their personal professional learning and the factors they recognise as shaping their professional development. I also investigate the changing nature of this constructed world through using narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry, as discussed in turn in the following sections.

3.2.1 Narrative inquiry

In this thesis I use narrative inquiry to interpret, explain and translate the individual experiences of the five expert teachers. Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) contend that understanding created through narrative inquiry allows for a reinterpretation of an individual's being in the world through the temporality and conceptuality of their social interactions. There is an interpretive fluidity between understandings of past, present and future experience. An individual's construction of reality represents a continual re-creation of meaning through the manifest stance of ongoing post-reflection on their experience. An interpretation of experience through narrative as proposed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Clandinin (2007) provides the basis for my investigation of the personal professional learning journeys of the teachers.

Narrative inquiry focuses on the post-reflective view of individual experience. The vicarious sharing of an individual's experience allows for

implicitly understanding rather than explicitly just 'telling a good story'. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) contend that an individual's highly personalised representation of reality requires rich, thick descriptions in the narrative interpretation. They perceive "good narrative as having an *explanatory, invitational quality*, as having *authenticity*, as having *adequacy* and *plausibility*" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 185, italics in the original). The trustworthiness of narrative inquiry relies on the resonance of the interpretation for the participant and reader of the narrative. In my study, the 'explanatory, invitational quality' of the teacher's narrative is demonstrated through the rhetorical questions the teacher poses or the clarification of their thoughtful actions that they provide. I provide examples of this through the use of quotes such as:

And it's learning all those things which are a challenge but then you'd get bored if you didn't have a challenge wouldn't you?

I don't know how to put it [pause], it's not breaking them but I don't know whether it's just being really honest and almost letting them see that I'm human.

The teacher's narrative contains an 'authenticity' when experiences are validated with the realities of the lifeworld. These realities are acknowledged with the inclusion of anecdotal statements from the teachers in my study such as:

And the head of faculty sat down with me and goes "this paper is not very good". So I went and got the syllabus and I said "well here's where the questions came from" and he's like "oh okay".

I remember all this exactly because I had to fill in so much paperwork for immigration so I remember the timescales and everything very clearly.

Additionally, the teacher's story exhibits an 'adequacy and plausibility' by referring to experiences that align to those of another and in considering the likelihood that they may be the same or somewhat different. This aspect of story is evidenced for the teachers in my study through quotes such as:

I thought "yeah, I can be like that" and not exactly the same but I can operate a lot more like him.

I was still thinking about his philosophy about wanting to teach in not such an ideal school but try and make a difference. But having said that I've done what a lot of teachers have done.

Connelly and Clandinin (1999) argue that narrative inquiry is an effective medium for interpreting teachers' stories regarding poignant moments and events in the shaping of their professional identity. In my research, the perceptions of each expert teacher allow for the creation of their personal professional learning journey and allow rich interpretations of their experience. A narrative mode of interpretation contributes to understanding the unique learning experiences of each teacher. Through narrative inquiry, Fenstermacher (1997) presents teachers' unique interpretive perspectives in order to reveal the individual reasoning and beliefs that provide meaning to their practice; narrative inquiry allows the teachers to understand and retain ownership of their unique pedagogy. Furthermore, Latta and Kim (2009) conclude that creating narrative accounts is part of a formative learning approach for teachers participating in narrative inquiry. They also acknowledge the reliance on storytelling for transmitting meaning and building relationships, as evident within the teaching culture and the broader societal context (Latta and Kim, 2009). In my research, narrative inquiry enables the expert teachers to reflect on their personal professional

learning journey and to share the meaning constructed through their unique approach to their own learning.

3.2.2 Phenomenological inquiry

In this thesis I explore the post-reflective construction of meaning as described above along with the pre-reflective meaning-making represented as phenomenological constituents within the personal professional development and learning experiences of the expert teachers.

Determining the phenomena of everyday lived experience requires capturing the changeable nature of experience. Giorgi (1989) represents phenomena as “calling an experience a kind of name, giving certain stable moments to this flux of experiences” (Giorgi, 1989, p. 46). The deconstruction of an individual’s experience requires the creation of analytical boundaries. The capturing of essential phenomena within the context of the experience requires a suspension of imposed meaning as much as is possible. Envisioning a new understanding then makes possible the construction of new phenomena. Finally, contextualisation of the meaning of the phenomena enables the sharing of an understanding of this experience.

The crucial challenge for phenomenological inquiry is the harnessing of a pre-reflective mindset that is devoid of existing cultural meaning. Merriam acknowledges that this challenge requires ‘imaginative variation’, presented by Moustakas (1994) as “examining the data from divergent perspectives and varying frames of reference” (Merriam, 2002, p. 94). Phenomenological inquiry requires contextual analysis to tentatively propose the phenomena as uniquely understood existential constituents. This requires bracketing of phenomena within explicit methodological constructs while remaining open to the variable and unfamiliar nature of the experience of another. A central challenge for my research is to question and, as much as possible, suspend

my own imposed cultural meanings and those of the teachers in my study. Putting aside the everyday understanding of experience enables the revelation of the unexpressed phenomena previously constrained within this experience. Furthermore, as Atkinson (2007) identifies, there is an essential tension in that “each individual life experience is simultaneously in some ways like no one else’s (unique), in some ways like some others’, and in some ways like everyone else’s (universal)” (Atkinson, 2007, p. 231). Phenomenological inquiry requires a pre-reflective mindset that perceives the uniqueness of experience in capturing phenomena and acknowledges the universality of experience in constructing the meaning of experience. In this contradiction lies the core challenge of phenomenological inquiry, and so I discuss the tensions in phenomenological writing in the final section of this chapter. Fundamentally, my phenomenological inquiry aligns with Giorgi’s (1989) contention that an analysis must answer the question “How could this subject live through these constituents and what are the interrelationships among them for the subject as lived through?” (Giorgi, 1989, p. 55).

In my research I represent the dichotomy of human experience in order to access the pre-reflective understanding of each expert teacher. Van Manen (1997, pp. 127-129) perceives this dichotomy in what separates and unites us, what distances and draws us close, how we decontextualise practice and return it to praxis (thoughtful action), how we abstract and concretise experiences, and what objectifies and subjectifies. The different individual interpretations are then what separate us as unique individuals, yet the similarities draw us together in our mutual experience. In my research, phenomenological inquiry allows me to access the dichotomies of the teacher’s professional practice as thoughtful action. Furthermore, as Elbaz (1983) contends, a teacher’s practical knowledge is “held in the context of the

particular experiences through which it was acquired, and is experientially orientated in that it reflects and gives shape to the knower's experience" (Elbaz, 1983, pp. 101-102). In my research, a pre-reflective representation of an expert teacher's personal professional learning enables understanding of the meaning constructed through their developmental experiences and their approach to their own learning.

These aspects of phenomenological inquiry are represented in my thesis both within quotations from participants and in my phenomenological analysis, discussed in Chapter 9. The phenomenological constituents explored there uniquely evidence the 'flux' and 'dichotomy' of the teachers' experiences as representative of their personal professional learning journeys. My phenomenological analysis is one interpretive perspective from the divergent and varying interpretive perspectives that are possible. This analysis is one way of understanding the lived constituents and their interrelationships for the five teachers in my study.

In my study, the personal professional development and learning of the expert teachers are analysed through constructing a personal professional learning journey for each teacher and through interpreting the pre-reflective meaning presented as phenomenological constituents. This demonstrates one methodological possibility for deriving new complementary hermeneutic understandings of the meaning-making of each expert teacher. The following section addresses the compatibility of narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry through the lens of hermeneutic phenomenology. These are explored using the ontological hermeneutics espoused by Gadamer (1993) as well as Ricœur's (2008) approach to hermeneutics which relies on a phenomenological method.

3.3 The lens of hermeneutic phenomenology

Through the theoretical lens of hermeneutic phenomenology, this thesis proposes compatible dual methodologies in order to create understanding from a constructivist perspective. My combining of narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry relies on the rigour of such qualitative principles as verisimilitude, appetency and transferability, in order to make complementary hermeneutic understandings visible through the theoretical lens of hermeneutic phenomenology.

Taking this approach requires providing a sensitive and creative response to my research and to the expert teachers in my study. Smith, Larkin and Flowers (2008) acknowledge that Edmund Husserl, as the founder of phenomenology, did not offer a defined investigative method but focused on the presuppositionlessness of his phenomenological philosophy. The transcendental reflection of Husserlian phenomenology, as discussed by Moran (2000), asserts that 'horizons', as the possibilities of our experience, can be reduced to essential meanings within self-understanding. Our understanding of others in our lifeworld is formed as "historical and cultural consciousness" with a "realm of pure essential possibilities" (Moran, 2000, pp. 161-163). However, Moran (2000) recognises that Husserl's assumed access to consciousness was a contentious issue in which:

Fact and essence are entwined in my own self-relation in a manner in which Husserl never satisfactorily resolved and which, in fact, strained the whole project of his phenomenology. (Moran, 2000, p. 179)

Consequently, the translation of philosophy, focused on reflection and understanding meaning, into compatible research methodologies presents a research challenge for social inquiry. Within ontological hermeneutics there

are essentially two ways of understanding phenomenology: as the individual's philosophical thinking on their lifeworld or as a methodology. Significant for Gadamer (1993) is the inseparable nature of understanding, language and reason in manifest forms. He sees this understanding as created through the individual's explication of experience and not through methodological constructs. On the other hand, phenomenology as a form of social inquiry represents a distinct methodology. The use of phenomenology within qualitative research represents an alternate stance where:

It aims to identify and describe the subjective experiences of respondents. It is a matter of studying everyday experiences from the point of view of the subject. (Schwandt, 2007, p. 226)

In this sense, phenomenology as a methodology provides a framework for thinking about the lifeworld phenomena of social inquiry. For my inquiry, hermeneutic phenomenology provides a framework for thinking about and interpreting the life experience of the expert teachers. The generation of meaning from their experiences promotes the creation of understanding that is recognisable in and transferable to the lives of other teachers. I concur with Greene's (2005) declaration that:

for me, what matters most in our theorizing is how to respectfully honor multiple ways of knowing and valuing and how to meaningfully and generatively engage with difference (Greene, 2005, p. 210)

Furthermore, Thomas (2002) argues that in education research the 'exaltation' of theory "can lead to a premature closure on interpretation, and even to a restriction on the very notion that interpretation has to be open" (Thomas, 2002, p. 431). In contrast, my inquiry uses the lens of hermeneutic phenomenology to propose one version of compatible methodologies in

order to create complementary hermeneutic understandings. Lichtman (2010) recognises that hermeneutics provides explanation through interpretation and that phenomenology allows investigation of the lived experience. My research focuses on the use of language to share life experience and to express understanding of this experience.

My theoretical lens stems from phenomenological and hermeneutic philosophies. Schwandt (2007) describes the hermeneutics of both Ricœur and Gadamer as concerned with the interpretation of language and the meaning revealed through modes of communication. Gadamer's (1993) investigation of the 'hermeneutic problem' was through the historical work of Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Husserl and Heidegger. His questioning of scientific method led to the development of ontological hermeneutics as a discipline for inquiry into the universal relation of beings, which he succinctly outlines in the following statement:

Abstracted from the fundamental relation to the world that is given in the linguistic nature of our experience of it, science attempts to become certain about entities by methodologically organizing its knowledge of the world ... in view of the experience of art and history, we were led to a universal hermeneutics that was concerned with the general relationship of man to the world. (Gadamer, 1993, p. 476)

For Schwandt (2007), Gadamer's hermeneutics asserts that, "Meaning is created or constructed each time one seeks to understand; hence, understanding meaning is never complete" (Schwandt, 2007, p. 186). Ricœur and Thompson (1981) concur that hermeneutic philosophy enables the gathering of interpretations but contend that the quest is not for an ultimate ontological horizon. Ontological reflection on realities reveals a hermeneutics

“concerned with the understanding of being and the relations between beings” (Ricœur & Thompson, 1981, p. 19). However, Ricœur and Thompson (1981) further contend that hermeneutic interpretations are open to conflict through the “intrinsic fragmentation of the hermeneutical horizon” (Ricœur & Thompson, 1981, p. 19). In my research, a hermeneutic theoretical lens affords a narrative interpretation of each expert teacher’s story. Through narrative analysis I interpret the contextual meaning constructed by expert teachers within the horizon of their experience. As such, I do not synthesise these horizons but construct new understandings of expert teacher learning through the use of ontological hermeneutics.

Ricœur’s (2008) ongoing investigation into language is based on the presuppositions he critiques for both hermeneutics and Husserlian phenomenology. Fundamentally, he recognises an affinity between the “pre-predicative of phenomenology” and the hermeneutical meaning of being. This meaning is derived from linguistic interpretation and the intentionality of meaning in consciousness (Ricœur, 2008, pp. 36-40). Thus he asserts that “phenomenology remains the unsurpassable presupposition of hermeneutics” and that phenomenological method relies on hermeneutics for the revelation of “an exegesis, an explication, an interpretation” (Ricœur, 2008, pp. 23, 41). He most notably applies these presuppositions to understanding metaphor, as well as narrative function. Ricœur (2008) argues that these:

analyses continually presuppose the conviction that discourse never exists *for its own sake*, for its own glory, but that in all of its uses it seeks to bring into language an experience, a way of living in and of Being-in-the-world which precedes it and which demands to be said. It is this conviction that there is always a *Being-demanding-to-be-said*

(un être-à-dire) that precedes our actual saying. (Ricoeur, 2008, p. 19, italics in the original)

My research aims to develop hermeneutic understandings that incorporate the phenomenological pre-reflective meanings revealed through the context and relation of each teacher's experience.

Previous studies in the areas of teacher professional learning and the development of expertise have utilised other theoretical lenses to progress understanding in this research field. Historically, the focus of social research shifted from methodologies mostly underpinned by positivistic theoretical frames that employed quantitative methods, such as Berliner's (1987) study of expert teacher thinking, to more qualitative methods based on constructivist perspectives (Denscombe, 2008). Qualitative methods resulted in significant insights into teacher expertise. Some examples of such studies are Elbaz's (1983) exploration of teacher practical knowledge, studies investigating learning across teaching careers (Huberman, 1989) and the development of pedagogical content knowledge of novice and expert teachers (Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1990; Gudmundsdottir, 1990), as well as studies exploring the emotional aspects of teaching in the development of expertise (Hargreaves, 1998; Agne, 1999). Since the 1990s the use of 'mixed methods' has emerged to harness the affordances of quantitative and qualitative methods as appropriate for the research phenomena.

The variety of methods and methodological frameworks that have been used to study teachers' lives and work are evident from the following examples. Korthagen (2004) and Korthagen and Verkuyl (2002) conducted collaborative studies with teachers utilising workshops, logbooks and questionnaires to investigate qualities of good teaching. Questionnaires were utilised to elicit teacher perceptions on excellence in classroom teaching by

Connelly and McMahon (2007). Hattie and Clinton (2008) applied learning taxonomies and a synthesis of studies to explore the attributes of expert teachers that affect student learning. Understandings of continuing professional development were explored to illuminate practice and collaborative professional learning through: critical discourse analysis of the research and professional literature (Kennedy, 2007); qualitative analysis through self-study (Flessner, 2014); analysis of interview transcripts of experienced teachers (Kershner, Pedder & Doddington, 2012); as well as action research by teachers (Carroll, 2009; Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2009). Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) used the e-delphi method to synthesise discussion of video-taped situations dealing with practical knowledge in the professional lives of teachers. Purposive selection of peer nominated exemplary teachers enabled Collinson (2012a) to understand professional learning and the development of expertise. My inquiry acknowledges the methodological plurality afforded across research traditions. The ability to access multiple ways of knowing and to include multiple traditions in social inquiry is supported by Greene's (2005) methodological thinking. For Greene:

“a mixed method way of thinking seeks not so much convergence as insight; the point is not a well-fitting model or curve but rather the generation of important understandings and discernments through the juxtaposition of different lenses, perspectives, and stances”
(Greene, 2005, p. 208)

The use of dual methodologies in this study has the goal of garnering representations of the realities experienced by expert teachers and expressing this meaning through complementary hermeneutic understandings.

3.3.1 Qualitative principles of rigour

Three principles of rigour are central to the use of the theoretical lens of hermeneutic phenomenology. My study aligns with Pinnegar's and Daynes' (2007) approach that relies on the qualitative principles of verisimilitude, appetency and transferability. Furthermore, these principles are recognised through "Van Maanen's (1988) *apparency* and *verisimilitude*, criteria that put emphasis on recognisability of the field in the research text, and Lincoln and Guba's (1985) *transferability*, which takes the emphasis off generalisability" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 184, italics in the original).

Verisimilitude requires the reasonable appearance of truth and reality in representations. During my research I shared my contextual interpretation of the transcripts with each teacher to ensure that it made sense and represented the reality of their experience as shared with me. My interpretation of expert teachers' learning and of the ways their beliefs and views influence their personal professional development should realistically resonate with participants and be recognisable within the realm of their experience. Appetency is the recognition of shared hopes and goals and is evident in my shared interpretative approach with expert teachers, which encouraged a mutual aspiration for seeking interpretative meaning from their experience. Appetency and verisimilitude require trustworthiness in reporting research findings and in understanding external factors. In my research these factors included an awareness of the influences of each expert teacher's societal status and certification assessment, as these may have presented tensions in recognising their teaching expertise.

Merriam (2002) recognises that narrative and phenomenological analysis addresses both the psychological and linguistic dimensions of research participants' experience. My study draws on these dimensions to represent

the meaning-making of expert teacher perspectives. I sought the authentic views of expert teachers in a reflective approach towards their own learning. My study elicits the perspectives of the expert teachers as a credible account of their experience for description and interpretation.

The value of my qualitative approach relies on the degree to which expert teachers are able to relate the research findings to their own experience. My research approach focused on transferability rather than an empirical quest for generalisability. Maxwell (2002) describes internal generalisability as “crucial” for interpreting interviews, whereas external generalisability is “useful in making sense of similar persons or situations” (Maxwell, 2002, p. 52). Transferability is the ability to recognise findings within the research field and their applicability to future research endeavours. In my research I aimed for transferability by creating a plausible dialogue with the expert teacher.

Riessman (2008) identifies the three levels of coherence for research findings as local, themal and global. My contextual analysis endeavours to address the coherence of the expert teachers’ views across these levels. Being aware of these three levels of coherence has allowed me to strengthen the degree to which my research findings would readily cohere within the Australian context. My research findings resonate with Riessman’s (2002) pragmatic premise to the extent that they may provide a basis for future research.

Applying the lens of hermeneutic phenomenology requires careful attention to these qualitative principles of rigour in order to create new hermeneutic understandings from both a narrative post-reflective and phenomenological pre-reflective stance. My use of hermeneutics relied on these qualitative principles of rigour in the development of my research

methods. In the following sections I describe the methods I employed in the design processes for encouraging expert teacher participation as well as in the gathering and analysis of their meaning representations.

3.4 Process for encouraging expert teacher participation

My process for encouraging expert teacher participation was central to my research design. I communicated my research intention through various phone discussions, emails and other modes of communication. My use of purposeful sampling through teachers nominating colleagues and then the snowballing of communications to nominated teachers enabled teachers to volunteer as expert teacher participants. I was mindful of ethical considerations throughout the process, from the initial sampling procedures to obtaining consent from participating teachers, as shown in Figure 2 on page 61.

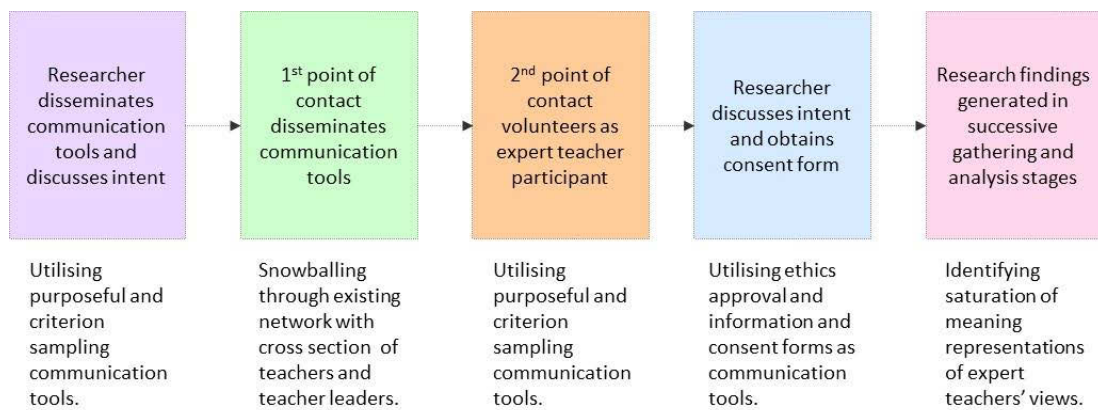


Figure 2: Procedures for selection of expert teachers.

3.4.1 Communicating my research intention

My communications highlighted my research intention of understanding expert teachers' views on their expertise and their own learning, and highlighted the benefits for the profession of recognising expert teachers' development and approach to learning.

My research intention was shared with the participating expert teachers through my research documentation (refer to Appendix A). I piloted the communication process of using the teaching expertise criteria I developed and an initial snowballing email (refer to Appendix B) as well as an online wiki (refer to Appendix C) to publish a reference list of supporting research literature along with the teaching expertise criteria. From the feedback I received, I then streamlined the information in my email communications. I continued to confirm understandings of my research intention through phone discussions, the published wiki information, email exchanges (refer to Appendix D), and face-to-face meetings with my initial contact network and the participating expert teachers.

3.4.2 Sharing criteria for purposive sampling

As part of the process, I identified my first points of contact from my existing network of teachers and other professional contacts within government, systemic and non-systemic non-government schools. In an initial phone conversation, I explained the nature of my research and my approach to selecting participants. I explained that I was not determining who demonstrates expertise but was relying on people working within various school communities to identify and select teachers they believed demonstrated expertise in their teaching and learning. During these discussions I explained that my focus was on secondary school teachers who have progressed beyond their initial teacher registration and accreditation years. For clarification, I referred to teachers who are established in the profession and could be classified from the Professional Competence level of

classification rather than a 'new scheme teacher'¹ in New South Wales (NSW Institute of Teachers, 2004).

My approach required me to challenge the assumptions that competence was aligned to years of teaching experience or that high levels of competence entirely represents teaching expertise. Tsui (2009) identifies expert teachers as those who continually seek transformational learning, while Carroll (2009) holds that such teachers are advocates of teaching as a learning profession. The nature of the teaching profession is to scrutinise an 'expert' label. Teachers recognise the formative nature of their own learning and question the notion of an expert fixed within a set of criteria. Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) identify their use of the term 'skilful' to recruit teachers for their research as problematic: the participating teachers either "did not perceive themselves as 'skilful', or they felt presumptuous to pose as such" (Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2010, p. 51). Therefore, I was cognisant that the teachers I needed to participate in my study may exhibit reticence in identifying themselves as experts. My approach was thus to present criteria (refer to Appendix B.1) as descriptors open to interpretation by the people who were my first points of contact and so allow them to identify the expert teachers among them.

From my initial discussions, the first point of contact people quickly identified the teachers corresponding to their understanding of experts in learning and teaching. I explained to the first point of contact people their involvement in forwarding the email onto their selected teacher/s (refer to Appendix B.2). The first section of the email contained a hyperlink to my online wiki with the teaching expertise criteria presented in overall

¹ Refer to Glossary. New scheme teacher.

categories. I suggested they could review the criteria and that it was not an all-inclusive or exhaustive list of people's ideas of a 'good' teacher. The online wiki (refer to Appendix C) supported discussion of my research as it identified my research intention and my supervisors' names, as well as linking to the UTS research website and listing my UTS ethics clearance number from my research documentation (refer to Appendix A).

My study required gathering and analysis of meanings and interpretations from expert teachers' experiences. Therefore, I used purposive sampling to obtain "detailed and rich data relevant to the particular research problem" (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005, p. 47). My use of criterion sampling provided a definition of 'expert teachers' that helped to identify and select teachers who represented "information-rich cases" (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005, p. 36). This use of criteria for purposive sampling allowed people working within different school communities to identify expert teachers. The selection criteria for the first point of contact people were provided for feedback in light of their own interpretation and in nomination of teachers. In my discussions, I made it clear that I was open to people providing feedback on the teaching expertise criteria. Throughout the selection process I did not receive any comments on the details published under the criteria categories.

I advised the first point of contact people that once they had forwarded the email they did not need to do anything further. I advised them also that they did not need to follow up with any teacher they had emailed, as involvement was voluntary. I further emphasised that I did not wish teachers to be in any way pressured to respond to the email and that they should contact me only if they were interested in participating in my research. My research design used criterion sampling with the first point of

contact people to identify a purposeful sample of expert teachers. From this, teachers could volunteer and contact me if they were interested in participating.

3.4.3 Sampling process for volunteer research participants

Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005) describe 'snowball or chain sampling' as one strategy for sampling research participants. In my study, the first point of contact people were not research participants. Instead, they created a snowballing effect by distributing the email to teachers they believed would be interested in participating, based on their understanding of teaching and learning expertise from our discussion. This was useful for my research approach as it allowed identification of teachers who may have been reticent to identify themselves as exhibiting expertise; Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005), for example, recognise that social and political influences may make potential research participants reticent to volunteer. However, an outcome of snowballing is reduced variation, as there is often similarity between mutually connected people. Therefore, I developed my list of first point of contact people from a cross-section of teachers within different school systems and professional contacts with schools in order to increase the variability of expert teachers nominated. I then continued my sampling process through email and through discussions with the teachers themselves. At this second point of contact, expert teachers essentially volunteered to participate in my study.

3.4.4 Considering ethical implications

My overarching consideration was that my research procedures would demonstrate respect for expert teachers, and I endeavoured to avoid potentially harmful consequences for expert teachers due to their participation. This included using pseudonyms for all the teachers and, if

requested by a participant, making amendments after participant reviews. In obtaining informed consent for research participation, I reviewed the consent documentation (refer to Appendix A.2 and Appendix A.3) and outlined the interview and transcript review processes to be undertaken by expert teachers.

My research approach was to alert the research participants to potential social or political consequences of participating. I emphasised that if they discussed their involvement with others there was a possibility of teacher identification through the publication of associated research materials. I did not disclose to the first point of contact people whether any of the teachers they contacted were subsequently involved in the research. It was important in my gathering and analysis of representations of meaning in the teachers' life histories to outline the political, methodological and ethical concerns of the research. Tripp (1994) identifies the researcher's need to consider these areas by asking: "Who gets to say what, about whom, to whom, and with what results? ... What is learned by others from the personal lives of teachers? ... To what extent should the personal be made public?" (Tripp, 1994, p. 75). My research methods employed a shared approach between researcher and participating teacher for the creation of their narratives and subsequent phenomenological meaning-making.

Figure 2, earlier in this section, depicts a linear sequence of the selection process. However, determining the point of saturation of findings occurred throughout the process of gathering and analysing meaning representations, and hence was more iterative in nature, as described in the following section.

3.5 Gathering of meaning representations

My narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry employed a three-interview process comprising two semi-structured face-to-face interviews for

initial gathering of meaning representations and a third phone interview for the teachers to offer final reflections on their expertise in teaching and learning. I also determined when I had reached saturation of meaning representation throughout the process.

3.5.1 Determining saturation and identifying limitation of findings

Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005) propose 'staggering' as one way of circumventing any repetition in information which is not providing new meaning or insights. This involves completing the entire interview process for a participant and conducting preliminary analysis on findings prior to commencing the process with another participant. With this in mind, I determined whether the expert teachers' interpretations were sufficient to address my research questions as I progressed through the gathering and analysis of data for each participant. Being mindful of saturation of information in which I was "no longer learning anything new" (Seidman, 1991, p. 45) dictated the number of participants in my sample. The use of criteria for purposive sampling within my study enabled the selection of expert teachers identified as understanding and demonstrating expertise in teaching and learning. This purposeful, non-randomised selection of the teachers for my study limits the subsequent interpretations of findings as they are not generalizable and may not be representative of all teachers viewed as expert. However, the method allows the gathering of "in-depth information from those who are in a position to give it" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007, p. 115) and enables the answering of my research questions.

In the initial gathering and analysis stage, I estimated that my sample group should range between five and ten participants. This aligned to Kvale and Brinkmann's (2009) suggestion of a range of five to fifteen participants based on "the law of diminishing returns" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009,

p. 113). Researchers within both narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry argue that a small number of participants provides rich, thick descriptions (Denzin, 2002; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Lichtman, 2010; Riessman, 2002; van Manen, 1997). Furthermore, Yates (2003) suggests that such small-scale interpretive research allows for “the setting up of opportunities to think self-critically about the attributions we are making about the meaning of the texts” (Yates, 2003, p. 226). I found this to be true in my small-scale study where my gathering of unique meaning representations was facilitated by this research approach in determining the saturation of findings and led to the inclusion of the fifth teacher as the final participant in my study.

Table 1 on page 69 lists the pseudonyms, teaching context and years of experience of the five teachers who participated in my research.

<i>Teacher pseudonym</i>	<i>Lincoln</i>	<i>Sally</i>	<i>Rosemary</i>	<i>Brenda</i>	<i>Ken</i>
<i>Gender</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
<i>Age range</i>	<i>35 - 45</i>	<i>< 35</i>	<i>35 – 45</i>	<i>45 – 55</i>	<i>> 55</i>
<i>School system experience</i>	<i>Non-government (systemic and non-systemic)</i>	<i>Government and non-government (non-systemic)</i>	<i>Government and non-government (non-systemic)</i>	<i>Government and non-government (non-systemic)</i>	<i>Government and non-government (non-systemic)</i>
<i>Teaching countries</i>	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Australia, New Zealand</i>	<i>Australia, England, United States of America</i>	<i>Australia, England</i>	<i>Australia</i>
<i>Current location</i>	<i>Inner metropolitan non-coastal</i>	<i>Inner regional coastal</i>	<i>Inner metropolitan coastal</i>	<i>Inner metropolitan coastal</i>	<i>Inner metropolitan non-coastal</i>
<i>Teacher leader experience</i>	<i>Pastoral and administrative teacher leader</i>	<i>Pastoral and administrative teacher leader</i>	<i>Pastoral teacher leader</i>	<i>Curriculum and learning teacher leader</i>	<i>Pastoral teacher leader</i>
<i>Secondary school subjects taught</i>	<i>History, geography, English literature, maths, religion, senior economics, business studies</i>	<i>Personal development, health, physical education</i>	<i>English literature</i>	<i>Maths, science, senior biology, generalist primary school</i>	<i>Maths</i>
<i>Years teaching</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>30</i>

Table 1: Characteristics of the five teachers who participated in the research.

3.5.2 Three-interview process

This research involved the gathering of meaning representations in the form of interview transcripts and email responses. I employed a three-interview process covering narrative oral history experiences, the phenomenological lifeworld, and reflections on expertise. In three sub-sections I describe the

sequence of semi-structured interviews and email and phone conversations with the teachers, and the confirmation of the accuracy of my transcripts and the trustworthiness of my tentative interpretations.

Bruner (1986) asserts that language is a means to organise our perceptions and actions through thought. The three-interview process was aimed at eliciting teacher thoughts on their developmental experiences, their attitudes to learning and their approaches to their own learning. Lichtman (2010) asserts that hermeneutic understandings are constructed throughout the stages of interview-based methods. Furthermore, Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) present interviewing as a 'craft', highlighting the practical and conceptual aspects of co-constructing understanding. My three-interview process was designed to garner reflections and interpretations through the telling of story, and to elicit further representations of life experiences to explicate meaning. I responded to the reflections of each teacher by reordering, rewording or sometimes deviating from the sequence of prompts contained in the semi-structured guides (refer to Appendix E). The second interviews were separated from the first interviews by a period of one to several months to allow for the teachers to reflect on their experiences. I was cognisant of allowing the teachers to freely articulate their responses in the two face-to-face interviews; firstly the narrative oral history and experiences interview and secondly the phenomenological lifeworld interview. These interviews took place at a location chosen by each teacher, either in a personal meeting room at their school or in an off-site public venue. The third interview questions clarify previously supplied information, along with a final version of the personal professional learning journey, were emailed to the teachers to allow them to prepare written responses to discuss during the third phone interview (refer to Appendix D.7).

Initially, I piloted my semi-structured interview guides with teachers I had previously worked with, in order to obtain practical feedback. I then modified the guides by removing duplication, refining and reordering questions, and listing some further pertinent prompts. Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005) discuss the difficulty of interviewing people with whom you are closely acquainted. The pilot confirmed the importance of overcoming this difficulty through a sampling approach. I became aware that unstated assumptions often form part of familiar acquaintance and can limit the depth and breadth of participant answers, as well as restricting further probing within discussions. There is also a cautionary element in interviewing people who have expertise within their field, in that they will already have formulated statements or philosophical views within their field of expertise. This may lead to the interview situation presenting a post-reflective platform for regurgitating established statements or views rather than an opportunity for more open pre-reflection. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) conceptualise the prompting within an 'InterView' as "provocations possibly leading to new insights" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 147). During the interview process I therefore continued to probe or challenge statements in order to allow post-reflective meaning-making.

I was mindful of avoiding references to my own experience when using the probing questions, so as not to confirm or contradict the teachers' views. Suspending my own interpretations and cultural meanings throughout the interview process was aimed at reducing the possibility of interfering with the teachers' views. It was a continual challenge not to explicitly acknowledge and state my own culturally imposed meanings while searching for the teachers' implied meanings. Heshusius (1994) describes an ethical stance of kinship throughout interview processes that uses a

'selfother' approach through "a participatory mode of consciousness" (Heshusius, 1994, p. 17). The interviews required focusing my attention on the teachers' experience and relinquishing thoughts centred on my experience. I made a strong effort to be aware of this participatory mode of consciousness in order to reside with the teachers' view of their experience and affirm a kinship of mutual understanding.

3.5.3 First interview: narrative oral history and experiences

The narrative oral history interview focused on the time, people and places significant for each expert teacher in recounting their story (refer to Appendix E.1). The interview transcript was provided to the expert teacher for member checking via email. The feedback provided via email and phone conversations was used to edit the transcripts.

This initial interview process allowed me to focus on the unique experience of each expert teacher. It also allowed me to confirm my understanding of their meaning in talking of their personal professional development and learning from their experience. Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe (1994) suggest that a narrative oral history approach illuminates the self-understanding aspect of transformative learning, as indicative in the following excerpt:

Teachers' professional behaviour, and its development, can only be understood properly when situated in the broader context of a career and a personal life history ... professional experiences result in a sense of professional self and a subjective educational theory.

(Kelchtermans & Vandenberghe, 1994, p. 45)

The first interviews focused on expert teachers' views on the influences on their personal professional development, as well as their beliefs pertaining to

their own learning. The transcript from this first interview formed the basis of my narrative representations of each teacher's personal professional development and learning experiences. Clandinin (2007) proposes that the creation of a narrative base initiates unique storied explanations for phenomena. The initial transcript initiated the creation of each expert teacher's narrative within my study. My initial interpretations of the unique contextual narrative of their professional development stories also informed the second interview process. I also identified specific aspects from the first interviews that may provide further guiding prompts for the second interview process.

3.5.4 Second interview: phenomenological lifeworld

The second interview engaged the teachers in a pre-reflective mindset in order to garner meaning-making representations on their learning (refer to Appendix E.2), with the aim of building on the oral history and experience details provided in the first interview process. The break between the two interview processes gave me time to conduct an initial analysis to identify tentative interpretations of the teachers' personal constructions of meaning. This break allowed each expert teacher to attempt some resolution of their first interview revelations. Seidman (1991) acknowledges that providing time between interviews allows the creation of emotional and intellectual connections. Kvale's (1983) approach to phenomenological-hermeneutical research identifies "the presuppositionlessness involved by the phenomenological reduction and the emphasis upon foreknowledge in the hermeneutical tradition" (Kvale, 1983, p. 188). The second interviews did not presuppose an understanding of the phenomena being investigated. I created prompts within the interview guide that aligned to Kvale's (1983) endeavour in which "a phenomenological-hermeneutical approach rather

involves an attempt to clarify the investigated phenomenon and its meaning” (Kvale, 1983, p. 193).

Four existentials for prompting

The second interview was thematically structured on the four existentials of van Manen (1997, pp. 102-106) and applied to my research as described below.

- Spatiality of the lived space: the spaces expert teachers need and inhabit for their personal professional developmental experiences and learning within their lifeworld.
- Corporeality of the lived body: the reshaping of their physical, psychological and intellectual being throughout their personal professional developmental experiences and learning in their lifeworld.
- Temporality of lived time: the relationship of past, present, and future across their personal professional developmental experiences and learning within their lifeworld.
- Relationality of the lived others: the influence of interpersonal and communal relations throughout their personal professional developmental experiences and learning in their lifeworld.

From the first interview transcripts and initial interpretations I identified phenomenological components within each teacher’s narrative. I reviewed each first interview transcript to filter initial insights and revelations. Each teacher’s unique first interview revelations were then used within these phenomenological themes for guiding prompts in their second interview.

Methodological constructs through a sequence of steps

The second interview process aligned to Kvale's (1983) 'phenomenological-hermeneutical approach' and was predominately based on a sequence of steps outlined by Denzin (2002):

- Deconstructing prior conceptions of the phenomenon through critical analysis of the research and literature: My interpretation examined explicit statements of preconceptions and biases from culturally imposed meanings as currently applied to the phenomena for expert teachers.
- Attending to the hermeneutic circle that centres the researcher and participant within the research process: I acknowledged that the experience of expert teachers and myself as researcher overlaps. I was aware of Kvale's (1983, p. 185) assertion that this "infinite process" exerts continual influence on the meaning of phenomena within the research.
- Capturing the phenomenon through a semi-structured interview to document experiences: I recorded and transcribed each interview and prompted each teacher, in collaboration with me as researcher, to identify milestones or epiphanies.
- Suspending imposed cultural meanings: I attempted to suspend such meanings for both myself and the teacher being interviewed. Kvale (1983) highlights the need to put aside "judgement as to the existence or non-existence of the content of the experience" (1983, p. 184). Importantly, this allowed for the subsequent steps of phenomenological reduction of this experience during analysis.
- Bracketing the phenomenon by locating meaningful phrases or statements for the participant: I identified recurring features,

semiotic signs/symbols and persistent perspectives in order to begin tentative interpretations of each teacher's experience.

- Constructing the phenomenon by ordering bracketed elements that may indicate affects and relationships: I created my analysis structure to enable some coherence for the phenomenological constituents of the expert teachers' experiences.
- Contextualising the problem by repositioning the phenomenon within the lifeworld: I demonstrated how each teacher's experience was able to reify and so transform that phenomenon.
- Ascertaining meaning of the newly understood phenomena: I attempted to do this for the teachers in my study. Denzin (2002) contends that such meanings should reveal how each person "emotionally and biographically fits an experience into his or her emerging, unfolding definitions of self" (Denzin, 2002, p. 361).

In using the above sequence, I moved through the complexities of the phenomenological interview process using defined methodical constructs. I focused on the initial four steps described above in my preparation for and in the three-interview process. This encompassed the deconstructing of prior conceptions, attending to the hermeneutic circle, capturing the phenomena, and suspending imposed cultural preconceptions in relation to the expert teachers' personal professional development and learning.

3.5.5 Third interview: reflections on expertise

The third interview process allowed each teacher to reflect on their understandings of expertise after having participated in the research. I emailed them a final story draft and the narrative interpretation prior to completing the chapter discussion for their personal professional learning journey. The email contained questions for them on which to reflect and

provide feedback, either via email or via a third interview on the phone (refer to Appendix D.7).

From the outset of my research, I used a variety of computer software applications for the recording, storing, organising and analysing of information (refer to Appendix F). Using this software allowed me to improve the speed and information capacity of my analysis (Silverman & Seale, 2005, p. 254). I was able to quickly access, readily manipulate and link information through an electronic audit trail.

The three-interview process described above for the gathering of meaning representations and the analysis described in the following section were not linear in nature. I attended to the hermeneutic circle through a continual process of iterative analysis. The result was a spiralling process that interlinked the creation of interview transcripts and the iterative analysis, as illustrated in Figure 3.

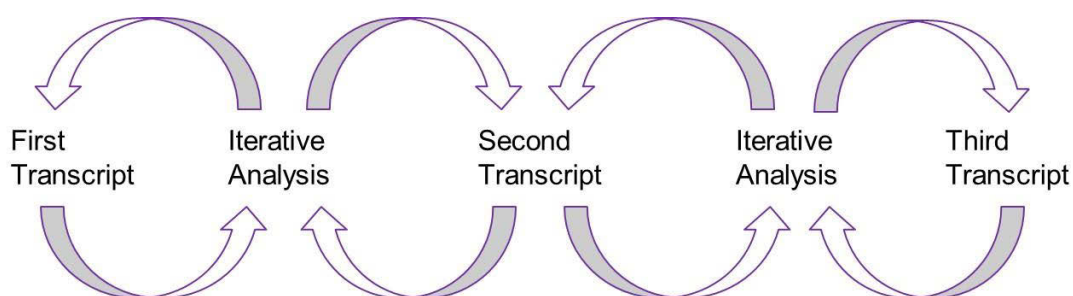


Figure 3: Spiralling processes in gathering and analysing the representations of meaning.

3.6 Analysis of meaning representations

The iterative analysis of my research allowed for interpretative construction of and phenomenological reflection on each expert teacher's experience. I used narrative analysis to create stories and to interpret the contextual meaning of each teacher's personal professional learning journey. My use of narrative inquiry responds to Egan's (1986) affective appeal "not to make the

strange seem familiar, but to make the familiar seem strange" (Egan (1986) as cited in Breault, 2009, p. 4). The phenomenological focus of van Manen (1997) requires the "reflectively bringing into nearness that which tends to be obscure, that which tends to evade the intelligibility of our natural attitude of everyday life" (van Manen, 1997). Similarly, my phenomenological analysis focuses on each teacher's emotional and intellectual meaning-making, often not apparent within the context of their own learning.

3.6.1 Narrative analysis

My approach to the first interview (narrative oral history) applied several stages to the gathering and analysis of the teachers' views: attending to the narration event, telling the story, transcribing the events, analysing the story's meaning, and rereading of the story. This approach was aimed at improving authenticity and accuracy by reflecting on meaning at each stage of the analysis.

Both Riessman (2002) and Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) cite a structural approach based on a story sequence developed by Labov and Waletzky (1967). I employed this structural approach to identify the components of the story and also used a story sequence developed by Murray (2003):

- (1) the abstract that provides a summary of the narrative, inserting it into the framework of conversational turn-taking;
- (2) the orientation of the listener to the time, place, actors, and activity of the narrative;
- (3) the complicating action, containing the central details of the narrative;
- (4) the evaluation of the central details; and
- (5) the coda, which summarizes and returns the narrative time frame to the present (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 223).

Riessman (2002) contends that this typical story model provides a readily recognisable form for different aspects of contextual representation. This representation occurs throughout the attending, telling, transcribing, analysing and rereading of narrative oral history. At each stage of these representations, the interpretation goes through an expansion and reduction (Riessman, 2002).

My use of narrative inquiry methods applied various structures to the representation and analysis of the interview transcripts. The selection of quotes for representing unique aspects of each teacher's story in Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are previously explained in this chapter under 'Narrative inquiry'. The two frameworks used in the iterative analysis, and the tensions encountered in the narrative space, are described below.

Structured story sequence

For the initial analysis, I identified the storied sequence of abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation and coda identified by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009). The expert teachers related teaching stories with reference to students, school environments, the education system or the teaching process. Within each teacher's story, these components contained both the teaching and learning aspects intertwined across the stages of storytelling. The experience of teaching generated related learning and this learning in turn initiated changes to teaching approaches and beliefs.

Contextual modes

The contextual modes apparent throughout the interview transcripts were analysed using a second narrative framework. Riessman (2002, pp. 232-234) presents the analysis of context and meaning through different 'forms of telling'. She draws on the three functions of language described by Halliday (1973, cited in Riessman (2002)) for analysing three levels of meaning as

ideational, interpersonal and textual. I applied these three levels of interpretation to the contextual meaning of each teacher's discussion of their personal professional development as follows:

- Ideational interpretation: denoting the referential meaning and conceptual understanding represented by each expert teacher.
- Interpersonal interpretation: concerning the context of each teacher's social and personal relationships.
- Textual or spoken interpretation: signifying the context conveyed through the syntactic expression of language rules and the semantic use of various words or symbols. This context may occur between aspects within a story or through the co-construction process of the teacher telling their story and me as researcher listening and probing for clarification.

Tensions in narrative space

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) propose a metaphorical space representative of: the interaction between the personal and the social; continuity throughout past, present and future; and the situation creating a notion of place. I used these aspects within the first interview process to focus on this metaphorical space. The expert teachers' reconstruction of experiences through their oral history identified formative events and enabled exploration of these through people, places, and time. These metaphorical narrative aspects were identified across the structured story sequence and the contextual mode of narrative analysis. This metaphorical space within each teacher's unique learning also naturally aligned with the subsequent phenomenological analysis. This duplication in my analysis was evidence of the acknowledged tensions of thinking and writing at the boundaries of this metaphorical space. I was mindful of the concerns highlighted by Clandinin and Connelly

(2000) concerning the reduction of nuanced experiences to formulaic representations when using narrative analysis frameworks. I did not want to reduce to facts the teachers' nuanced experiences, nor formally articulate their storied experiences into representative categories that would overshadow the unique quality of their experience. Denzin (1989) suggests that these "meanings of the self are fundamentally unstable and realized only through time and temporality" (Denzin, 1989, pp. 62-63). Consequently, I felt that my creation of a unique narrative comprised of the teacher's story along with a contextual mode of interpretation captured their voice and allowed interpretation of their unique meaning and reality through their personal professional learning journey.

I wished to avoid fixing my own interpretation within the two narrative frameworks – the structured story sequence and the contextual modes of narrative interpretation – rather than elucidating the teachers' representations of meaning. My repeated purposeful listening to each interview while reviewing the interview transcripts enabled me to audit the coded information within each framework. Kvale (1983, p. 186) identifies 'good Gestalt' as "free of logical contradictions" in which "themes in the interview make sensible patterns, and go into consistent unity". I felt that my interpretation exhibited 'good Gestalt' in that the components had unity within and across each of the frameworks and allowed for the creation of each teacher's narrative and subsequent phenomenological analysis.

3.6.2 Phenomenological analysis

My analysis of representations of meaning incorporated the initial four steps from Denzin (2002) that I have described earlier in this chapter under 'Methodological constructs through a sequence of steps'. My analysis also applied Denzin's subsequent four steps to my research, namely bracketing of

essential meaning, constructing the meaning of phenomena, contextualising these phenomena within the lifeworld, and ascertaining meaning of the teachers' experience with the reinterpretation of the phenomena. I used the anecdotal reflections from the first interviews and second interviews for my phenomenological analysis of the teachers' views. I searched for phenomena specific to personal professional development and learning within each teacher's lived experience.

The four phenomenological existentials of van Manen (1997) provided an initial analytical framework for possible phenomenological meaning representations across the first and second interview transcripts. Phenomenological constituents in relation to the development of expertise and professional learning were then identified across all interview transcripts, including the feedback on the third interview questions. The relative importance and connection of meaning for each of the teachers emerged from the unique narratives of personal professional development and my identification of the phenomenological constituents across the teachers' learning experiences. These aspects as unique representations in my thesis are explained in an earlier section of this chapter under 'Phenomenological inquiry'.

'Selfother' of phenomenological writing

My phenomenological writing was aimed at representing the constituents constrained within the teachers' experience and elucidating the potential interconnections within current understanding. I was mindful of van Manen's (1997) proposal of writing as a measure of thoughtfulness. He was aware of the tension in that what separates us also unites us; what distances us also draws us close; in that decontextualizing practice we also need to return to praxis (thoughtful action); and in the continuum between the

abstraction and concretising of experience (van Manen, 1997, pp. 127-129). I aimed at transcending the dichotomy of representing expert teachers' views and at reflecting on the contradictory qualities of the human lifeworld. I contextualised the teachers' views of their personal professional development experience and also explored the transformative possibilities of their meaning-making on these experiences for their own learning. Importantly for me was subscribing to the idiographic perception of Smith, Larkin and Flowers (2008) in relation to 'an experience'. Their interpretive phenomenology advocates an understanding of "what the experience for this person is like, what sense this particular person is making of what is happening to them" (Smith, Larkin, et al., 2008, p. 3). My original thematic representations of meaning from the second and third interviews then changed from the initial four existentials originally used for prompting. My ongoing rereading and rewriting of the personal professional learning journey for each teacher in the study and their representations of meaning across all three interview transcripts prompted my own intuitive feeling on the experiences represented within each unique lifeworld. As I continued my phenomenological writing, I widened my reading within the literature. I became aware of more implicit representations within the teachers' experience and so was able to identify these as unique phenomenological constituents.

My creation of phenomenological constituents enabled the writing of thickly contextualised material. These meaning representations have contextual grounding, acknowledge prior understandings and articulate unfinished interpretations. Throughout the phenomenological writing, I was challenged by those aspects acknowledged by Merleau-Ponty (1962) as "the impossibility of a total reduction" (Kvale, 1983, pp. 184), along with the

researcher's "consciousness of one's own presuppositions" (Kvale, 1983, p. 185). I acknowledged and maintained awareness of these complexities throughout the writing and rewriting process. Maintaining a pre-reflective viewpoint in capturing the phenomena of the teachers' experience was essential to my research and was important in allowing me to make a contribution to the relevant fields.

3.7 Chapter discussion

This chapter has identified my constructivist perspective as reliant on a pragmatic and relativist ontology to create multiple, complementary understandings. The lens of hermeneutic phenomenology makes our reality visible through the universal indivisibility of understanding, language and reason. Our construction of meaning relies on our ontological being in the world. The use of narrative inquiry in my study provides understanding through interpretation of the context of each unique human experience. Phenomenological inquiry then traverses the complexity of meaning representations constructed through these individual experiences. The compatibility of my dual methodologies - narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry - allow for complementary hermeneutic understandings of how expert teachers approach their own learning and how they construct meaning from their professional development experience.

My design of research methods has enabled me to represent the meaning-making of the expert teachers in their approach to their learning as interpreted through their personal professional learning journeys. Analysis of each teacher's developmental experience encompasses two interpretative frameworks, the structured story sequence and the contextual modes of narrative interpretation, formulated from the work of Riessman (2002, 2008)

and Kvale and Brinkmann (2009). Each teacher's story aligns to the 'oral personal experience narrative' proposed by Patterson (2008) as "*texts which bring stories of personal experience into being by means of the first person oral narration of past, present, future or imaginary experience*" (Patterson, 2008, p. 37, italics in the original). The use of these two interpretive frameworks has allowed me to examine unique narrative as co-constructed between each teacher and me as researcher.

My representation of the personal professional learning journeys of the five teachers in my study – Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary, Barbara and Ken – forms the following five chapters. Each teacher's narrative is presented as a story sequence accompanied by a contextual interpretive analysis, and is underpinned by the methodological responsiveness outlined in this chapter. Following the individual narratives in Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, I interrogate the pre-reflectively created meaning of the personal professional learning journey for each of the five teachers and explore the phenomenological constituents in Chapter 9. In my phenomenological writing I was conscious of 'selfother' in reference to Heshusius' (1994) conceptualisation of 'a participatory mode of consciousness'. This focused on mutual understanding of the meaning constructed by the teachers from their experience. I was conscious of my need to 'immerse' myself in their experience but 'suspend' my culturally imposed understanding in order to reveal their construction of meaning from their personal professional development.

Throughout this chapter I acknowledge that the lens of hermeneutic phenomenology enables a unique methodological responsiveness in answering my research questions. My exploration using this lens is one possibility for combining methodologies – as narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry in a dual methodological approach. Furthermore,

the methods I employ for encouraging expert teacher participation and gathering and analysing meaning representations within this approach represents one avenue for creating complementary hermeneutic understandings. Therefore, Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 represent my unique interpretation of the personal professional learning journeys of five teachers in positing the meaning making for the development of expertise.

Chapter 4

Lincoln's learning motivation: heart, happiness and whole person

4.1 Introduction

This chapter illustrates Lincoln's approach to learning through the construction of his personal professional learning journey.

I follow the storied sequence of abstract, orientation, complicating action, evaluation and coda as described in Chapter 3. The quotations chosen in creating the story were based on their authenticity, adequacy and plausibility, and on the explanatory, invitational quality of narrative inquiry as discussed in Chapter 3. I provide an abstract as an overview of Lincoln's story to illustrate his career opportunities and his need for new learning. I explore Lincoln's perception of challenges as learning opportunities and his inclination towards taking risks to enable his learning in the section 'Benefiting from a challenge – "sink or swim".' I then interrogate three complicating actions for Lincoln and the evaluation of his learning experienced with mentors, colleagues and students. These three complicating actions demonstrate Lincoln's realisation of his teaching competence, and the centrality of collegial learning and student pastoral care within his practice. The coda to Lincoln's story discusses his possible future career directions, and in particular his interest in pastoral care.

Following Lincoln's story, I analyse its unique contextual significance through the narrative modes of storytelling, as discussed in Chapter 3. Three contexts are interpreted: the ideational significance of Lincoln's teaching focus on the whole learner, the interpersonal importance for Lincoln of student happiness and collegial relationships, and the textual and spoken context representing a metaphorical universe containing the challenges that Lincoln values.

The chapter discussion builds on the literature critique of Chapter 2 in evaluating the meaning Lincoln attributes to heart, happiness and whole person as represented within his personal professional learning.

4.2 Lincoln's story

4.2.1 Risking serendipity – "looking for something new; I was just looking for an opportunity"

In 1997, Lincoln commenced his secondary teaching career on the east coast of Australia in an area experiencing population growth. This outer metropolitan area of NSW had a diverse economic and sociocultural population. Lincoln undertook varied opportunities during his first 15 years of teaching and coordination roles. He taught in two non-government systemic Years 7-12 secondary schools, in an independent boarding and day school for boys from Years 5-12, and in a coeducational Years K-12 private school. His experience as a teacher and pastoral care coordinator was guided by the mentoring from colleagues and the leadership of coordinators and principals. Lincoln's experience did not follow any pre-determined path but charts his driving need to be challenged in his learning.

Lincoln initially taught Years 7-10 religion and the social science² subjects of history and geography at the junior campus of a newly built school. He then accepted a role at the Years 11-12 campus that utilised his university degree in teaching senior economics and business studies, recognising this as his “*strength area*”. He was promoted to pastoral care coordinator after his first two years of teaching senior students.

Lincoln's teaching merit and attention to student pastoral care was acknowledged by the principal in offering him the combined Year 11 and Year 12 assistant coordinator role. Lincoln's development in dealing with student pastoral care responsibilities continued in this role for the next three years:

But after six years of only teaching that, I got a little bit stale with it. And we went through three or four different principals and the new one that came in said “I want to start a middle school³ at this school” and I was looking for something new so I volunteered to do it.

The significance for Lincoln of recognising an encroaching staleness was that it presented an opportunity to revitalise his teaching. He then extended his teaching as a Year 7 middle school teacher and added English to his range of curriculum areas. He shared the teaching of this class with another teacher, who was responsible for subjects such as maths, science and health. Lincoln developed his teaching practice in a context different to the conventional teaching role of a secondary teacher. He also had pastoral care responsibilities as assistant Year 7 coordinator for his remaining two years at this school.

² Refer to Glossary. Key Learning Area (KLA) within the Australian curriculum.

³ Refer to Glossary. Middle school years within Australian schools.

Lincoln then taught at an independent boarding and day school for boys in an affluent, inner metropolitan area for the following six years. He taught in both secondary and middle school structured classes, and also added Year 7 maths to his range of teaching skills. Lincoln completed advanced teacher accreditation for independent schools in his first year at this school.

Although Lincoln acknowledged that the accreditation process was sometimes overwhelming, in the following year he was motivated to coordinate an advanced teacher program. Lincoln's "I'll have a go at that" attitude led to this role with the responsibility of teacher accreditation at the school including mentoring of new scheme teachers⁴. He then accepted pastoral care responsibility for Year 7 students as boarding master, during his third year at the school:

I've kind of haven't really gone into any of it going 'this is what I want to do' and really 'I'll shoot for that'. It's kind of been like I've floated around and as things come off I've taken them on. The same with the boarding master, like that was probably the biggest role that I've had ... and 'right place at the right time' kind of thing.

Lincoln's perception of his appointments underplays both his readiness and willingness to undertake the learning associated with these mentoring and coordination roles. His attributing both to chance highlights the unexpected aspect of his learning and his inclination to be challenged.

Lincoln acknowledges the value of the expertise he cultivated across a diverse range of teaching roles. However, he admits he did not strategically

⁴ Refer to Glossary. New scheme teacher

plan his career or explicitly address specific criteria to target a role of his choice:

At the moment what I've got is this really broad range of stuff. I just have a feeling, when I go for a position [that] I'll miss out. So I think I do need to [pause] I like being flexible ... but I think I also need to start to build a little bit more focus.

In recent years, Lincoln recognised the implications of the serendipitous nature of his career and so actively sought opportunities to enable him to direct his career progression. He strategically targeted a leadership role even though it did not directly meet his pastoral care aspirations, and he commenced a role as head of administration and student services in 2012. He perceived a need to package his 15-year career into a recognisable role incorporating full school administrative responsibilities.

4.2.2 Motivational approaches and stimulating contexts – “sink or swim”

Lincoln was motivated to seek new roles in order to influence student learning and to satisfy his need for ongoing learning.

My personal thing is that I think pastoral care needs to be at the base of everything you do, because if the kids are happy and they like being in your class then they're in a position to learn. ... so I like the middle school model from that perspective.

Substantively, Lincoln presents his pedagogical focus as being on the overall development of the whole student and the centrality of happiness for their learning.

As a student himself, Lincoln had attended six different schools in inland country towns and a regional coastal city, each of which represented essentially monocultural environments:

[O]ur playground was kind of delineated by what activities you liked to do. So if you liked to read you went to the library at lunch time, and if you wanted to play handball you went to one place, if you wanted to play touch football you went to another place, if you liked to sit around and talk to friends you sat down and talked to friends.

He then taught in school environments that were distinctly different to that of his own schooling:

The playground was split up by culture, which was as confusing to me as it was to them. ... So I think that not having any preconceptions of what particular races were like helped me. ... So I think that was in a way an advantage and it was also a challenge ... as I started to learn about different ways, especially different reactions of parents to different situations.

Lincoln sees the sociocultural naivety of his pre-teaching experience as advantageous in not giving him any fixed conceptions of sociocultural stereotypes. From this perspective, he endeavoured to present a receptive, amicable and approachable persona to his students. Contrasting these experiences has implications for his developing professional self in understanding the support structures necessary for adolescent development. He acted on his new understanding of broader cultural conventions in order to develop relationships with students and parents.

From his early career, Lincoln also valued the demands of teaching curricula outside his university qualifications and developing relationships with senior students:

I can remember I was up until 10:30, 11 o'clock every night, pretty much staying one step ahead of the kids but at the same time it was an excellent school, I learnt a lot ... I could form good working relationships with the kids that I was teaching, and able to relate because I was four years older than them ... So it was a really good atmosphere to work in as much as it was a bit of a sink or swim kind of thing, it was tough work and it was a different universe.

Lincoln's motivational approach and stimulating contexts presented different learning opportunities. His learning involved understanding new content to teach the senior curriculum, addressing developmental needs and fostering relationships with senior students. He felt that 'sink or swim' situations provided the required diversity for developing his expertise.

4.2.3 Realising competence – "it doesn't matter how long I've been teaching for"

Lincoln's observation of teachers he believed to be inflexible and unimaginative provided a critical revelation in his first years of teaching. In one instance, he was responsible for creating an assessment task for the senior business studies course and was aware that a more experienced teacher was using established teaching resources not adapted to the recently amended syllabus:

And the head of faculty sat down with me and goes "this paper is not very good". So I went and got the syllabus and I said "well here's where the questions came from" and he's like "oh okay".

Through this experience Lincoln recognised his own competence. He became assured of his ability in teaching and assessing students, identifying the value of specific and proficient teaching practices:

It was my third year teaching. So that was like a pretty big moment for me that this person had been teaching for 30 years or 20 years or I'm not sure, and somebody in between so who had been teaching for probably 15 years, and here was me teaching for three years, and suddenly you think like three years, 15 years, 20 years, the hierarchy, and suddenly I felt "oh it doesn't matter". I can be at the top of this hierarchy because I know what I'm doing, I'm competent. And it doesn't matter how long I've been teaching for and really if I've got those same overheads I haven't got 20 years' experience, I've got one year experience repeated 20 times if I do the same thing every year exactly the same way.

Lincoln recognised that his competence was not aligned to the number of teaching years within the hierarchy he experienced. This experience reinforced his confidence to develop his own teaching philosophy and explore how to put this into practice.

4.2.4 Working with mentors – “throw stuff at me and I’ll figure it out”

Lincoln received support in his learning through relationships with colleagues. He felt that these mentors nurtured and supported his learning, particularly in pastoral care and cross-curricular areas:

I think as a young teacher the most defining things were just times when people became mentors in some way. So a very big one was a teacher Stan ... I worked very closely with him and I learnt more in six months off him than I had learnt in any other six-month stretch in

my life. Just in the way he spoke to people, just in the way he talked to the kids and the way that he taught even kind of matched the way that I taught. ... So seeing this person who kind of did things the same way that I did and was very successful at it, that was really good. ... So I always think of defining moments in terms of people like that.

Paramount for Lincoln's learning was his connection with mentors who demonstrated teaching practices he aspired to emulate and approaches that displayed creativity, flexibility and empathy. He developed self-confidence by accepting challenges to his abilities, experimenting in areas outside of his perceived talents or formal qualifications, and attempting activities that he may not have sought on his own.

Lincoln's teaching and mentoring experiences guided his pastoral care philosophy, and in turn served to reinforce his focus for his coordination roles.

4.2.5 Caring and learning – “that's bigger than any classroom issue”

Lincoln's responsibilities as a Year 7 boarding master presented a significant event when a student with a long term illness died. This that reinforced the role of pastoral care as central to his teaching philosophy:

There was one day I can remember thinking “why does everybody think that I'm going to be able to handle this?” He died on the last day of school holidays in term three ... I was extremely upset, like I was having a hard time dealing with it myself ... when the boys walked in I put on a boarding master hat and turned into the boarding master and I was able to get through it. I was able to come to school and function as a school teacher and then I'd go home and be me and be a mess and break down but I was able to do that. ... It's helped give me

the confidence that whatever I get thrown, and that's bigger than any classroom issue, that's bigger than anything I'm ever going to have to deal with and there's nothing really like that that I'm ever going to have to deal with again hopefully.

The significance of this event for Lincoln reinforced his appreciation of pastoral care responsibilities and the realisation of the expectations on him. His experience in dealing with parents and students strengthened the conviction of his confidence and capability, and was crucial for his development as a teacher:

That day I had to call 35 sets of parents and tell them, and that's the hardest thing I've ever done. I've got zero problem calling parents now whereas I wasn't really big on calling parents before. It doesn't matter what I have to talk to them about, I've done something harder than that. I think the biggest thing was on my confidence that, you know, throw something at me it doesn't matter.

Lincoln valued the development of his self-belief in that it nurtured his ability to meet challenges and his approach to learning. His pastoral care responsibilities reinforced his philosophy to place all other classroom issues as secondary to the more important role of fostering relationships with students. The experience of his early teaching years and coordination roles enabled Lincoln to frame his future thinking on his career.

4.2.6 Sustaining future direction – “I thought that's really powerful; I'm more interested in pastoral care”

Lincoln was keen to project his classroom practice into a pastoral care approach for whole-year groups or a school population. This led him to contemplate a leadership role:

Going back to the mentor and just that process, I felt like I was doing

really good things in my classroom and I thought that was the important part of the school. And then when I saw somebody able to do what I was doing in my classroom with 200 people, I thought that's really powerful ... And then I started to think well that's what I'd like to do.

He moved towards his goal in 2012 by accepting a school executive role in an independent K-12 coeducational school with approximately 1,000 students. His role also entailed Year 10 pastoral advisor and teaching three geography classes. He felt there was limited opportunity for mentoring but continued to value the challenge of this learning experience:

I think there are negatives about it obviously but it's forcing me to think. Remembering back to how there were times when I felt I was just thrown in the deep end and have to figure things out on your own and how you can learn a lot out of those experiences ...

Lincoln recognised that his career choice should fulfil his personal professional learning needs. His latest role has reinforced the satisfaction achieved from addressing the learning and development needs of the whole student:

I'm more interested in pastoral care ... I'm finding that my best times here, my happiest times here are in my classes. In future roles I think I would like to have more of a student focus.

Lincoln reiterates throughout his story that happiness is his career driver, in which a pastoral care focus will motivate his ongoing learning and teacher leader career.

4.3 Narrative modes of storytelling

This section examines the significance of the narrative aspects in Lincoln's story. Within this narrative mode I use three levels of contextual interpretation – ideational, interpersonal, and textual or spoken (Riessman, 2002) – to highlight the uniqueness of these forms of telling. In an ideational context, Lincoln presents his conceptual understanding of himself as both learner and teacher. Students and colleagues are central to an interpersonal context within which Lincoln pursues learning opportunities that develop his pastoral skills in order to make a difference to students' life outcomes. The textual or spoken context reveals Lincoln's use of metaphor to enrich his emotional expression and to communicate the effect on him of his relationships and learning challenges.

4.3.1 Ideational context: teaching for the learner

Throughout his story, Lincoln presented his idea of learning and the attributes of a learner, and referenced his idea of a good teacher. He conceptualised a learner as one who searches for new challenges, risks failure and frames mistakes to enable further learning. He represented a good teacher as one who assists in the overall development and wellbeing of the learner.

Lincoln expressed a continual willingness to search for challenges and accept the associated risks in order to learn:

I do have high expectations so I do feel disappointment when I don't do something but I think I still like to learn from mistakes. I like to take risks and try something and if it works, it works and if it doesn't work ... [trails off speaking]"

Lincoln's learning risked the failure of experimentation with new ideas in his classroom teaching. He alleviated the disappointment of failures by

accepting that gains in his learning would reverberate in his teaching and extend his capabilities beyond his formal qualifications. He was able to balance any reservations with the gains in his ability to meet the learning needs of his students and so contextualise learning for his students:

I love to learn new things to use in my classroom, just little things that make a big difference ... Most of the time I'm thinking "what do these kids like to do? How do these kids respond?" And trying to come up with ways of how to make things work in the way that works best for them.

Lincoln appreciates learners' unique needs and uses them to encourage a love of learning. His learning is focused on responding with appropriate strategies to meet their learning needs, gaining their interest and stimulating their motivation to learn. He recognises that the specific learning challenges he experienced were also confronting his adolescent students:

Like they won't try things because they don't want to go bad at something and they don't have the resilience to make a mistake and work through it. ... I haven't really thought about it before, but hopefully I can make mistakes and say "oh well, it didn't work out" and they can see that and have the same attitude towards that.

For Lincoln, this experience reinforced the importance of modelling an acceptance of failure when taking risks in order to develop resilience in adolescent learners. He also acknowledges the significance of empathetic relationships necessary for supporting learners:

I mean there are words that I always use, that say, I like to establish rapport with the students, that I like to encourage the students to be independent learners and independent thinkers, that I tried to instil a

love of learning, but you run the danger of sounding like a whole lot of jargon.

Lincoln's own learning experiences resonate in his teaching. His practice recognises and responds to the unique learner and their situation, and displays empathetic communications and interactions:

I think generally a principal wants someone who has the heart of the teacher, that kind of personality that just matches teaching that you can't really quantify ... I'm teaching English, geography, religion and maths at the moment and I'm not trained in any of them, but I don't see that as a disadvantage because I think I have teaching skills that are transferable across subjects. That's where my talents are in teaching and not specifically in a particular area of teaching.

Lincoln characteristic portrayal of a good teacher includes having expertise that is not necessarily subject specific, as well as an aptitude for teaching that may be unquantifiable. He contrasts a stereotypical approach of a traditional teacher with the teaching characteristics he has endeavoured to emulate:

I have an 'old school' teacher here, he teaches my homeroom like "everyone sit down and be quiet, sit in your chair". I have my kids set up in groups and he comes in every lesson and moves the desks into single desks and into rows ... But he came to me and said "I just want to give you a bit of advice. You shouldn't have them in groups because then they talk to each other, distract each other, it stops them from listening, this has been working since the 1900s and it still works today." And I thought you're all almost a caricature.

Lincoln recognises the difficulty of revamping entrenched teaching practices that may not align with contemporary approaches to learning. He continues to develop confidence in his teaching approach, which has enabled him to

develop students' collaborative abilities and capacity for independent thinking:

It's not like teaching kids to add and subtract. To teach them to be resilient or to teach them to be happy or to teach them to work independently, or those kind of things, and not everybody would agree but I think those things are a lot more important than the final marks and the final grades.

Lincoln affirms the fundamental importance of student happiness to enabling their learning and ongoing development. His learning has incorporated an understanding of the teaching practices he has developed to meet the needs of his adolescent students in conjunction with fostering positive relationships that are focused on the wellbeing of the whole student.

4.3.2 Interpersonal context: happiness and collegial relationships

Lincoln's personal professional learning reflects his pastoral care philosophy, which was guided by his relationships with students, parents and colleagues. His reflections on certain incidents indicate the importance he places on individual developmental growth and unique contextual learning needs.

He perceives parents' desires to ensure their child's happiness as aligned with his teaching focus. He feels this balance towards wellbeing threatened, however, with the publication of results that produce a competitive teaching environment, and feels it is detrimental in that it places greater pressure on both students and teachers:

I've just kind of learnt over time that if my kids go home happy and they like being in my class and their results aren't as good as other kids then, as much as people think that parents are going to be

extremely upset, the parents are like “well yet you could do better but we’re happy that you’re happy”. ... I would hate to teach to an assessment task and I’d hate to spoon-feed the kids like that and not make them learn and do that.

During his career Lincoln maintained his philosophical approach, in line with parental concern for their child’s happiness, and developed these relationships to value learning beyond assessment results. He developed a clear vision of classroom teaching that maintained his pastoral focus and identified learning requirements based on student needs. Additionally, he focused on relationships with other teachers that enabled collaborative learning through a collegial environment. He recognised the learning value of being able to approach colleagues, share ideas and experiences:

I share an office with a first year out person and I say “Hey I am doing this in class” and they say “oh that’s so good”. And having a collegial environment where I can go to other people and say this is what I’m doing in class and people say ‘oh that’s really good’.”

Lincoln’s confidence in his learning approach enabled him to promote cooperative learning with his peers and to attempt new teaching practices in a collegial environment. Furthermore, he maintained confidence in his teaching approach through a mutual understanding with parents of concerns about student learning:

I think just coming back to the competitiveness and insecurity. People think if the kids in my class don’t do as well as compared to other kids then parents are going to come in and complain. ... And I think people are worried that that’s going to happen and it might be self-perpetuating.

He promoted pastoral care in the relationships he developed with students, parents and colleagues. His teaching focused on student learning needs, fostering a mature relationship with students and successfully motivating them to take personal responsibility in directing their learning:

So I'm finding with boys at the moment that I'm giving them autonomy and responsibility and a say in how the class runs and things like that and they really appreciate that. ... And so regardless of whether they like the subject, they still like being in the room.

Such experiences throughout Lincoln's story emphasise the importance of interpersonal aspects for both his students and his own learning. He continually emphasises the pivotal nature of student happiness and wellbeing and expresses professional satisfaction through the pastoral care responsibilities in his assistant coordinator and boarding master roles. In particular, he acknowledges the importance of supporting students at risk:

Just to see somebody able to say, "I can really reach you just by acknowledging what I can see" ... A big thing was not to say "I understand how you feel", because I can't understand how you feel, but to be able to say "you must be really under a lot of pressure right now, you must be really hurting right now, you must be very sad" and just the acknowledgment that that's okay, that kind of thing.

Lincoln values his ability to recognise the pressures and difficulties of a student's unique situation even when his personal experience is different. Significantly, he has developed relationships that encourage positive choices for ongoing student learning and guide students in making decisions about their future goals, even though contributions of this sort can be difficult to quantify:

It's more than being a teacher isn't it, it's what kind of person you are to them and maybe what I did wasn't the role of the teacher, but as a teacher I had the ability to be a part of that ... It's not like a sales job where you can say you've got a 4 percent increase in sales this quarter well done, well it doesn't really work like that.

For Lincoln, the summative measurement of learning outcomes does not encapsulate the formative influence on student development of fostering relationship. He focuses on the manifold impacts of his teaching in being able to influence his students' future directions and happiness beyond the school environment.

4.3.3 Textual or spoken context: unfazed by challenges and universal differences

Lincoln uses metaphor as well as colloquial terminology to communicate emotion and to enliven the contextual meaning of his experiences.

He uses colloquial terms, such as “like”, which draw on an adolescent context and invite a sympathetic understanding of the secondary school context. His frequent use of the idea of not being “fazed” indicates Lincoln’s view of learning, which requires a perception of challenges as opportunities and encompasses the resilience he aims to develop in his adolescent students:

It really doesn't faze me.

Like I wasn't really fazed by that, so “I think I can do that”.

If that doesn't work then that's a lesson learned and something that you can work on next time, and that doesn't really faze me ... You know throw something at me it doesn't matter.

Lincoln's ability not to be fazed indicates that, for him, creating a challenging situation provides the impetus for developing confidence and so the opportunity for encouragement. He identifies his growth in confidence as integral to developing his expertise.

Metaphors of water are also used by Lincoln to represent the great depth of a challenge and that remaining buoyant is being able to meet the challenge or make use of the opportunity it offers:

Just really feeling like I'd been thrown in at the deep end and all that kind of stuff.

It was a really good atmosphere to work in as much as it was a bit of a sink or swim kind of thing.

Lincoln also uses metaphor to enhance the representation of his experiences of the people and places of differing environments. His experiential universe extends across the varied environments of his upbringing, through his early teaching years and his ongoing development in an independent private school. He represents the meaning of the people and situations across the instances of his experience to be as complex, all-encompassing and ever-expanding as a universe:

It was tough work and it was a different universe.

I've always said this it is a completely different universe to where I've come from.

He also negotiates his story to render self-understanding of his professional development and to allow reflexivity on his learning experiences. He recognises the opportunity for critical reflection through the narrative context of relating his experiences:

So hopefully, and I haven't really thought about it before ...

So not surprising, just reflecting on all the things that I've been saying ...

Lincoln's language reveals a need for self-reflection in order to enable his personal professional learning.

4.4 Chapter discussion

This section identifies the importance of the affective aspect of relationships in shaping Lincoln's personal professional development. Lincoln's belief in addressing the happiness and needs of the whole person are central to his learning. In this section I identify the importance of Lincoln's attitude to personal and professional challenges in his learning and discuss the influence of his interrelationships and the development of his self-understanding.

Lincoln's expertise developed in conjunction with his philosophy on education, which thus enabled a unique approach to his learning. His personal responsibility, interpersonal contacts, situational experiences and experiential reflection represented important orientations for the development of his personal practical knowledge. He specifically recognised that relationships with colleagues, students and parents across different sociocultural contexts were significant factors in shaping his personal professional learning. In this way, Lincoln's experience aligns with the development of teaching expertise as represented through personal and practical knowledge (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Elbaz, 1983; Fenstermacher, 1994).

Elbaz (1983) holds that teachers' attitudes and beliefs direct their personal practical knowledge towards their own social purpose. In my study, Lincoln's social purpose is clearly focused on making a difference to the lives of his students. He continually presented the happiness and wellbeing of the

individual as central to his teaching approach and the driver for his own learning, and he placed paramount importance on fostering relationships to positively impact his students' happiness. Several studies discuss the emotion embedded in a teacher's practice (Hamachek, 1999; Hargreaves, 1998; Nias, 1996). Hargreaves (1998) identifies a teacher's emotions and beliefs as central to their practice, relationships and learning. For Lincoln, the happiness of his students and his own happiness were central to his teaching and learning. He anecdotally emphasises that someone with "*the heart of the teacher*" is attuned to the "*unquantifiable*" aspects of development for the learner. The portrayal of the emotional attributes through Lincoln's story require articulation in the teaching expertise criteria I developed (refer to Appendix B.1) in order to extend the descriptors drawn from the literature and professional teaching standards. Collinson (2012b) recognises that the development of values and attitudes for exemplary teachers is a 'lifelong process' and calls for further investigation in understanding this influence of the lives of both their students and colleagues.

Lincoln's expertise developed through his relationships with colleagues, mentors and leaders. These professional relationships were empowering for Lincoln's development and the meaning he created from the associated learning. Leader and mentor recognition of Lincoln's capabilities developed his confidence. The support and encouragement offered through these opportunities was instrumental in enabling him to recognise his developing capabilities. He was able to identify with colleagues who provided exemplars for the practice he aspired to emulate, while the approaches of some teachers that were not allied to these exemplars enabled him to build confidence in his own competence. Furthermore, his interactions enable a realisation of competence in his early years of teaching and squash an assumption that years of experience equate to teaching expertise.

Consequently, this realisation boosts Lincoln's confidence and so encourages him to mentor colleagues in order to enhance their learning as well as his own learning. His story is indicative of narrative research that provides a critical understanding of the temporal aspect of a teacher's 'embodied knowledge' (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Teacher narrative reveals this knowledge in the unfolding of relationships and the significance associated with their practice and their learning:

Thus, narrative authority becomes the expression and enactment of a person's personal practical knowledge that develops as individuals learn to authorize meaning in relationship with others. (Craig, 2011, pp. 26-27)

Lincoln demonstrated that learning through sharing of expertise was essential for his development. Collinson (2012a) holds that exemplary secondary school teachers continually pursue learning and select colleagues with whom to work, and would change schools to do both of these. This finding is also illustrated in my research: Lincoln actively sought to develop his practical knowledge through good collegial relationships across different situations over time. His learning occurred through teaching a broad range of secondary curriculum subjects and experiencing a range of school structures and roles. Lincoln's experience within two vastly different school communities developed his understanding of distinct sociocultural and economic issues. Lincoln's portrayal of the development of his personal practical knowledge as incorporating his understanding of contextually diverse school communities and the fostering of relationships with colleagues, students and parents, demonstrates a 'narrative authority' (Craig, 2011). Agne (1999) proposes that a teacher's caring is an orientation to attend to the wellbeing of others, which is balanced with a self-efficacy, a

propensity for independent problem-solving and taking responsibility for success and failure. Connelly and Clandinin (1999) see this articulated through narrative, when teachers:

express an aesthetic sense of being in the right place at the right time and of doing certain things according to satisfying temporal cycles. They express a sense of moral appropriateness of certain actions associated with spatial and temporal borders and how people position themselves on the landscape relative to these borders. (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999, p. 113).

During my research, Lincoln presented a 'right time, right place' attitude within his 'looking for something new' learning approach. He believes that the challenges of 'sink or swim' environments represent opportunities for learning. Tsui (2009) identifies that the development of teaching competence is dependent on a teacher's willingness to challenge their learning by attempting more complex tasks. Lincoln believes that his ability to meet challenges, to remain 'unfazed', has allowed him to develop his teaching expertise. His willingness to take risks and accept challenges as fortuitous opportunities speaks of a resilient self-confidence in his teaching and learning. He accepts both success and failure as necessary for learning.

Lincoln's reflection on his personal professional development has enabled him to deconstruct the meaning in his approach to teaching and learning. His self-understanding was affirmed when he read his constructed story and my subsequent narrative analysis. His email response was as follows:

Thank you for this, I loved reading it. I feel like sending it to my mum, and to my friends who don't know 'the teacher'. I think it gave a really true picture of who I am as a teacher – when I was reading it I was thinking it should be my résumé. I felt like I would want to work

for a principal who would read that and say "That's the kind of person I want in my school".

Teacher narrative enables teachers to reflect on their experience and reveals a greater self-understanding through the 'interactive sense-making' (Kelchtermans, 2009) and the 'transactional' authority of their learning experience (Craig, 2011). Kelchtermans (2009) identifies the five components of a teacher's self-understanding as descriptive self-image, evaluative self-esteem, teaching task perception, job resolve or motivation, and future career perspective. These five components "are all intertwined and refer to each other" (Kelchtermans, 2009, pp. 261-263). In my research, Lincoln's personal professional learning journey proved to be indicative of the interaction between these five components. His narrative portrays the development of self-image and self-esteem as reciprocally interwoven with the changing perceptions of his teaching and leadership responsibilities, and the motivation for his future career aspirations.

Elbaz (1983) identifies a theoretical orientation as a teacher's application of theory in the context of their practical knowledge. Kelchtermans' (2009) 'subjective educational theory' identifies that the "personal system of knowledge and beliefs about education that teachers use when performing their job" is interwoven with the self-understanding that "teachers develop and use to interpret and make sense of the professional situations they find themselves in" (Kelchtermans, 2009, pp. 263-265). This interconnectedness is demonstrated in Lincoln's development of self-understanding along with the development of his personal teaching and learning philosophy.

Lincoln represents his teaching expertise as achieving an understanding of the learner and prioritising the development of each individual learner. Lovlie and Standish (2003) outline the concept of 'Bildung' within the

contemporary context of education as a form of self-transformation that emphasises individual responsibility for humanity. Attributes of Bildung are infused within Lincoln's attitudes and beliefs towards learning. This is exemplified in his care for each student and desire to improve each student's future life experiences and outcomes, though the students' life experiences are very different to his own. Nordenbo (2003) describes Bildung as occurring through a process in which one person presents an image or model that enables another person to develop into their own image. This is not purely a reflective process but rather an 'in camera' experience from which an individual may develop their uniquely characteristic model. Lincoln identified the 'caricature' of a teacher that he does not wish to emulate, but also recognised the attributes of an inspiring mentor who influenced his development in that he could be: *"and not exactly the same but I can operate a lot more like him"*. For Lincoln, selected mentors and colleagues presented an image of the teacher and leader that he was able to draw on and so use to develop his own pastoral care approach. He, in turn, modelled risk-taking and resilience for his students. He aimed to promote an independent and responsible attitude towards learning, and a love of learning in his students. He presented an image of the adaptable and experiential aspects of a lifelong learner for his students. Menck (2000) perceives the practicality of Bildung as allowing teachers to "distinguish the different areas of didactic reasoning [and] establish the connection between the achievements of humanity and culture on the one hand, and the young people in a society who have to adopt this culture on the other" (Menck, 2000, p. 18). Lincoln considers curriculum content of secondary importance to a consideration of the unique needs of the learner within the learning context. His own learning focuses on developing greater self-understanding in order to achieve personally fulfilling life goals.

Lincoln's willingness to accept challenges and his receptive approach to new experiences have created a broad developmental path rather than a planned career trajectory. His earliest estimation of his teaching strength was in the area of his university qualifications. Then his understanding was broadened through the development of his pedagogy across a range of curriculum content areas and ongoing incorporation of ICT into his practice. Lincoln's story is a unique version of developing technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) within a 'dynamic equilibrium' as outlined by Mishra and Koehler (2006, 2009). Lincoln's challenges of teaching content outside his formal qualifications and integrating ICT into his practice, were entwined with an ongoing development of pedagogical approaches underpinned by his philosophy of pastoral care. Collinson (2012a) and Fairman and Mackenzie (2012) identify a sustained commitment to learning in their studies of teacher leaders. They found exemplary teachers to be successful innovators and initiators in advancing their learning beyond curriculum content and pedagogical prowess (Collinson, 2012a; Fairman & Mackenzie, 2012). Typically, these teachers accept leadership responsibilities to extend their learning through reflecting on their teaching beliefs, sharing learning with colleagues, and developing "interpersonal skills and intrapersonal awareness" (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2012, p. 243). Lincoln's development of pedagogical prowess has been entwined with his development of pastoral care skills. His pedagogical innovation and shared learning with colleagues form part of his developing self-understanding. For Lincoln, pastoral care becomes central to the learning for his teaching practice and leadership responsibilities.

Lincoln has cultivated his teaching and learning philosophy based on the fostering of caring relationships and enabling learning for the development of the whole person. Collinson (2012a) identifies the significance of

relationships and the emotional aspects of learning in the development of teacher leaders, noting that their attitudes and beliefs encompass:

commitment to education, a love of learning, doing one's best, curiosity and open-mindedness ... healthy and supportive relationships to help others develop and to influence improvement, development of caring (empathy and respect), along with communication and collaborative skills. (Collinson, 2012a, p. 263)

Lincoln's personal professional development goal was to project his pastoral care influence from the classroom into a wider school environment.

However, his adoption of an administrative leadership position did not fit with his learning approach, which entailed personal happiness and fulfilment through relationships. His desire to resume a full-time classroom teaching role was hindered by financial considerations as well as an appreciation of the potential pastoral care leadership role that may stem from his administrative leadership role. Significantly, the risks and failures that Lincoln considered to be necessary for his learning were perceived to be at odds with his developmental aspirations for leadership in a pastoral care role. Frost (2012) argues that innovative strategies are needed to create professional development that addresses the learning needs of teacher leaders not appointed to specified leadership roles. The conflict for Lincoln's ongoing professional development lies in his efforts to sustain his learning approach within his classroom teaching while aligning to expectations of leadership that are inconsistent with his pastoral care vision.

The issues and possibilities for Lincoln's ongoing learning will be examined later in Chapter 10, along with those of the four other expert teachers who participated in my research. The next four chapters present the personal professional learning journeys of these teachers.

Chapter 5

Sally's experiential orientation: tangibility, feedback and self- regulation

5.1 Introduction

Central influences on Sally's personal professional learning journey are her relationships with mentors and colleagues. This chapter uses the same structure as in Lincoln's story and follows the same process for selecting quotes and creating the story, based on the aspects of narrative inquiry discussed in Chapter 3. This chapter provides a synopsis of Sally's story in the section 'Contributing to professional accomplishment – "hanging out with older more experienced staff"'. I identify her orientation towards her ability to address the competing demands of her teaching and leadership roles. I also explore two complicating actions for Sally and her subsequent reflections, which highlight a recognition of expertise in others and her aspirations to leadership while quelling feelings of being 'a fraud' in her role. I then provide the story coda, which identifies Sally's ongoing developmental needs for learning and teaching that are tangible and experiential.

After presenting Sally's story, I interpret the narrative mode of storytelling, as described in Chapter 3. For Sally, I analyse the context and meaning of experiential learning, specific role model mentors and her

expressions of doubt in relation to teacher leader roles. In the chapter discussion I examine the meaning Sally ascribes to the tangibility, feedback and self-regulation of her learning experiences and their relevance to her personal professional development, and critique my findings in terms of their alignment with the literature.

5.2 Sally's story

5.2.1 Contributing to professional accomplishment – “hanging out with older, more experienced staff”

Sally has taught personal development, health and physical education (PDHPE)⁵ at junior and senior secondary school levels since 2000. Her experience encompasses teaching in various school contexts in both outer metropolitan and regional coastal areas. She taught in a New Zealand boarding secondary school, an Australian private boarding school, and government secondary schools. Sally differentiated between her initial boarding school teaching and the government school environments she attended as a student, with her first “tough” teaching role at a government school:

I think that sort of made me realize that I was quite competent with really challenging kids. ... I found the private school kids quite frustrating, with lack of respect for equipment and things like that. Whereas at the outer metropolitan high school it was, you know they valued a tennis ball but yet they couldn't say a sentence that didn't have 'F U' in it, kind of thing.

⁵ Refer to Glossary: Key Learning Area (KLA) within the Australian curriculum.

Sally valued the redeeming qualities of these challenging students. Her empathy increased her confidence in dealing with challenging students and also reinforced her ability to cope with this teaching environment.

She accepted her first full-time role in an Australian government secondary school after a chance meeting with David, a former teacher and touch football coach she knew from her own schooling. She commenced teaching within a faculty with David as her PE head teacher. Sally successively moved into two relieving roles, firstly as a PE head teacher and then as a relieving deputy head teacher.⁶ She was aware of the value of the relationships she fostered with like-minded teachers at this school in her nine years up to 2012:

And so having a lot of friends that are teachers, in an informal context you bounce things off each other. ... So I'm sort of hanging out with older more experienced staff and that has I think contributed to me becoming, not an expert, but I guess, maybe highly accomplished.⁷

Sally acknowledges a degree of accomplishment in her profession yet she is reticent to accept an expert label. She emphasises the value of sharing teaching experiences and notes that her continual learning required cultivating collegial and collaborative relationships with more experienced peers.

⁶ Refer to Glossary: Coordinator, head teacher and other promotional classifications within Australian schools.

⁷ Refer to Glossary: NSW Institute of Teachers accreditation and standards.

5.2.2 Balancing responsibilities and relationships – “I should make a more conscious effort in devoting my attention to that group of kids”

The constant multitasking requirements of her teaching and leadership responsibilities were challenging for Sally. She taught across the junior and senior secondary school campuses of a government school, requiring a drive of approximately ten minutes between campuses, while acting as the relieving deputy head teacher at the junior campus.

Sally acknowledges a conscious need to learn to remain on task, grappling with a need to focus on her classroom practice and balance the various demands of her combined roles:

I know that I'm a strong teacher and I have great relationships with kids. Sometimes I have too many things going on and that affects the class in that I might be five minutes late, or we've got to pack up five minutes early because I've got to bolt somewhere to the other school and things like that.

Central to Sally's teaching approach is developing an understanding of students so she could provide them contextually relevant activities. She learnt to integrate her assessment of student learning needs and build student motivation. This approach allowed her to address the challenge of maintaining interest for her Year 10 students⁸ towards the end of the school year:

I actually ask the kids “Look this is the situation we're in. It can go down the behaviour path and where I tell you what to do and you don't do it and I'll follow the policy and we both end up unhappy. Or

⁸ Refer to Glossary. Record of School Achievement (RoSA)

you can give me two options and we'll create a program or a lesson structure to get us through to the end of the year that actually has some relevance for you and me."

Sally negotiated alternatives with students in order to promote shared curiosity and to encourage responsibility for their learning and behaviour. Her approach to student behaviour and discipline issues relied on her ability to negotiate and articulate clear alternatives to enable student behavioural change:

I say this constantly "I will not wrap you up in cotton wool, get over it, this is what's going to happen, this is why it has to happen" ... I don't know how to put it [pause], it's not breaking them but I don't know whether it's just being really honest and almost letting them see that I'm human.

Sally advocates a positive reframing of situations with each new context. She recognises that, developmentally, students often require time to appreciate the consequences of their actions and the emotional assistance to develop an understanding of their responsibilities as they mature.

Sally's learning encompasses her teaching and behaviour management approach to address adolescent learner needs. She identifies the complexity of balancing these relationships in order to develop responsible and responsive learners. Sally's need to apply better time management to address her diverse responsibilities in teaching and coordination roles presents for her a substantial learning curve.

5.2.3 Recognising expertise – "just watching him be a head teacher and teach"

Sally has been able to observe role models and mentors and to draw on their experience to support her in recognising her capabilities and motivations.

Mentors have provided Sally with experiential learning opportunities through her coordination and leadership roles.

David's impetus for employing Sally in 2003 was the rapport they developed when he was her sports coach and she was a school student. David, as the newly appointed deputy head teacher, acknowledged Sally's readiness for a new learning experience by offering her the relieving PDHPE head teacher role, which she welcomed:

So I went "yeah alright", flumed my way through the first term of that and then I guess sort of realised that that's the direction I wanted to go. And there wasn't really that much professional development then, it was sort of learning on the job.

Sally moved in and out of this PDHPE coordinator role, developing at the same time a strong working relationship with her next head teacher, Gerard. The value for Sally was both the mentor-mentee relationship and the chance to extend her capacity to take on a PDHPE head teacher position when Gerard took blocks of leave:

I would just step up straight away ... I would say I can't narrow it down to one specific thing but having Gerard mentoring me in that way really made me think ... to get me to verbalise why I was doing things. And, I guess, that made me realise that it is my purpose, I feel like it is my purpose.

Sally learnt to deal with issues in consultation with Gerard as her mentor. She cites one occasion when her principal proposed to remove sport from the Year 10 curriculum and Sally and Gerard worked together to formulate a reasoned argument to retain it:

He made sure that everything I had a supporting or justification for

all my arguments of "no, you can't do this and it's wrong and this is why it's wrong" and that kind of thing so that one sticks out.

Sally appreciated the intricacies of school policy for teacher leaders, and working on this with her mentor influenced her professional learning direction. Her professional learning and mentoring experiences concentrated on the pedagogical aspects of leadership in order to address her career goals.

The unique rapport and professional friendship evident in Sally's relationship with Gerard was different to that with other mentors. Through another mentor, Tony, who was a head teacher in different curriculum area, Sally better understood matters such as legislation, the teacher's union and timetabling, *"More, I guess, wisdom and what not to do with stuff that people just assume you know"*. Yet this mentor-mentee relationship was not to last:

I was running a game at the end of last term, 'capture the flag', and we ran down the back of Tony's specialist curriculum building to try and get the flag. And we were running through hallways or whatever, and he came down and absolutely sprayed me deluxe, went off. I never would've thought that would've happened but he just went berserk. And so then I thought "well there goes that relationship" but then school started back and everything's been fine, it was bizarre.

Sally's bewilderment at this incident led her to distance herself from Tony and she did not pursue a more personal professional relationship with him. She stored the incident as an exemplar of behaviour she would not model as a leader.

5.2.4 Aspiring to lead while quelling the imposter – “sometimes I feel like a bit of a fraud”

The temporary nature of Sally’s relieving roles provided an ongoing dissonance to her leadership aspirations although she was able to enrich her learning through a variety of mentor-mentee relationships.

Her observations of each mentor’s teaching practice and leadership behaviour enabled her to create her leadership style, clearly conscious of the positive attributes that she needed to develop for herself as well as the negative aspects she did not want to emulate. She described her learning in relation to the specific incident with Tony:

I think I file it away for a little while. Then I think about it. Then I think about, I actually put myself in the position of being a principal, and how I would treat my staff like after that experience with Tony. First thing I’ve learned is that you never confront another teacher in front of kids like he did. ... I guess I test it out a little bit and see whether that is part of who I am, and if it works or doesn’t work, then I go from there.

Sally’s critique of her colleagues and selected mentors provided a focus for her ongoing learning, allowing her to adopt aspects that aligned with her own personality and teaching approach.

Paramount for Sally’s ongoing learning was the inspirational leadership of particular mentors. Sally’s observations of a role model confirmed her aspirations to leadership:

In 2009 we had a relieving principal [David] who ... actually was a really inspiring principal. Our principal has come back this year. Whilst he’s a nice guy and everything like that, I have really noticed that he hasn’t inspired me ... I guess I look at him and I think ‘make

sure you don't ever do that when you're a principal', like I'm conscious of the negative with him. Whereas the other one I was looking at, everything just seemed to be a positive, pretty much, not everything but on a whole. So that's probably the only other thing that I would add to my development is having someone above that is inspirational.

Sally developed her teaching philosophy through exploring insights and judgements in her mentee-mentor relationships, which led her to continue a mentoring relationship with Gerard outside of the school environment upon his retirement:

I made a conscious decision to say "right, we can't just sever all ties all of a sudden. I've got this that I want to work towards and I do actually need your help". And he was more than happy ... but we were conscious in making sure that we did have regular contact, leading up to his relinquishing of the position.

This relationship provided an enduring friendship and the support to reflect on her ongoing choices. Her personal professional learning continued through informal discussions with Gerard, to address teaching and leadership issues as they occurred.

Yet, despite the confidence she had developed in her teaching, Sally felt a 'fraud' in her various leadership positions due to their temporary nature:

I don't know, sometimes I feel like a bit of a fraud and maybe that's because I'm constantly relieving.

Well, no not a fraud but well sort of, no just in that I'm a relieving deputy and I just think it's hilarious because technically I'm still only

on \$65,000.⁹

Yeah so, I know I'm not a fraud, I know I'm capable and everything like that but it just cracks me up that I'm a relieving head teacher, a relieving deputy, it just makes me laugh.

Sally's career movement between government and non-government schools had in fact resulted in a slower progression through the salary scale. This contrasted to the additional remuneration she received for the higher duties of the leadership role. However, Sally could not resolve feelings of being a fraud when undertaking a relieving leadership role. She hesitated to articulate why she represented herself as a fraud even though other faculty members acknowledged her capability. Yet, despite these feelings, Sally expressed confidence in her way forward.

5.2.5 Ensuring learning is tangible – “sequential and more frequent, it's more beneficial and has more meaning”

Tangible learning has been significant for the ongoing development of Sally's leadership career, yet developing school initiatives that provide tangible learning experiences for students has been challenging. Sally envisioned replacing one-off activity days with embedded practical programs across the curriculum that would represent more frequent, sequential and meaningful learning for students:

I'm lucky in the school that I'm in that I have a strong relationship with the senior executive and I can pretty much do whatever I like, they do understand that that's my purpose ... I guess, sequential and more frequent, it's more beneficial and has more meaning.

⁹ Refer to Glossary: Coordinator, head teacher and other promotional classifications within Australian schools.

Her learning ideal incorporates tangible, sequential and more frequent activities that integrate risk-taking within the school curriculum in order to address the needs of adolescent learners.

Sally's experience growing up and the relationships within her school community continued to be influential on her teaching practice and professional learning:

I think it's because of that community feel and the way that I was brought up in my school and seeing teachers outside of school at touch football and stuff like that. That's what I have at my current school and that's what I want my career to look like or to have.

Valued interpersonal relationships have been constant throughout Sally's career path. Her influential mentors have challenged her to reflect more deeply on her learning and she has continued to search for role models and mentors:

I think I really need to find a principal that can now mentor me into being a principal. I definitely need ... to find, and you can't just find it but I hope that I do, another mentor while I'm in the school setting. Because that immediate feedback and things like that really helps your learning and your development.

Sally recognises her ongoing need for more immediate feedback within the context of her current experiences.

Sally was unsuccessful in obtaining a deputy principal role for the start of 2012, with another person appointed in a relieving capacity:

So I learnt from that one and spent the first term getting my CV ready for the actual position.

She learnt from her failure and was then successful in her permanent appointment as deputy principal:

Well that position came up and I was successful in being appointed substantively to that. I think because I had relieved for so long it was like I was moving sideways rather than moving forward ... So I was in the right place at the right time ... I'm actually no longer in the classroom but I will be next year. I'm going to timetable myself a class so I can keep my skills up but I've progressed.

Sally's enthusiasm and vigour are ignited by the possibility of continuing to learn and teach in her chosen school.

5.3 Narrative modes of storytelling

This section provides a narrative interpretation of Sally's personal professional learning journey as evident in the ideational, interpersonal, and textual or spoken contexts of story (Riessman, 2002). Fundamental within the ideational context is Sally's revelation of her need for ongoing learning and the confidence developed through her experience. She emphasises that appropriate mentee-mentor relationships and the building of similar relationships with her students was essential in the interpersonal context of her learning. In the textual or spoken context, her terminology displays the doubts she feels in acknowledging her expertise.

5.3.1 Ideational context: ongoing experiential learning

Sally emphasises the need for experiential learning that is contextually relevant for both her own learning and her teaching, as well as a need to support her practice with theory.

She experienced a substantial learning curve in taking on leadership responsibilities while continuing to teach, revealing the dynamic nature of her learning within the context of each new role:

You don't actually stop learning. And it wasn't that I'd made a conscious effort to stop learning but once I made a conscious effort to learn again [pause] I think I realised that when you start learning you realise how much there is to actually learn.

Sally willingly sought new experiential learning for herself in her teaching and leadership roles, and endeavoured to provide contextually relevant learning experiences for her students through practical and developmentally sensitive pedagogy. She identified the hallmark of pedagogical expertise as consistently maximising student learning through recognising each student's capabilities, context, readiness and existing understanding:

I think that's what an expert can do on a regular basis, more so than just a one-off fluky lesson or a fluky presentation, they do it consistently.

Sally emphasises that learning requires consistently orchestrated pedagogical expertise.

The practical nature of Sally's PDHPE teaching centred on the need for tangible experiences that integrate risk-taking into students' learning. Her understanding of meaningful learning includes the notion that adolescent brains crave risk-taking and that this is necessary for their development into adulthood:

I guess in the nature of what we do, and especially high school, the kids want to take risks. And I try and give them a risk-taking environment with a degree of safety attached to it by taking them to

the snow or to a remote area or whatever but in actual fact it's a controlled environment.

Sally advocates experiential learning to encourage students to make personally responsible choices.

Sally has also sought to underpin her practice with theory, so in 2011 she completed two subjects of a Master's degree focused on school leadership. She responded to the intellectual stimulation and was motivated by the prospect of learning about the pedagogical aspects of leadership that interested her:

I did it because I am interested in it, and I actually sort of crave stimulation and things like that ... it was more that hopefully I find things to read and sink my teeth into that I'm interested in.

Her understanding developed through both philosophical investigations with mentors and the intellectual demands of tertiary study.

Sally places importance on continuing her classroom teaching along with the responsibilities of her current leadership role:

I hate being stuck in this office. I'm always joining in on different lessons and making sure that I'm not always stuck with the naughty kids. So it's really important for me to have a class. I'm just conscious of the fact that sometimes you do get held up. So I need to make sure that I do it in a way that it's not going to impact on the actual class itself.

Significant for Sally was the continued development of her pedagogical understandings of leadership and teaching practice, and fostering relationships with all students while in her leadership role.

5.3.2 Interpersonal context: rapport and mentoring relationships

Significant for Sally is her learning with mentors, colleagues and students. Her mentoring relationships have been dependent on personally selected and professionally aligned colleagues who are able to foster her professional learning:

In terms of a relationship based on teaching it would be those that have a similar belief to me with regards to kids and education and that kind of thing.

Sally values colleagues with similar teaching philosophies and seeks mentors from different areas of expertise. She identifies their qualities of leadership and the relevance they hold contextually for her learning. The most influential of her mentee-mentor relationships was with Gerard:

He actually really developed my philosophy of education I would say. ... A lot of reflective stuff he would do with me and really make me think "well, am I doing it just for the sake of doing it or is there an actual purpose?" and that kind of stuff. So it wasn't development, like, sitting down and him teaching me how to do a budget, I knew all that. It was more the deeper side of leading a faculty.

Sally contextualises much of her story around the influence of mentors. Her experience as a student with David as her sports coach provided a continuity for her professional mentee-mentor relationships. Her unique learning with Gerard reinforced her choice of a leadership path. This influential relationship supported her realisation over time that teaching is her purpose in life, and she valued being able to reflect on her motivations and her decision-making with Gerard. Justifying her actions on student learning also led her to think more deeply about the inspiration for her teaching and leadership approach.

Sally also engaged in the more practical context of her work requirements, such as reviewing documents or CVs, with a small group of colleagues. However, she preferred individualised interactions as they provided greater opportunity for feedback that was straightforward and personally relevant:

Probably really honest feedback ... So obviously it was immediate feedback in the majority of cases and I think that's really important.

Her learning through mentoring relationships and in small professional community groups relied on situated experiences. The contextual nature of the feedback addressed her learning needs as well as allowing a mutual respect to develop within the mentee-mentor relationship.

Sally also expresses confidence in accessing her existing network of colleagues as mentors in leadership roles:

I've got a couple of friends who are principals in other schools and I'm conscious of consuming their time but I know that I've got a strong base. I haven't really accessed it yet.

She recognises the value of maintaining connections with her leadership colleagues but also acknowledges the time constraints for her continued learning.

Sally's mentee-mentor relationships have mirrored her relationships with her students. She appreciates her ability to build rapport with students, seeing this as central to their learning within the classroom and through extracurricular activities:

I can build a rapport with a student really quick. Once I have some connection with them, be it a similarity in, I don't know, the type of sport they play or if I can find something that we can relate to, then that has helped with my experiences inside the classroom. So I'd

definitely put down that I can build rapport and connect with kids.

She believes that understanding her students' interests has enabled her to build rapport and encourage them in their learning, and she endeavours to further her understanding of adolescent learner needs in order to motivate them to learn.

5.3.3 Textual or spoken context: language of doubt

In the words she used during my research, Sally reflected an uncertainty regarding the relevance of her answers and sometimes questioned whether she was the appropriate person to put forward such answers.

Her continual use of 'I don't know' (which appears 74 times in the transcript) and 'I guess' (32 times) suggest some uncertainty. Admittedly, these terms may also have represented a colloquial idiom for Sally, or a pause to reflect on her statements while speaking. At other times, she seemed to be attempting to link several ideas in more of a cause and effect manner. She used the term 'conscious of' 13 times and 'conscious effort' 3 times in reflecting on her understanding of her actions and those of her colleagues and mentors.

Sally also used several phrases to ensure clarity and mutual understanding. She checked that her comments 'make sense' or are 'right' in terms of the ideas discussed: *"Only that it's probably more of a worry, I don't know if I'm the right person. I don't know if I'm answering everything."* This may have been for interviewer clarification to ensure relevance to the research. She also sought clarification that her learning experiences were suitable examples of developing expertise and revealed her underlying feelings of being a 'fraud'. Her uncertainties appeared to stem from the relieving nature of her coordination and leadership roles, and whether to present her experience as an example to others. Her doubts, however, may have

stemmed from a reticence due to unfamiliarity with a research interview situation.

5.4 Chapter discussion

In this section I analyse the learning that occurred for Sally through the influence of mentors in contextually significant spaces over time. I examine the centrality of her experiential orientation, in which the need for feedback on tangible experiences drives her self-regulated learning. The opportunity for reflection on concrete experiences allows for the meta-cognition necessary for this mode of experiential learning, as proposed by Kolb and Kolb (2009). Finally, I consider the importance of developing self-confidence and overcoming fraudulent feelings within Sally's personal professional development.

Sally identifies selected mentors as 'expert', attributing her learning to the modelling and sharing of their experience. Many research studies (Long et al., 2012; Roberts, 2000; Schwille, 2008; Steinke & Putnam, 2011; Tsui, 2009) focus on learning and mentoring within formal induction programs. Often "highly successful veteran teachers" (Tsui, 2009, p. 422) have the responsibility for mentoring novice teachers. These studies are relevant to my investigation of Sally's learning in that her mentoring experiences have supported the development of her practical classroom approach and teaching philosophy.

Schwille's (2008) study of novice teachers identifies a temporal dimension for various forms of mentoring. She describes 'inside the action' interactions of mentors stepping into the practice of mostly pre-service novices as different from 'outside the action' mentoring typically conducted with induction-year novices when reflecting on teaching activities (Schwille, 2008). In my research, Sally's mentoring occurred 'outside the action'

through the modelling and informal discussion evident in her coaching-styled relationships with colleagues. She valued the understanding gained from expert mentors who articulated and explored incidents and so provided insights for her learning. She perceived the development of her expertise in her teaching practice and leadership development as entwined with the reflection afforded to her as a mentee.

Sally's mentoring was not part of a professional development program but relied on informal relationships that addressed her specific learning needs. While there is little literature on mentoring for accomplished teachers such as Sally, parallels in her learning can be drawn from the research addressing mentoring for teacher inductees. Long et al. (2012) highlight that mentoring of beginning teachers should move "towards conceptualizing the development of becoming a new teacher as a process" (Long et al., 2012, p. 19). In my research, Sally reported continually experiencing a process of becoming in undertaking each new role responsibility with the support of her mentors. In relation to her case, even though she is not a new teacher, the findings of Long et al. (2012) illustrate the connection between self-understanding and mentoring that she experienced in her learning.

Sally's professional aspirations, along with her personal choice of mentors, were significant in forming her approach to learning and her process of becoming. She aligns her idea of a mentor with a friend who shares a similar disposition in their teaching approaches. Studies on teacher mentoring within designated curriculum areas have highlighted the unique interpersonal requirements of specialist teachers (Hardre, Nanny, Refai, Ling, & Slater, 2010; Steinke & Putnam, 2011). In one professional learning program "mentoring style interacted with teachers' expectations and individual differences" (Hardre et al., 2010, p. 173). In my research, Sally

developed mutually respectful relationships with colleagues in order to share task-oriented learning and deeper philosophical discussion on teaching and leadership responsibilities. Steinke and Putnam (2011) argue that the collaborative nature of a situational mentoring approach addresses the individually specific learning needs of specialist teachers better than those of more traditional mentoring programs. Similarly, my research found that Sally's engagement with mentors as role models for both her teaching practice and leadership responsibilities represented more informal, collaborative relationships. The support network of mentors and colleagues in her school community was a determining factor in Sally developing her career. She relied on the experience of her mentors to determine the benchmarks and the preparation necessary for her learning.

Sally's context and experiential orientation were also central to her learning. She created meaning for her personal professional development through the immediacy of the setting for her learning through observations of and feedback from mentors. Her chosen school was a community space similar to that of her own time as a student and represented the teaching and leadership context she sought for her continued development. She required tangible experiences and so undertook challenges in her teaching practice and leadership development as the opportunities presented themselves. The orientation for Sally's learning is replicated in the context and experiential focus for her students' learning. In her own words, her students required tangible experiences that were "*sequential and more frequent [as] it's more beneficial and has more meaning*". My findings support those of Elbaz (1983), who identifies the contextual significance of time and space within the experiential orientation of a teacher's practical knowledge. This orientation is evident in a teacher's attention to their experience in terms of time as a commodity as well as a setting, and also their awareness of space as an

enclosure as well as an intellectual affordance "onto the spaces of others" (Elbaz, 1983, pp. 125-126).

Reflection and self-regulation have been central to Sally's experiential learning approach. Her mentoring relationships allowed her to develop her teaching philosophy and leadership aspirations, and her formal university study and professional development courses provided opportunities for critical reflection. Dewey and Archambault (1964) argue that reflective thinking is an educational aim because it represents genuine intellectual freedom for individuals to deliberate on their experience. Zimmerman's (2002) studies on achieving academic excellence through self-regulation identify the need for ongoing goal orientation and self-monitoring in conjunction with regular feedback. In my research, Sally noted that her need for immediate and personally contextual feedback created a self-regulated cycle of learning. Mentoring relationships allowed an integration of the experience of her chosen colleagues with their feedback on her own performance to create new understanding for her. Swaffield (2008) identifies dialogue as central to critical friendships that are based on "trust, provocative questioning, an alternative perspective, constructive critique and advocacy" (Swaffield, 2008, p. 323). Similarly, this type of reflection and feedback within a self-regulated learning approach allowed Sally to develop self-understanding.

Over nine years, Sally was unresolved in her feelings of being a 'fraud' in leadership roles. However, she accepted the responsibilities and challenges of a permanent teaching role with the various temporary leadership appointments. In contrast to Lincoln's revelation of competence, Sally's ongoing relieving roles engender a sense of 'acting' that initially stifles self-acknowledgement of her expertise. Although she trusted more 'experienced'

colleagues for her mentoring, she came to rely on a selection of other colleagues who influenced her development and encouraged her to grow more confident in her developing expertise. The development of self-confidence may allow this shift from perceptions of fraud to an accepted professional modesty. Collinson (2012a) identifies that attribute of humility as essential for teacher leaders in their learning, with humility being seen as incorporating taking risks, accepting mistakes, asking for assistance and continually investigating experiences:

It is possible that humility, coupled with the teachers' desire to develop themselves and others, allows them to use retrospective and prospective reflection advantageously; that is, to analyse in retrospect and then imagine and implement prospective, ameliorative actions ... Supported by the development of strong communication skills (non-verbal, verbal and written) and intellectual ability to provide reasoning and evidence, humility appears critical to learning and leading. (Collinson, 2012a, p. 263)

My findings align with Collinson (2012a) in that I consider humility as central to Sally's learning as a teacher leader. Essentially, her humility has allowed her to request support throughout her ongoing investigation of her experiences. Her learning has incorporated continual adjustments in her practice and continual articulation of pedagogical justifications for her leadership approach. At various points, Sally gained affirmation from her colleagues that she was capable of leadership. She developed self-confidence and accepted a view of herself as an 'accomplished' teacher. However, it was through her ongoing self-study and reflection on the feedback of others that she eventually accepted her leadership capabilities and aspirations. Sally's personal professional development demonstrates that this process of

becoming a teacher continues beyond a teacher's pre-service and induction years. A mentor in fact suggested that Sally participate in my study due to her ongoing self-reflective learning approach. Sally commented on this during the phone interview:

I think because he recognised that I was continually trying to find ways to improve what I do and perhaps a bit of self-reflection and reflection on how things have progressed would help me in that. I think also out of a desire to help you and just for a different way to reflect on how I'm progressing professionally.

Sally's self-understanding incorporates a self-confidence in her capabilities and aspirations for leadership. Her experiential orientation shows a progression in learning focus from her classroom-specific pedagogy to strategically creating tangible learning experiences across a school community. Sally describes 'learning on the job' as a series of practically oriented experiences during her early teaching years. Her subsequent mentoring in leadership responsibilities supported her ongoing belief in the importance of experience. She realised there was always more to learn, as evident in her ongoing learning of leadership responsibilities. Her experience is similar to those of other exemplary teachers as described Collinson (2012a):

they did not intend to become teacher leaders; they became leaders as their learning became valuable to others. Then, as leaders, the teachers discovered that they still have much to learn and that leading affords many new possibilities for learning. (Collinson, 2012a, p. 264)

My research found that Sally effectively addresses the constant challenge of the multitasking required in combining teaching and leadership roles. She looks to her existing leadership network of colleagues to continue to learn

from within her newly gained permanent leadership role. Her approach to her learning ensures that she plans to continue to maintain a teaching role along with her leadership role and so she continues to benefit from learning across both roles.

In this chapter, I have represented the contextual significance of Sally's learning through a narrative interpretation of her story, and I have indicated the influence of mentoring as a significant factor in shaping her personal professional development. My research suggests that self-regulation and an experiential orientation are central to Sally's approach to learning, and that Sally's development of self-understanding has relied on a growth in self-confidence in her teaching and leadership capabilities.

Poekert (2012) characterises teacher leaders as interacting with and influencing colleagues and school communities in order to improve student achievements in learning. Teacher leader development requires ongoing learning through professional collaboration that is logically linked to practice and curriculum (Poekert, 2012). In my research, Sally has shown herself to be a teacher leader focused on her students and school community. Her professional development revolves around her practice and leadership responsibilities. She collaborates with selected mentors and her PE faculty as well as coordinating PE head teacher meetings for her region. At different times and to varying degrees, Sally demonstrates the 'learning by doing' approach identified by Collinson (2012a). This approach includes:

team teaching with mentors or colleagues; finding external support from the local community, and through professional, vocational or academic partnerships; changing schools to work with exemplary colleagues in a new setting; observing colleagues in 'any possibility they can envision'; serving on committees to broaden their

understanding of issues at a regional, state and national levels;
participating in professional organisations to investigate innovations
and collegial support; and providing professional development at an
individual, group or system level. (Collinson, 2012a, pp. 257-262)

Sally's unique approach to her learning has allowed her to construct a meaningful understanding of her development of expertise in classroom pedagogy. She endeavours to continue to develop her classroom teaching abilities along with her strategic leadership capabilities.

The issues and possibilities of Sally's ongoing personal professional learning are discussed later in Chapter 10. The next three chapters present the personal professional learning journeys for Rosemary, Brenda and Ken respectively.

Rosemary's determined professionalism: resilience, pastoral care and professionalism

6.1 Introduction

Rosemary's story reveals the richness of her professional learning, experienced through teaching environments diverse in their economic and sociocultural context.

The first section of this chapter provides an overview of the diversity of teaching environments Rosemary has experienced. I identify her motivation for travel and ongoing incentives to seek a variety of experiences despite the stressful aspects of initiation into different teaching environments. Three complicating actions within her story reveal her commitment to ongoing evaluation throughout her learning journey. I explore her ability to preserve her self-esteem and resilience in her secondary school teaching across education systems internationally, then interrogate the development of her expertise in negotiating student and parent relationships within her teaching practice and in her head of boarding house responsibilities. Finally, I present her aspirations for new opportunities.

The second section of the chapter provides an interpretation of Rosemary's personal professional development through three contextual

aspects within her story: her beliefs about the learner, her attitudes to student pastoral care and sharing of collegial knowledge, and her focus on clues and conversations in her teaching and learning approach.

The chapter discussion then explores the concepts of resilience, pastoral care and life enrichment and considers how these concepts, as noted in the relevant literature, align with the findings regarding their meaning for Rosemary's personal professional development and learning.

6.2 Rosemary's story

6.2.1 International experiences – "I really wanted to try something different"

Rosemary commenced her career teaching secondary English literature in the north of England in 1996. Her teacher certification and initial three years of teaching took place in a metropolitan area in the north of England where she grew up. She then taught from 2001 to 2002 in the United States of America before returning home to England to take up a permanent teaching position for three years. Rosemary valued the culturally diverse environments she experienced as well as the exposure to a broader literature curriculum. In England, she fulfilled the responsibilities of English coordinator for junior secondary Years 7-9 and mentored student teachers. In 2005 she visited Australia, where she worked initially as a live-in nanny. She then accepted a full-time teaching position that allowed her to migrate to Australia.

In describing her career progression leading up to her migration to Australia, she noted:

I started applying for work because if you're from overseas you have to do some sort of course to work in the public school system here and

I couldn't get on this course because there was a waiting list and there was lots of red tape and so on, and I just started applying to private schools.

Rosemary gained employment at an independent boarding and day school for girls. She balanced a 60 percent teaching load with the one-point coordinator¹⁰ role for one of the school's three boarding houses for secondary students in Years 7-12. She learnt to navigate the administrative requirements of accreditation for her teaching in an independent secondary school in Australia. She initially achieved accreditation through the independent school teaching association in Australia:

I went through the accreditation of professional experience¹¹ last year and got that. And then ironically because I didn't realise that I had to, I wasn't told that with the 'new scheme teacher'¹² thing you have to register with the Institute of Teachers and go through professional competency¹³ so I'm actually doing that now.

Rosemary's lack of clarity regarding the subsequent completion of her mandatory accreditation with the NSW government professional body may in part be attributed to the disparate certification processes that have existed for teacher accreditation nationally, with different accreditation bodies¹⁴ run by either professional teaching organisations or government-mandated bodies.

¹⁰ Refer to Glossary: Coordinator, head teacher and other promotional classifications within Australian schools.

¹¹ Refer to Glossary: Independent Schools Teacher Accreditation Authority (ISTAA).

¹² Refer to Glossary: New scheme teacher.

¹³ Refer to Glossary: NSW Institute of Teachers levels of accreditation.

¹⁴ Refer to Glossary. Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL).

Rosemary's reflection on her initial teaching and her interest in gaining different life experiences motivated her to look beyond the metropolitan area in the north of England of her upbringing:

Oh well, the places I taught in England they were in the same rough area where I lived and where my family lived. I just wanted to see some different things and try living in different places. ... I could've just repeated myself over and over again at the same school or at a different school or whatever and it's just very, sort of dull, I guess. So I really wanted to try something different.

She was motivated to seek a variety of personal professional learning experiences in order to avoid the boredom she envisaged with the established structure of a traditional teaching role.

In describing the learning goals she set within her teaching practice, Rosemary said:

I'm doing the standard HSC¹⁵ English courses at the moment and I want to teach an advanced class and that's going to mean, I know some of the texts already but that's the thing will be making sure that my subject knowledge in those particular texts and units is definitely up to scratch.

Rosemary understands her need to reassess how to teach the syllabus content within different international contexts and to relate her understanding to student perspectives at the HSC level. She continues to draw on her early experiences as she negotiates the pastoral care of adolescent girls in her teaching and coordinator roles.

¹⁵ Refer to Glossary. Higher School Certificate (HSC).

6.2.2 Preserving self-esteem and resilience – “You just have to sort of keep carrying on really”

Rosemary developed resilience in environments that challenged her confidence in her teaching skills during the first nine years of her career. Rosemary felt that her practice primarily focused on behaviour management in her first teaching job in England. She described a lack of respect demonstrated by students:

There's a lot of power games, there's a lot of kids trying to distract you and a lot of kids arguing and trying to literally take control, tell everybody what the class is going to do today, very blatant and aggressive, just refusal to do stuff as well. I mean we had kids from really tough estates and it was just so ingrained in the culture outside the classroom to not do whatever you were asked and it wasn't like we were asking them to do anything unreasonable. ... At my first school the kids would call it torture and they'd all decide to torture a teacher and just as a group go out of their way to be as awful as possible, but that was a very rough estate, that was very rough.

Rosemary's experiences in this challenging environment constrained her teaching and thwarted her attempts to develop her practice. She acknowledges that the school management attempted to deal with difficult students, but she felt constrained in her dealings with consistently difficult students within the available school processes:

If there's so many expelled or permanently excluded it flags an OFSTED¹⁶ inspection and things like that. And basically if you kick a kid out permanently, they're just at home or on the streets or

¹⁶ Refer to Glossary. Office for Standards in Education Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED).

whatever and someone's got to deal with them, you can't just pass them around if they're really tough students.

However, this became a motivational impetus for Rosemary to travel and broaden her experience. Her choice to further her teaching practice in the United States of America presented a challenge in coping with the differences between education systems.

I found it was tough a lot of the time but it was more because of the way the system was organised. And I felt like I couldn't go with certain things that I thought the kids needed.

Rosemary felt her professional judgement, creativity and self-assurance in her teaching practice were limited by the use of packaged programs and prescribed performative measures in the United States of America. The system of mandated assessment processes and teaching procedures represented a tedious and repetitive school environment that she wished to avoid. Her teaching was required to utilise prescribed resources targeted for students at specified ability levels. Despite this, she attempted to assert her professional judgement:

I did try to work it out. In America it was so prescriptive. This lesson you're going to do this and read this story and answer those questions and give that worksheet, very much like that, every single thing. ... It was very incredibly controlled.

This experience significantly restricted Rosemary's professional creativity, and she felt her professional judgement was inhibited within such a prescribed system.

Rosemary also perceived that setting student achievement at such a low level did not encourage their learning. She experienced doubt about the influence of her practice on student progress:

I think soul destroying is too dramatic a term, but it did hit my self-esteem a bit. ... I wasn't sure what exactly I'd managed to make the kids learn.

Rosemary was negatively impacted by the lack of empowerment in her teaching practice, as well as unsupportive school management at that school. Yet she showed resilience in her professional acumen, maintaining a resolve in her teaching and learning approach by reasserting her professional judgement:

You just have to sort of keep carrying on really. You just pick it up again, you find whatever it is you're teaching and you just start thinking about that. And when you've got control about how you're going to teach something and then you can tailor it to a specific class of kids; then it helps out.

Rosemary remained optimistic about being able to influence her teaching of the curriculum and adapt her classroom practice to the learning needs of specific students. Her resilience in maintaining her self-esteem also nurtured self-confidence in her teaching practice. Her subsequent holiday travels then became her impetus to migrate to Australia.

6.2.3 Negotiating student and parent relationships – “it's another part of the job really”

Rosemary's focus changed with her teaching practice and professional learning at a school located within an affluent NSW metropolitan area. Her responsibilities broadened her understanding of the specific needs of adolescent girls within an Australian independent day and boarding school.

This independent school represented a very different environment, economically and socioculturally, from Rosemary's upbringing and previous teaching experiences. The day school students travelled between the school and both inner and outer metropolitan areas, while the boarding school students were from various regional rural areas of NSW as well as overseas. She recognised the individual differences across the diverse social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds of these adolescent girls:

They're on a massive learning curve when they get there especially when they're twelve years old and they come to boarding ... You've got international students, a lot from a variety of Asian countries ... These students come straight into preliminary HSC courses with no background in western education. Their English language skills are often quite low too. Most of them attend tutoring at language schools during the weekend. Their issues are we can't get them to put the light off because they're studying, or they get up at 5 am because the learning culture is so different and so intense and they're so into it.

Rosemary acknowledges the relationship complications associated with the distance separating the families of the boarding students. She further appreciates the effects of the variety of factors on each student's learning and the challenges for her teaching practice in addressing the difficulties experienced by these students in this environment.

At this school, Rosemary gained a deeper understanding of parent-daughter relationships and their implications for student learning. She learnt to cope with the emotional strains between parent, student and teacher that occur in this type of situation:

I deal with emotional parents as well in the boarding side of things but really, just to let them speak it all out because that sort of calms

them down just to get it all out. And then you try to explain very reasonably, exactly what really did go on because there's always a very interesting version of what actually happened gets told to the parents.

She understood the need to maintain candid and supportive relationships, and she approached difficult situations as opportunities for developing relationships between herself, her students and their parents.

Rosemary felt professionally and personally challenged from emotionally charged incidents and student complaints. She continued to develop her capacity to analyse such difficult situations, pragmatically reflecting on experiences in contrast to her previous teaching challenges:

When it happens I just say "here it is, the one for this year" ... you're upset as well because I would never behave in the way that has been reported or I would never say that or do that or whatever but you are sort of demonized in this home of one of your students. The first once or twice it happens in your career it can be upsetting but I've been doing this since 1997 so at a point you're just like it's another part of the job really.

Repeated experiences of this sort allowed Rosemary to develop a philosophical approach to her practice. She acknowledged the intensely personal aspect of developing relationships and recognised the associated professional risks, including experiencing frightening and uncivil personal attacks:

Well you feel very threatened because as well I think most people and the likes aren't used to that sort of level of attack or that sort of confrontation, people avoid it very much. But we're in a profession

where you get it right in the face and when it's coming it's really full force and harshly spoken accusations.

To negotiate such relationships, she relied on the resilience and self-confidence she developed through her earlier teaching:

I have a really high threshold for that sort of thing because the first school I worked at was very tough, it was in a very deprived area and that was the way the adults problem-solved by screaming and shouting and all the rest of it. So I managed to keep calm pretty well.

Making use of her experience, she managed to maintain a professional demeanour in challenging situations. She developed an ability to model a professional image in her communication and interactions with parents and students.

6.2.4 Challenging new contexts – “it is a higher level of learning, more intellectual learning”

Rosemary's English literature expertise derived from the school and university curriculum of her native England, and her university study of American literature supported her teaching of the prescribed American syllabus. Yet her migration to Australia provided a different curriculum and assessment focus within a new teaching context.

Rosemary needed to re-establish her contextual understanding for teaching English¹⁷ in Australia, and in so doing experienced the teaching pressures that accompany high-stakes assessment of student learning:

I do find it challenging when I'm teaching whatever it might be, a new text, to understand myself the sort of received way that the school

¹⁷ Refer to Glossary: Key Learning Area (KLA) within the Australian curriculum.

is looking at it, and how the kids are going to be assessed.

Rosemary maintained confidence in her interpretive abilities and confronted the need to learn a different literature for the Australian syllabus. Yet she recognised a gap in her expertise in terms of curriculum and assessment:

It was when we came to assess essays and stuff or whatever the assessment was and then standardize it together, and finding what I thought what a piece was worth in relation to what the other staff did ... So it was quite tough to pick that up and I was never quite sure that I understood it myself fully or as well as I should.

Rosemary placed her international experience and situated knowledge of curriculum documents, subject texts and literature into an Australian teaching context. However, her learning relied strongly on the advice of other teachers to ensure assessments addressed the syllabus outcomes. She was challenged in accessing and understanding the tacit knowledge that teachers have. Tacit knowing requires not only recognition of what is known but also avenues for accessing and validating the understanding within context (Polanyi, 1983). For Rosemary, the difficulty in accessing this tacit knowledge and approaching her colleagues impacted on her confidence. Furthermore, the lack of overt direction by colleagues may have reflected an assumption that Rosemary needed little assistance in transferring her experience to this new context:

I did feel that I was on my own for quite a bit, to be honest, with trying to pick it all up because the people here are so used to that's the way it is, they think that everyone, they would assume that everyone just knows that and they're going to go away with it.

Rosemary focused on demonstrating and sharing her comprehensive knowledge of the English literature texts. She recognised that collaboration

with other teachers deepened her understanding and so she sourced the tacit knowledge of her colleagues in order to facilitate student learning. Her learning was also tied to the high-stakes assessment of student learning and the external grading that impacts university admission.

The new environment, with few classroom management issues, presented unique teaching opportunities for Rosemary: *“it is a higher level of learning, more intellectual learning”*. Rosemary addressed the contextual challenges of learning different curriculum and assessment requirements for her teaching. She reinvigorated her self-confidence and self-assurance in her teaching abilities through embedding her learning experiences within a new teaching context.

6.2.5 Contemplating new opportunities – “I’m still thinking about a change”

Rosemary has contemplated new opportunities in educational leadership but remains uncertain on the direction of her career path:

Well I am ready for something new ... I don't know, to stay in education forever? It's definitely a possibility because there's a lot I like about the job as well.

She deliberated about starting a Master's degree in educational leadership as she aspired to develop and progress professionally within this area.

Rosemary also endeavoured to build on her learning from her head of boarding house role as well as achieving a work-life balance. She applied for a full-time year coordinator role within the day school but was unsuccessful. At this time, she was encouraged to consider her future aspirations by a colleague from the school's leadership team. From 2011, Rosemary continued in her boarding coordinator role and taught English at junior secondary and

up to HSC course level. She put her Master's degree on hold after experiencing a stressful incident at school.

I'll be honest with you here, one of the things at this place of work that is not very fair is [pause] I had one of the students said I wasn't teaching them right and being nasty to them and so on. And she later said that she was lying. But at the time the principal got involved and sent this official letter ... I was trying to do two units. Perhaps I should have started with trying to do one because I was enjoying it. I mean it was a lot of work but I did like it. I just thought "I can't".

Rosemary then refocused on the professional learning she required for teaching a preliminary HSC course that was new to her. Subsequently, the students in both of her senior English literature classes achieved good learning outcomes. She felt justified in her professional acumen when the results of her students reaffirmed her confidence in her practice:

I was pleased when the deputy head told me that when they had this statistical breakdown of how the kids did in the courses that the principal said "why isn't Rosemary taking a HSC group?" So I was really pleased about that.

She remains open to change to meet her need for new experiences:

I'm still thinking about a change. I don't know if, to be honest, I don't know if I'll stay in teaching forever. ... Sometimes I think I'd like to leave boarding and go full-time teaching. And then other times I think I do really quite like the pastoral role. Whereas in the past I always did think that I would be academic, more looking at going for heads of English and that kind of thing.

Rosemary asserts her improved confidence and contextual familiarity with the school environment, emphasising the personal importance of pastoral care for her continuing career in teaching.

6.3 Narrative modes of storytelling

My interpretation of the ideational, interpersonal and textual or spoken contexts of Rosemary's story explores the meaning-making within her teaching and learning. The ideational context focuses on Rosemary's belief in learner responsibility and the significance of her understanding of the learner. She highlights her concern for student pastoral care and her ability to access collegial tacit knowledge within an interpersonal context. Her language reveals the importance of 'clues' and conversations within a textual or spoken context.

6.3.1 Ideational context: learner responsibility and understanding the learner

As a teacher in Australia, Rosemary identified her responsibility as a learner to access the tacit understanding of each new teaching context.

Acknowledging the subjective nature of teaching English literature also challenged her understanding of how to reframe tasks for her students. She recognised the importance of understanding the developmental needs of adolescent students in order to encourage their responsibility for learning. She did this by identifying a need to understand adolescent learners by acknowledging their skills, interests and prior achievements:

I just think if you can like flick the switch or wake it up in them, then they'll get going with it. And really I mean if you say to your class right now "write a poem on this", you can't really say that to a bunch of kids, you can't really say that to anyone, unless you had that specific knowledge already, you wouldn't have a clue.

Rosemary learnt the importance of content knowledge and pedagogically sound strategies in developing her teaching expertise:

I think the expertise is about first of all studying something ourselves. A new text or a new unit of work or whatever it might be, figuring it out bit by bit in lots of detail, and then I would understand it reasonably quickly but then trying to get it across to a mixed ability group of 14-year-olds is a different question. So it's about finding the ways to break it down.

Rosemary continually linked her content understanding and pedagogy to addressing the physical, social and intellectual developmental needs of her adolescent learners. She also participated in professional development courses to develop her expertise in classroom teaching. Yet the generic nature of such courses was less likely to be applicable to her need for contextual learning:

To be honest it doesn't always end up in the classroom because you're restricted by the text you're teaching, the kids you've got, time limits, the programs written for you and certain things you have to do for the assessment, so yeah maybe 50 percent of it I manage to apply and the rest not so much.

Her development relied on accepting challenges in teaching. She integrated new techniques in her practice and shared her learning with colleagues and parents:

My recent experience has been helping out more special needs kids or kids with different challenges to learning. I'm not great with ICT but I'm willing to learn and I'm willing to use it so I think that's quite positive.

Rosemary observed that the pressure of exam results on adolescent students adversely affects their confidence in their abilities, reduces the resilience necessary to risk making mistakes, and so decreases their motivation to learn and their responsibility for learning.

I find that a lot of people, if anything goes wrong or if the kid hasn't learned something or the kid's not got a great mark, it is all the teacher's responsibility. ... That's pressure, that's the stress of the job.

Encouraging student responsibility for their learning represented a challenge within Rosemary's classroom practice. She associated an increase in teacher accountability with a high-stakes assessment environment. This created further pressures on the student, parent and teacher relationship.

6.3.2 Interpersonal context: student pastoral care and collegial tacit knowledge

The interpersonal context within which Rosemary found herself highlighted her need to become better acquainted with her peers and so to develop avenues for sharing of tacit knowledge. Of increasing importance was Rosemary's professional learning about the pastoral care of boarding students and relationships with their parents.

She initially felt there was no specific process to assist resource-sharing as part of her preparation to teach a new course syllabus:

I find it difficult sometimes to get resources off other people because they're not trying to hide them or anything ... they just don't think that I might not have it.

She felt hindered initially in accessing the tacit knowledge and collections of resources she required for her practice, but found a way to do so:

You have to just try to talk to each other. ... So there's a lot of

knowledge nearby if we need to grab it. And everyone is very willing to help out or if they're not sure to at least show us where the direction to go in.

Rosemary realised the importance of informal communication in sharing resources and ideas, and she learnt to foster more informal opportunities for discussions with her colleagues. Her involvement in professional staff days enabled her to share her learning with colleagues across departmental faculties and to benefit from the expertise of education professionals external to the school:

We do tend to train each other quite a bit on these days. We usually have one speaker or two speakers from outside ... There are pastoral conferences ... developmentally in boarding there's life skills. ... Then again how to make people accept you and like you and how to care about other people sometimes as well.

Rosemary valued the learning available to her through conferences on pastoral care that specifically addressed her concerns on adolescent developmental needs and the particular needs of boarding students. She recognised her need to remain attentive to the concerns of her students and avoid becoming complacent in appreciating the impacts on her adolescent students.

It's easy if you're not careful just to think "oh that's happened" and carry on thinking about your lesson and not really appreciate the impact that it's had on the kids. You know they're going to go to the lessons the next day and you know they're going to be in bed at night so you really have to take on board how they feel and you have to appreciate that.

Being aware of the need to continually negotiate the intensity of adolescent emotions, she understood the professional fatigue that can lead to detachment from the concerns of students. This instilled in her a commitment to the pastoral care of her students. She then gained understanding in the intricacies of negotiating pastoral relationships with the parents of adolescent girls as boarding house coordinator. She encouraged equal responsibility for learning, developing life skill strategies, fostering long distance communications and handling emotional difficulties:

I mean those sorts of things they are so simplistic to us as adults that we forget that when you're very young you don't know that sort of thing or that you can find it very scary or intimidating to literally walk up to one of your peers and say hello and so forth ... We also try to explain this sort of thing to the parents too because they know their daughter is upset, they know their daughter is saying things like no one likes me and often they do over-catastrophise, they're quite dramatic.

This pastoral focus allowed Rosemary to negotiate the complications associated with the emotional changes of adolescence, as well as the difficulties of communication for parents and students. She developed a pragmatic approach to the relational strains that occur in dealing with complex parent and student relationships.

So we do a lot of, I don't know if it's counselling but a lot of listening to them talking it out, explaining things, telling them it's really not so bad that teenage girls can act like the world is ending and it's not.

Rosemary placed increasing importance on the pastoral care of her students and their parents within the boarding school environment:

Well it's nice. It does have a nice social aspect to it and once you get to know the families as well. That can make a difference. I've been in the boarding responsibility for about five years now so I know some of these families pretty well at this point. And some of the older girls that I used to look after, they are technically adult, so I see them coming back sometimes as well.

Rosemary valued the ongoing relationships possible through the extended boarding school community.

6.3.3 Textual or spoken context: clues and conversations

During the research interview process, Rosemary's terminology indicated her search for understanding in her learning. She continually used the word 'talk' throughout her learning and teaching story, emphasising her need for and enjoyment of conversation as part of her learning. She also expressed appreciation for being involved in the research process.

Rosemary uses the word 'clue' several times to indicate the understanding she requires in her teaching practice. She related this to her teaching subject content knowledge and the specific skills she needed to address for her students' learning.

So you pick up a lot of clues and tricks and ideas.

They didn't have a clue.

Unless you had that specific knowledge already, you wouldn't have a clue.

That sort of literature that I wouldn't have had a clue about it.

Rosemary reinforced the importance of conversation throughout her story. She often referred to talk as important for her learning and sharing of professional learning:

You have to just try to talk to each other. Be specific and ask each other.

[W]e are good at learning about a particular topic, asking each other, talking to senior members of the department.

And the other staff would be talking about them and I didn't really know exactly what was happening. And you do just try and over hear these conversations that just happen to be going on about it.

... and it's just nice going through the stuff and talking about it and listening to the speaker or whoever and then having a coffee together and talking to colleagues from other schools as well, and that's just really nice, I do find it pleasant.

... so I'll talk at the odd meeting or give a bit of training, I'm talking this weekend actually for the intake parents.

Rosemary valued the dialogue between colleagues and experts in the field and the conversations available to her through professional staff days and pastoral care conferences. She appreciated the importance of conversation in her relationships with parents and students:

I mean we do talk to the girls with things like that but we also try to explain this sort of thing to the parents too.

I don't know if it's counselling but a lot of listening to them talking it out, explaining things, telling them it's really not so bad that teenage girls can act like the world is ending and it's not.

She also acknowledged the opportunity to talk about her professional experiences through the research interview process:

It is quite nice to chat about it as well though.

6.4 Chapter discussion

In this section, I identify the significant influence of cultural diversity and micro- and macro-contexts that shaped Rosemary's personal professional learning. Her motivation to learn is considered through the societal context, curriculum content and relationships she experienced across the different economic and sociocultural contexts of varied international education systems. I illustrate how her attitudes and beliefs about her own learning afforded unique opportunities in her personal professional development, and examine her refocusing of her learning from classroom behaviour management to a strategic involvement in pastoral care. I explore how Rosemary's approach required a meaningful construction of her own professionalism in order to fulfil her personal professional development.

Rosemary evaluated the different environments she experienced within each sociocultural context. She then continually reinterpreted her understanding within each new context by building on her previous experience. Dewey's (1963) theory of experience signifies the direct quality of an educational experience and the continuity of preceding experience in influencing subsequent experience. Interpreting the educational quality of experience relies on the situation which is "inseparable [from the interaction of] objective and internal conditions" (Dewey, 1963, pp. 42-43). This theory of experience highlights the unique nature of a teacher's learning. Employing Dewey's theory of experience, Elbaz (1983) identified that a teacher orientates their practical knowledge to their situational experience in terms of the teaching milieu, subject matter and curriculum. In my research, the different education contexts and the sociocultural diversity that Rosemary experienced internationally were critical in shaping her personal professional development. Her experience extended across three education systems,

within various school environments, using different curriculum and resources and through various role responsibilities.

Fundamental to Rosemary's professional learning was developing her capacity to understand subject content knowledge appropriate to the teaching context. She continually questioned her content knowledge and her understanding of the curriculum context for her students in each new situation. Her personal professional knowledge was extended by having to understand different curriculum and assessment processes for each national syllabus and education system. Calderhead (1987) holds that themes of complexity and context are evident in studies that investigated teacher thinking. Teachers' knowledge requires active interpretation and response to their practice in each context. This reveals the:

fluid, interactive nature of teachers' thinking. Teachers frequently juggle competing interests, draw on various different areas of knowledge, and mentally rehearse alternative ways of conceptualizing and responding to the situations they face.

(Calderhead, 1987, p. 16)

In my research, these themes were evident in Rosemary's evaluation of her learning across diverse contexts, highlighting the need to understand the content, curriculum requirements and milieu of each teaching situation. It was also essential for her to contextually reinterpret this understanding to address the learning needs of her students. Her teaching experience allowed her to develop her personal practical knowledge within each school community, as well as her understanding from an international sociocultural perspective.

Relying solely on her own experience, however, was not helpful for Rosemary in accessing the tacit understanding within each new teaching

environment. Drawing on Dewey's (1963) focus of 'lived experience', Fenstermacher (1994) differentiates between inferred tacit knowledge, explicit local knowledge and declarative situational knowledge. These latter two types of knowledge are represented in a teacher's understanding of explicit statements and propositions that are context specific, as well as in their heuristic expression of formal policy and procedures. It is the tacit knowledge that is often not articulated to newcomers within a teaching context and which may represent a critical omission for the situational development of their personal practical knowledge. For Rosemary, the process of accessing this tacit knowledge relied on communication and collaboration with her colleagues, allowing them time to share their unarticulated or customary understandings. Her development required her to access the tacit knowledge surrounding each new curriculum and to integrate this understanding into her personal practical knowledge.

Hawley and Valli (1999) propose that a teacher's professional development should include the principles of teacher involvement, school-based initiatives, collaborative problem-solving, continuous and supported learning, information-rich sources and developing theoretical understanding. Each of these aspects was important for Rosemary's professional development. She contributed to school-based initiatives by sharing her learning with colleagues and parents. Through growing self-confidence in each context, she was able to share understanding with colleagues. She participated in externally presented courses to access scholarly and professional knowledge in order to develop her theoretical understanding. She selected colleagues to whom she continued to articulate her career aspirations for future leadership roles. Rosemary twice attempted to access scholarly resources through university Master's degree courses. However, the demands and challenges of her combined teaching and

coordination roles and personal considerations for financial security reduced her confidence and motivation to continue with these studies.

Goodson (2003) proposes that teachers narrating and locating stories of their personal professional development enables a contextualised and collaborative creation of theories of context. He observes that when teachers are able to take “collective control of their work, in professional and personal autonomy” they are “pioneering a new complex professionalism” (Goodson, 2003, p. 84). The collective control of this complex professionalism encompasses teachers’ ability to influence the complex aspects of students’ learning and the programs within schooling, as well as engineering the mechanisms necessary for ongoing professional learning that will enable collaborative problem-solving. Additionally, he argues that nurturing a personal professionalism requires an appropriately “sustainable environment” for teachers (Goodson, 2003, pp. 74-75).

Rosemary’s personal professional learning journey highlights the difficulties that teachers may experience in creating the types of theories of context proposed by Goodson (2003). Rosemary experienced some obstacles in forging a professionalism that supported collaborative learning and in exerting her professional judgement. The early teaching environments she experienced did not offer sufficient collective control or individual authority to sustain an enriching personal and professional development for her practice. She acknowledged the constraining influences of an overly prescriptive syllabus. She then recognised the creative and innovative practice possible in her recent teaching environment with minimal issues of student behaviour management. She was encouraged to explore higher levels of thinking and to promote critical insights in her students’ learning and investigate avenues for her professional learning. For Rosemary,

exercising her professional judgement was central to developing self-confidence in her practice. The strength and determination of her character enabled her to maintain her professional judgement even after experiencing obstacles. She developed resilience, a belief in her professional acumen, and a self-confident determination in her teaching and learning approach.

The critical challenges in Rosemary's development relate to the questioning of and uncertainties surrounding her perceived professionalism as a teacher. Goodson (2003) proposes seven essential components of a 'post-modern professionalism' for teaching that invokes a changed approach towards developing a teacher's expertise. These components highlight that a teacher's personal professional learning should incorporate opportunities to:

- engage with the "moral and social purposes" embedded within education syllabi
- exercise their "discretionary judgement" on teaching issues
- share their expertise and solve problems within "collaborative cultures"
- exert "occupational heteronomy" that reduces "self-protective autonomy"
- embrace the emotional nature of their "commitment to active care"
- self-direct their "continuous learning", and
- recognise and appropriately reward the "high task complexity" of their teaching practice (Goodson, 2003, p. 132).

An analysis of Rosemary's story reveals the uncertainties that impeded the inclusion of some of these components throughout her personal professional learning. Her inability to exercise her professional judgement within overly prescriptive systems was not enriching for her teaching practice and so initially reinforced a 'self-protective autonomy'. Her confidence and

motivation to extend her capabilities were unsettled by incidents that challenged her professionalism. She experienced times when there was a lack of learning opportunities or where she was inhibited in accessing opportunities to extend her personal professional learning. Her studies at a tertiary level were twice suspended due to the demands of her teacher and leader roles and the stress she felt from the questioning of her professional judgement. Experiencing a lack of 'occupational heteronomy' again reinforced a 'self-protective autonomy' that restricted her learning in this area. Rosemary also felt thwarted by the client service and high stakes assessment environment of an independent school. Her experience of the 'high task complexity' of teaching led her to compare the recognition and rewards available within teaching and other professions. Consequently, Rosemary faced an ongoing dilemma regarding remaining within the teaching profession.

Rosemary's story also reveals opportunities that improved her ability to access some of the components in Goodson's (2003) 'post-modern professionalism', in contrast to the uncertainties she experienced. Her philosophical approach allowed her to look forward to 'discretionary judgement' opportunities that enabled her to maintain self-esteem and promoted resilience in her practice despite her early career challenges. When she experienced personal attacks and a questioning of her professionalism, she maintained a positive approach and confidence in her ability. At these times she focused on the 'moral and social purposes' of her teaching by modelling a professional demeanour for students and parents. When she found difficulty in accessing the tacit knowledge within each new teaching context, she was afforded the benefits of a 'collaborative culture' that encouraged her 'ongoing learning' through communication and collaboration with colleagues. Rosemary's learning focus then changed from

content and classroom behaviour management to analysing interpersonal relationships. She broadened her personal professional learning by combining teaching with a pastoral care coordination role that promoted her 'commitment to active care'. She learnt to foster pastoral care relationships with students and their parents in boarding and day school environments. At times the intensely personal dynamics of these interpersonal relationships was stressful for Rosemary. However, the emotional demands and relational strains that occur with teaching represent the 'moral and social purposes' aspects of the curriculum. Rosemary's attitudes to and beliefs about her own learning created the 'professionalism' for her personal professional development within the opportunities of her experience. Her understanding of expertise related to the degree to which she felt 'professionally' acknowledged in the development of her pedagogical prowess and content knowledge in different environments. Rosemary acknowledged that it was her response to challenges that developed her expertise within teaching rather than an accumulation of years of teaching. So much so that Rosemary recognised that she could have "*just repeated myself over and over again*" and so she continued to contemplate applying and developing her expertise in another profession.

Rosemary's desire for a variety of life experiences was the impetus for her to travel. Teaching in different countries she was able to compare different systems and analyse her learning in different societal contexts and through continual analysis of the interpersonal aspects of each situation. In studying expert and non-expert teachers, Tsui (2009) identified that experts extend their capabilities by engaging in complex tasks with a "willingness to re-invest mental resources and energy" (Tsui, 2009, p. 436). For Rosemary, the compounded complexity of her tasks in each new situation presented physical, intellectual and emotional demands. Nevertheless she dedicated

her energy to pursuing an international teaching career with the incentive of her personal professional development. In our final phone interview, Rosemary reflected on the unique personal and professional opportunities of her learning journey:

As far as the analysis and being able to look at situations and trying to figure out how best to act, I think that's been really valuable, it's really helped me. ... You know, you grow into your profession and it influences your personal, sort of, head as well.

Rosemary's reflection of her story emphasises the fundamental nature of the personal in her professional development and learning journey.

In this chapter, I have shown how Rosemary's need for new experiences enabled her to seek new contexts for her career progression. Her professional development shifts from classroom and curriculum considerations to the personal significance of student pastoral care within her teaching and her coordination roles. I affirm the significant influence of cultural diversity and micro- and macro-context on the shaping of Rosemary's personal professional learning; her attitudes and beliefs have enabled her to navigate professional development opportunities in relation to societal context, curriculum content and professional relationships. She came to recognise the satisfaction she experienced in the nurturing of relationships across a boarding and day school community. I have also suggested that Rosemary determined her own 'professionalism' through her unique approach to learning.

The issues and possibilities in the personal professional development and learning of Rosemary will be further discussed in Chapter 10. The next two chapters will present the remaining two personal professional learning journeys examined in my research.

Brenda's learning horizon: emotional positivity and accepting change

7.1 Introduction

This chapter uses narrative to identify the personal professional learning journey that Brenda experienced.

The first section, *Brenda's story*, outlines her ongoing reassessment of her professional learning, which I characterise as a constant juggling of responsibilities. I explore four complicating actions and the evaluation of these by Brenda herself. She indicates how she learnt through teaching a student with special needs, building good relationships with students, coordinating a school's professional development (PD) program and the collegial sharing of expertise. The coda of her story highlights her positive attitude to change and her ability to perceive challenges as satisfying in her approach to her own learning.

In the second section I analyse the contextual aspects of learning within Brenda's story. The ideational context explores her innovative approach to learning, while the interpersonal context signifies the positive power of relationships for her learning. I then consider her use of metaphor and proverbial understandings to express her classroom teaching practice and coordinator role responsibilities.

The chapter discussion critiques the relevant literature and explores how emotional positivity and accepting change has influenced Brenda's professional learning horizon and allowed her expertise to thrive.

7.2 Brenda's story

7.2.1 (Re)assessing professional learning – “you almost have to start again”

Brenda started teaching in England in 1997. Her experience has spanned classroom teaching and school coordination roles in primary and secondary non-government schools in England for eight years and then in an Australian independent boys school catering for Years 5-6 and secondary school Years 7-12.

Brenda recognises that her total focus was on her own classroom practice in her early years of teaching. As Brenda's understanding expanded from the classroom to the whole school context with time, so too her professional learning broadened to incorporate responsibilities beyond her classroom teaching. After her initial five years of teaching, she accepted a curriculum coordinator position at a different school in England. She learnt to integrate information and communication technology (ICT) into her teaching practice and into her collaborative learning by *“being enthusiastic about something yourself but spreading that enthusiasm to someone else”*. Brenda also extended her development with co-curricular activities for students, such as netball, tag rugby, dance club and ICT club.

After six year of teaching, she accepted a role as leading teacher of ICT, in which she was able to lead by example in different situations ways:

I've done it informally one-on-one. I've done it to whole staff. I've done it faculty. And in England, not here, I was the leading teacher in

ICT so I had teachers from other schools come into my class to observe how I incorporated ICT into the classroom.

Brenda's final two years of teaching in England culminated in a leadership role with curriculum responsibility for mathematics and whole-school target-setting. She contextualised her learning in combined teacher and leader roles across a range of different socioeconomic school communities:

You become more aware of results, and budgeting is a big one isn't it? And structure in the school ... So then perhaps you start to look at the students and their parents, and your colleagues and then beyond that it becomes the whole community so you really do progress and those experiences were in small schools and then coming here, having similar sort of experience in a big school, there's a big difference, there's a lot more money.

Brenda's learning encompassed classroom and leadership responsibilities across various contexts within smaller government schools in England and a large independent school in Australia. She developed her understanding of administrative budgeting, student and parent relationships associated with primary and secondary school teaching, curriculum coordination, the impact of school target-setting on teachers, and the needs and expectations of the broader school community.

Since 2005 in Australia, Brenda has taught junior secondary science and senior biology and chemistry at an independent school for boys. She recognises her progress through her role responsibilities:

I was in a management position and then moved to Australia and stepped back and went back into complete full-time just teaching and then have gone forward into management again, so a leadership role

again. And through obviously having made that transition from one country to another you have to then look at where you were and where you are and you almost have to start again.

In 2010, as teaching and learning coordinator, Brenda was responsible for “running breakfast clubs and twilights or organising other people to share their expertise” as part of the professional development program at her school. She continued to draw on her experience and share her expertise as she navigated her teaching and learning in each new context. Her professional learning focused on improving her classroom practice and realising the responsibilities of coordination and leadership roles.

7.2.2 Juggling the responsibilities of teaching – “you’ve got to spin all these plates at the same time and there’s always the possibility that you’re going to drop one of them”

The learning progression for Brenda involved balancing her leadership roles with the responsibilities of her classroom teaching within each new environment. Balancing the expectations and demands of a large independent school operating within a more advantaged socioeconomic locality was challenging:

I think socioeconomically they’re quite privileged, not all but many of them are, and you become aware of that, there’s a much bigger factor in education and attitude. And then when you’ve got a bigger staff, everything that you want to do then has a different set of problems because of sheer numbers.

Brenda taught more than her allocated requirements while fulfilling her coordinator responsibilities. Coordinating the professional learning of the school’s staff as well as fulfilling her own teaching allocation, she found her workdays would span up to 10 hours:

I've never had a leadership role without a teaching role so it's always been a balancing act between the two. There are never enough hours in the day, never ... So it's a real juggling act and you'll find that most teachers will tell you it's the old thing, you've got to spin all these plates at the same time and there's always the possibility that you're going to drop one of them because there are so many plates you have to keep them in the air at the same time. I don't think teaching ever changes, it doesn't matter what country you're in it's the same.

It was her determination in such circumstances that provided Brenda with the inducement to continue learning. She noted that:

There's never a dull day [and] there's always things happening that will interfere with your timetable ... So you're having to adapt, it's constantly changing.

Brenda reflected that she thrives under pressure. She links this to her motivation for balancing the responsibilities of her classroom teaching and leadership roles:

I really respond well to pressure, not everyone does. I mean there are days when you get, when it's really busy and it is overwhelming but to be able to complete everything on time is good, is satisfying.

Brenda is aware that she has a need for challenging roles in order to thrive. She recognises her motivation to strive to successfully complete tasks even in situations that require tremendous effort.

7.2.3 Differentiating student needs and building good relationships with students – “you always feel if that doesn’t happen then you’ve failed somehow”

Brenda’s science teaching and pastoral care as a home room teacher of a student with Down syndrome had a major influence on her in her second year of teaching in England. She felt:

Huge responsibilities, and it also made me much more aware of student development emotionally, and physically, and psychologically.

Brenda learnt to cater for different developmental levels in her teaching within the range of adolescent ability levels:

So it made me aware of differentiation in the biggest sense possible, having to differentiate the curriculum, teaching what would be the equivalent of stage four and then teaching the equivalent of what was stage one or less, in the same classroom. So obviously differentiating within the class in the normal way and then differentiating hugely and how that could coexist in the same room. So that was a really good experience.

For Brenda, the significance of this learning experience is enduring:

That will never go away, that will never go away.

The learning from Brenda’s experience in caring for and teaching a student with special needs contributed to her understanding of building relationships in order to cater for individual student needs. She recognises the ‘little moments’: when students “suddenly say ‘I get it’. And that is real; we have that all the time” and “classes that you teach that you remember very, very well for particular reasons”, and the personal interactions outside classroom teaching as “little things like that which don’t sound like anything do they?”

Brenda is also aware of the value of her interpersonal abilities in building rapport with both students and parents. In a parent meeting, she shared her experience of persevering with the student:

And the dad was laughing because he knew exactly what his son was like ... It was nice for the dad to be able to say "well I'm really glad because at least you tried and other people didn't". So you remember little things like that.

These relational moments maintained the impetus for Brenda to further her understanding of her adolescent students. However, she is realistic about the times she was not successful in building rapport with students:

Even though you might have a class of 28 children and you get on really well with 27 of them but there's one that you feel the relationship isn't good, it's that one that will bug you rather than the 27 good ones. You'll remember the one that you feel "oh I didn't get it right".

Brenda values building successful relationships with students and is concerned when she fails to do so.

7.2.4 Sharing expertise for professional development – “we all say as teachers we'd like to have more opportunities to do that”

Brenda experienced both success and challenges when she coordinated a school's professional development program for over 100 teachers. In this role she promoted learning between colleagues and encouraged opportunities for sharing outside teaching time, although aware that teachers are “time poor”, and that outside courses have “cost implications for the school”.

She learnt to deal with the time and work constraints in organising teacher professional development sessions as well as the associated costs and

people management issues. She recognises the extent and nature of her learning as a constant process with influences from the various contexts:

You learn things about people, how to handle people. I've learnt very quickly which things staff or teachers are very sensitive about. I think that's the best word. ... You have to be very careful that if you want staff to do things, you make it as easy as possible and so that they can spend the least amount of time but still get it done.

Learning was a daily occurrence for Brenda in her teaching and learning coordinator role. She developed her own communication approach and strategies to address specific teacher needs. In particular, she understood the increasing need for teachers to develop their use of ICT within their classroom practice. She became aware of the range of ability levels and the need to boost confidence through collaborative learning. She drew on the skills of her colleagues to facilitate ICT sessions:

What I found was interesting was that some staff got together in small groups and worked through the online courses together ... They were at different levels so different people could pair up and help people because they were at more of an advanced level so that was quite useful.

Brenda valued facilitating and sharing collaborative learning with colleagues through the in-school professional development sessions, such as "breakfast clubs" and "twilight sessions". It was the administrative and people management structures that govern the professional development program that presented challenges for her:

But for whatever reason, there are still some people who don't want to have to spend the extra hours or are committed somewhere else so it

becomes a really sensitive issue and quite a difficult one to deal with. And I understand the reasons behind it, so you learn to deal with people hopefully in a sensitive way.

Dealing with many individuals to provide a variety of professional learning experiences in a large school became a stressful experience for Brenda. She felt a sense of relief when she relinquished her teaching and learning coordinator role:

That's a huge relief because the more you deal with people face-to-face the more stressful it is. And for some reason professional development is a very touchy subject.

Brenda continued to investigate new approaches to her teaching. Team teaching with a colleague in one secondary science class provided an opportunity for her and her colleague to tailor lessons around specific areas of their science teaching expertise:

So we spent a lot of time looking at the concepts and the areas of science that students find difficult so whether it was looking at the historical development of theories, the uses of models or a particular area of science, and then we planned a series of lessons that would tackle those. We'd work as a team in that one of us would introduce the topic and one of us would be around the class talking to students in small groups or we'd reverse the roles or we might have a bit of a tag team sometimes but there would be two of us to call on so we would share our expertise.

This was an encouraging experience for Brenda, with an initial improvement in the learning outcomes for some students and an increase in the number of students studying science in their senior secondary years. She was able to

question the relative influence of different teaching approaches, and then to adapt her practice:

I knew them so well by the time we got to Year 10, was that making a difference? Or was it the team teaching? So it's interesting. We've changed it slightly because you learn and you think "well we did that and that bit didn't work and this bit would work better" and you find new resources that you can incorporate and new ways that you can perhaps tackle a topic. So it's still developing.

Brenda continued to question her practice and learn through this team teaching experience, recognising the need to be mindful of the specific context to refine her approach with her colleague, Keith. She further identified opportunities for teachers to share one class, for two classroom teachers to open a dividing wall to share one learning space, and for a group of teachers in one classroom to cater to the needs of gifted and talented students. Brenda continued to encourage team teaching opportunities for collegial learning.

7.2.5 Approaching change and finding satisfying challenges – "I have to keep doing different things because I don't like being set in a rut"

Along with relishing the intellectual challenges, Brenda recognised the various skills she was able to draw on from her experience in order to approach change. In 2011, she accepted a new role on the curriculum leadership team as literacy and NAPLAN¹⁸ coordinator, in which she relied on her previous experience.

Some of it is very new. It's a different situation obviously to what I

¹⁸ Refer to Glossary. National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

had before. The circumstances are different, the testing is slightly different and the style of teaching is slightly different but then there are lots of similarities ... Yes it's a challenge. It is a challenge.

She became aware that tracking student progress over time leads to greater teacher accountability.

Accepting coordination and leadership roles also enabled her to fulfil her need for challenges. Her learning encompassed adapting her teaching practices and extending her capabilities within these roles:

I have to keep doing different things because I don't like being set in a rut. Some people are very happy to teach the same thing year after year after year, and if it worked well in the first place they don't see the need to change it. I would get bored with that. So every time I re-teach a topic I try and do it in a different way or add something to it that makes it better.

Brenda valued her ability to positively deal with the change involved in a school restructure:

Not change for change's sake. It has to have a purpose ... If you look at it positively you get more out of it than if you look at it negatively. ... So if it's the point of view that you might not agree with a change but you've got to do it, then you might as well do it properly and have a good go at it. And I think that is part of looking at it positively.

Brenda recognises her adaptability and positive attitude as significant attributes for embracing change, allowing her to thrive on challenges. Her ongoing learning incorporated the 'juggling act' of her classroom teaching and the coordination responsibilities of her curriculum leadership role:

Challenging definitely ... And it's learning all those things which are

a challenge but then you'd get bored if you didn't have a challenge wouldn't you?

In 2012, Brenda took on a new role in the school's leadership team as Executive Officer Operations. She was responsible for teaching two senior classes of chemistry and biology along with managing the daily organisation of the school's teaching staff and the construction and maintenance of the school timetable for all teachers:

It's been a steep learning curve, it definitely has. It's been difficult [laughing] how can I describe it?... So basically I did a little bit of learning in the three weeks before the last [operations person] left. So apart from that it's all been self-taught and obviously development courses with the programmers. So it's still all very new. So that's obviously, been a lot to take on and a lot to learn whilst you're teaching as well.

Brenda consistently demonstrated an ability to embrace change as an opportunity and to relish challenges in satisfying her need for ongoing learning.

7.3 Narrative modes of storytelling

This section analyses Brenda's story on three levels of contextual interpretation. In the ideational context, I show how Brenda requires cooperative approaches to enhance her practice and embrace change. An important feature of her practice is that she investigates innovative approaches to teaching. For Brenda, positive relationships with students, parent and colleagues, as well as learning by sharing expertise, are important in the interpersonal context. She uses a 'juggling' metaphor and proverbial understandings of 'little things' and 'can of worms' within the textual or spoken context to convey the emotional aspects of her teaching and learning.

7.3.1 Ideational context: innovative and cooperative approaches

Brenda identified the important attributes associated with her learning as thriving on pressure, relishing a challenge and positively responding to change. Within each context, Brenda sought challenges that captured her interest with new and varied learning opportunities. She valued innovative approaches to teaching and cooperative approaches for professional learning that could counter the negative aspects of competition resulting from increased teacher accountability.

She was aware of the importance of learning through both her classroom teaching and coordination roles:

I suppose it's as you get more used to your teaching you still spend a lot of time improving but less time preparing because you're much more familiar with what you're doing so you can then start to devote more time to other things ... And then obviously once you get a leadership role or a coordinator's role it then opens up a whole new area that you start to need to learn about.

Brenda's ongoing learning incorporated her willingness to learn from others. Her motivation to seek innovative approaches meant that she was not content to rely on habitual practice. She maintained her impetus for ongoing improvements in her practice:

I really like to learn off other people ... I like to always try to find new ways of presenting materials to ... because things work and they work for a while and then you have to think "how could I change that? How can I make it better?" So I'm always looking for new and different ways especially of getting students involved, I don't like passive learners, and my classrooms aren't ones, I don't know, there might be a bit of anarchy at times.

A constant for Brenda was encouraging students to be active and interactive in their learning. She felt that this dynamic approach was needed to keep enhancing her practice:

We have discussions sometimes lively, we like to be very interactive ... play interactive games that may not be electronic they might be something else, modelling ... and then there will be an element of you actually physically doing something, participating in that way. ... just finding all different ways of approaching things, never being static, always looking to improve.

Brenda acknowledged the importance of recognising learner styles and incorporating strategies to address different learner needs. Understanding different learning styles for different types of learners was paramount in Brenda's lesson planning in order to provide variety in her students' learning and in her approach to her own learning.

Brenda placed value on a collegial learning approach for teacher's professional learning. Her learning also focused on demystifying individual teachers' practice through sharing and increasing opportunities for teachers to experience learning through peer observation and discussion of lessons as well as team teaching:

And I think that's coming a long way from teachers going into the classroom and shutting the door and nobody knows what's going on in there. It's now opening up the doors and sharing good practice much more than we ever used to do before.

However, the understandings from her coordination roles in professional learning and from statistical measures of student achievement highlight the tensions for professional learning when extrapolating target-setting from

outcomes to individual teacher accountability. Brenda acknowledged the caution needed with the NAPLAN results' analysis:

It is difficult because it could have a negative effect on some people who would perhaps want to make sure that what they are doing looks better or has better results and then tend to keep things to yourself and I don't think that's healthy ... And it's a matter if somebody is struggling it's a matter of supporting them and not condemning them so that's something that we have to do. It is difficult and you have to be very sensitive about it.

Significant for Brenda was the need to guard against adverse impacts of greater teacher accountability on collaboration in teaching practice and professional learning.

Responding to challenges and change was important for Brenda's learning at various times in her career. Her innovative approach to teaching, understanding of learning styles and sharing of teaching practice were central to her ideational context. Her own learning and that of her colleagues was at risk from results-driven competition. This posed a dilemma for Brenda in the ongoing fostering of collegial learning and enhancing of teacher performance.

7.3.2 Interpersonal context: positive relationships and learning by sharing expertise

Significant for Brenda's learning was maintaining her positive approach to professional relationships with colleagues. She also valued her ability to build relationships with students in order to foster their learning. She nurtured student relationships through her use of humour within a non-confrontational approach to her teaching practice:

You have to try a different approach so always a very positive upbeat

approach with that student, never negative. ... So I think you try as much as you can to be positive but of course there are times when you are going to have to say "Don't do that". But I don't go in for confrontation, that's not me, diffusing, humour, I like to use humour.

Navigating a unique relationship with each individual student was fundamental for Brenda's teaching. She recognised the need for regular positive feedback and for negating conflict. She developed an ability to light-heartedly minimise intensely emotional situations experienced with adolescent students.

Brenda values being observed and commended on her teaching expertise. She perceives that there is an issue of isolation for teachers when they are not able to obtain feedback from colleagues. Her early experience in England where she regularly received exceptional reports during the school inspection process provided her with a self-confidence that positively influenced her professional learning:

It reaffirms what you thought, you are doing the right thing. And I think the one thing with teachers because we are in rooms on our own isolated as adults, it is important to get some kind of reassurance that you are doing a good job. And that's the one thing sometimes that you don't get.

In her early years of teaching, Brenda appreciated the reassurance of another professional opinion on her teaching practice. She recognises that this experience is not often created or even possible for many teachers, and as a result she has worked at modelling and sharing her practice with others. She feels that team teaching reduced her isolation from colleagues and provided an opportunity for collaborative learning:

We are in isolation ... it's not collaborative with other adults and it's a shame because we'd like to get the opportunity to do more team teaching ... because I think that's always very helpful.

Significant for Brenda is the collaborative learning that occurs through sharing expertise with colleagues:

I do like working with other people either on a project or learning things from them or sharing things with them. Obviously, you can go on external courses and listen. I find those valuable in some ways, you do learn some good things, but most of the time I think they go on for longer than they should ... So for me I think the most valuable way I learn is by working with other people and learning from them.

Professional development in which teachers were involved in developing and presenting learning activities enabled Brenda to share the decision-making processes of teacher practice:

Because you're both teachers, you're both coming from the same point of view ... it's a great learning experience for both people. ... And most teachers will take it on board not as a criticism of what they're doing but as perhaps a great idea that they can now incorporate into their range of approaches, range of strategies, their pedagogy whatever you like to call it ... we all say the best professional learning is often run by teachers for teachers. So it's not necessarily that you go out on a course, it's where you sit together in groups or somebody leads something or you work together on a project, is the best form of professional learning.

Fostering camaraderie in teaching and learning has been important for Brenda in developing her expertise. She has been able to be involved in

unique in-school projects and reciprocal sharing of classroom practice with colleagues.

The importance of this interpersonal context for Brenda is that the dialogue and communication necessary in sharing practice can offset the isolation of the classroom. Significantly, Brenda values learning through the expertise of her colleagues above that of externally provided PD courses. Consequently, she willingly reciprocates the sharing of expertise through team teaching. She advocates professional learning opportunities for teachers in which they can share classroom practice.

7.3.3 Textual or spoken context: juggling act, can of worms and a little proverb

Brenda uses proverb and metaphor to illustrate the nature of her teaching and learning. She humorously addresses her ability to talk and references the importance of knowing when to stop talking in a lesson.

During the interview process, Brenda used a common maxim to express the complexity of her learning experiences throughout her teaching career:

... there's a whole can of worms.

This proverb represents the experiences of her learning journey as diverse and unrestrainable as a container of worms on a fishing trip.

Brenda also used metaphor to represent the dynamic nature of her learning across her teaching and leadership roles:

So it's a real juggling act and it will vary from day to day as well, so it's very difficult to quantify. Does that make sense?

I've never had a leadership role without a teaching role so it's always been a balancing act between the two. There are never enough hours in the day, never.

Look at the mess I've got on the wall; with all the things that I've got that are going on. I said before about juggling plates or spinning plates, that's it.

The juggling act metaphor expresses the difficulty of balancing the various role responsibilities, while also acknowledging the messiness that may result if the balancing is not successful.

During the interview process, Brenda also frequently referred to 'little' things or 'moments'. She recognised the emotional significance of these for her teaching, although downplaying these as everyday occurrences or incidents with students:

I suppose we all have those little moments in class where you're teaching.

... and little things like that which don't sound like anything do they?

... just those little things.

... it's the little things every day ... that keep building up.

So you remember little things like that.

Brenda often used the word 'little' in reference to memorable incidents and positive relationships with students. Using this word appears to understate the importance of this interpersonal context for Brenda. Yet it may indicate that she is unsure if others value and share her understanding of the significance of these interpersonal relationships for her teaching. There is a sense of not wishing to reveal her reliance on positive relational experiences, indicated by her minimising the emotional significance of these 'little' things.

Brenda's use of language reveals a textual context that acknowledges the changing and often precarious nature of her learning and highlights the

motivation for her ongoing learning in meeting these challenges. Brenda's language also reinforces the value she places on the relational nature of her teaching and learning.

7.4 Chapter discussion

In this section, I consider how emotions and the complexity of situations influenced Brenda's development of her professional knowledge and the cultivation of her practice. The previous sections have indicated how her learning was enhanced through her belief in collegial learning, her positive attitude to change and her personal drive to achieve under pressure. Brenda developed professionally by expanding her learning horizon. This horizon was initially her classroom teaching, but then it incorporated collegial learning and finally encompassed strategic education concern for the school community. The significantly personal construction of meaning for Brenda's professional development has afforded her a continually expanding learning horizon.

Brenda's opportunities to reframe her practice were made possible by the changing nature of her situation and the new role responsibilities she undertook. She developed her understanding of the detailed context in primary and secondary school classrooms. Her understanding broadened within small school and large school contexts, and her learning required her to develop an alternative perspective when she moved from England to Australia. Her move between countries was the impetus for Brenda to identify the similarities and differences between her previous and present experiences and so adapt to different coordination and leadership roles.

Embracing the complexities of the teaching and learning relationships also contributed to Brenda's learning. She applied her understanding of specific student needs to differentiated approaches within her teaching and to

building unique relationships with students. She experienced collegial support in her own professional learning and reciprocated by sensitively supporting others in their professional development. Yet her responsibilities in reporting on student achievement presented uncertainties for Brenda. She was torn because the increased accountability of high-stakes testing impacted on her collaborative learning and how she needed to work with her colleagues.

Brenda's developmental experiences demonstrate the tensions and ambiguities that Loughran (2010) contend are necessary for the development of expertise. Brenda extended her expertise by refining her teaching approach to match the specific details of classroom and school context and then reframing her learning within her teaching and leadership roles. Loughran (2010) recognises that the tensions and ambiguities of teaching and learning are embraced by 'expert pedagogues' who develop their professional knowledge of practice through refining and reframing their practice. This cultivation of practice requires an ability to develop understanding beyond the technicality of basic details and to develop an alternate perspective in order to reframe similar situations and so develop innovative approaches (Loughran, 2010).

An expert teacher's development of practice also requires the cultivation of a dynamic learning and teaching relationship in which students are trusted in their learning (Loughran, 2010). For Brenda, integrating student feedback and their responses to adaptations in her teaching practice each year was vital for motivating her students and herself. In her second year of teaching in England she responded to the unique requirements of a student with special needs as well as the student peers who were involved in this teaching and learning experience. Brenda continued to develop her

understanding of the differentiated teaching modes required for her adolescent students. She encouraged student participation in conducting and formulating learning activities and trusted her students' responses to their learning experiences. Her seeking out and integrating of feedback from students on her teaching approach also demonstrates that she valued their perceptions of their learning experience. Brenda's approach in this respect aligns to that of expert teachers studied by Loughran, who notes that expert teachers who are able "to construct pedagogy in ways that facilitate students as active learners have a major role in developing professional knowledge as practice" (Loughran, 2010, p. 213).

In the pastoral care aspects of her teaching role, an appreciation of the emotions of her students is significant for Brenda. Her approach is non-confrontational, using humour in tense situations and presenting a positive attitude in dealing with student issues. In particular, having responsibility for a student with special needs was cherished by Brenda as a learning experience. She values the emotional involvement of her teaching, despite her tendency to identify these as only 'little' incidents in her relationships with students. Her emotional needs dictate her strategies in much the same way as indicated by Hargreaves (1998) in his study on the emotional aspects of teaching. He found that teachers incorporated humour to reveal their human side, and significantly that:

The teaching strategies that teachers used were shaped by their own emotional needs, as well as those of their students. Excitement and enjoyment figured strongly among those needs, emotions that were often tied to senses of creativity, breakthrough and achievement in teaching students and in themselves as teachers. (Hargreaves, 1998, p. 848)

During the interview process, Brenda enthusiastically described her use of humour and her enjoyment of the 'little' moments in her teaching and learning relationship with students. These breakthroughs and achievements represent a significant emotional investment that has motivated her to individualise her teaching approach to the unique needs of students. She has fostered positive relationships in order to create an enjoyable, interesting and interactive learning environment. Her personal professional development has centred on the emotional aspects of her teaching in cultivating her relationships with parents, building positive rapport with students, and remaining sensitive to her colleagues. This emotional need corresponds to that observed by Hargreaves (1998), who perceives the emotional 'heart' of teaching as the impetus for teachers to develop their professional knowledge of practice. He claimed the emotional purpose of teaching provides the satisfaction and enjoyment that motivates teachers to "change and develop pedagogically" and to "take pride in that development over time" (Hargreaves, 1998, p. 849). In the interviews with Brenda I found that emotional aspects were significant to her ongoing professional development and her approach to her own learning.

Loughran (2010) asserts that the cultivation of self-understanding and awareness is essential for the development of an expert teacher's practice. I found that Brenda demonstrated that she understood her need for challenges to motivate her and relished the satisfaction she felt in responding to work pressures and overcoming a challenge. Her expertise indeed derived from being challenged and through fulfilling classroom teaching responsibilities and the demands of a coordination or leadership role. She maintained a positive attitude to change when it was directed to a sound educational purpose. At the same time, Brenda showed an understanding of the professional quandaries she experienced. She learnt how to handle people

and to deal with people in a sensitive way through the responsibilities of her professional development coordination role. She was supportive in the development of other teachers when competition resulted from increased public accountability of standardised assessment results, and she perceived unhealthy competition and the stifling of collegial learning as a negative implication of increased teacher accountability. To counter this, Brenda advocated an 'open door' approach to team teaching and the sharing of practice. Recognising the need to be tolerant, adaptive and supportive in these roles was important for her professional learning and allowed her to encourage this learning disposition in others.

Brenda values positive working relationships that enhance opportunities for teachers to share practice through collaborative learning activities. An interest in collaboration of this sort is noted in the literature on expert teachers. An expert teacher's development of practice relies on recognising the "value of planning, teaching and reviewing practice with a valued colleague" (Loughran, 2010, p. 215). Fraser, Kennedy, Reid, & McKinney (2007) investigated the public sharing of professional knowledge by "accomplished, experienced teachers" through professional learning communities of practice. They found that teacher ownership of their own learning was essential to enable "formal and informal planned opportunities" that encourage transformational learning in the "personal and social, as well as occupational aspects of professional learning" (Fraser et al., 2007, pp. 165-166). For Brenda, her first few years of teaching provided the groundwork for a growing confidence in her practice that enabled her to begin sharing her expertise. She was a forerunner in encouraging colleagues to incorporate ICT into their practice and she investigated new practices through team teaching, always thinking about and experimenting with how to change and improve her teaching approach. Lieberman and Pointer Mace

(2009) highlight the importance of inquiry into practice for accomplished teachers:

'Going public' provides the opportunity for teachers to not only learn about their own practice, but to enlist a group of peers in the work. Teachers break the isolation of their world and become a part of an intellectual community: finding out that they can learn from their peers, and in so doing become members of a collaborative group. (Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2009, p. 469)

For Brenda, her professional learning approach is built on collaborative learning with peers, with the aim of self-reflection and evaluation of practice. She relies on communication with her students and peers in her learning and she values feedback that enables her to refine her practice. Similar to Lincoln, Brenda's understanding of her development emphasises the dynamic nature of her learning that is critically influenced by interpersonal relationships and intrapersonal motivations. This view of expertise highlights the limitations of an accumulation of years of experience as the sole indicator of teacher development without qualifying understanding of the learning journey over that time. In our final phone interview, Brenda reflected on her learning as a constant process, the continual development of professional knowledge:

Obviously you're still learning a lot and whatever you do there's still more to learn. You never stop learning, I think, as a teacher. Or if you do perhaps that's when you stop being a good teacher.

Tsui (2009) identifies the attributes of expert teachers as critically different to those of experienced non-experts. Specifically, expert teachers select and complete tasks that represent "increasingly difficult problems" as part of the process of extending their expertise (Tsui, 2009, p. 423). In my research I found that Brenda was motivated by the challenges associated with change

and eager to undertake new opportunities to enable her learning. She took on leadership roles that extended her understanding of curriculum coordination, professional development and standardised assessment, and constantly created new learning horizons for herself. Her learning moved from teaching in her own classroom to sharing practice with colleagues and to an understanding of the strategic needs and issues of the whole school community.

In telling Brenda's story in this chapter, I have used narrative analysis to reveal the personally contextual significance of her professional development and learning. Essentially, the development of Brenda's practice has entailed addressing her and her students' emotional needs. Relationships with students, colleagues and members of the school community have motivated her interactive and innovative approach to teaching and learning. A range of complex situations have provided challenges for Brenda's professional learning, and her learning has developed out of resilient attitude to change, a positive response to challenges and a core belief in the value of experiencing a variety of collegial learning opportunities. Brenda has constructed meaning in her personal professional development as her learning horizon has expanded.

The issues and possibilities of Brenda's ongoing personal professional learning will be discussed in Chapter 10. The next chapter constructs and analyses the story of the fifth and final teacher interviewed, Ken, and in it can be seen a distinctly different story to that of the other four.

Chapter 8

Ken's established pedagogy: resistance, limitations and emotional suffering

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter I construct Ken's personal professional learning journey across 30 years of classroom teaching.

I begin by identifying the challenges in leadership and teaching of lower ability students that Ken faced and which led to a refocusing on his classroom practice. I then highlight several critical incidents that presented personal dilemmas and professional challenges for Ken. His evaluation of the failures in his career, his ability to balance stress and satisfaction, and his acceptance and relinquishing of difficult situations are then examined. As a coda to his story, I look at Ken's consideration of his life goals outside of teaching.

The narrative mode of analysis for this chapter highlights the unique contextual aspects of Ken's story. I examine the tensions between his established pedagogy and external innovations in practice, and explore the greater self-understanding he gains in the interpersonal context with his students. I also consider Ken's use of language in revealing his need for re-energising and maintaining the right and best approach in his teaching.

Finally, the chapter discussion reveals how Ken's approach to his learning enables him to construct self-understanding from his personal professional development. A further analysis of the relevant literature contributes to understanding of the inherent value of years of teaching experience.

8.2 Ken's story

8.2.1 (Re)focusing on classroom teaching – "from time to time people suggest to me that I should go for positions and I just say 'I don't want it'"

Ken's 30-year experience has spanned mathematics teaching at two government secondary schools and at an independent secondary day school in an outer metropolitan area. He has experienced a spectrum of learner needs across a variety of school communities, often appreciating the change as a chance to reinvigorate his teaching:

Every school I've been at would have a completely different clientele, different staff, probably a different view about education, about I suppose, splitting academic and extracurricular. When I was thinking about leaving at the end of 2009 I wasn't too concerned because I thought to myself well if I go somewhere else that's going to be a new experience and it might energise the batteries a bit too in a different situation.

Ken's third teaching position, from 1996, was at a boys' school catering for junior secondary Years 7-10 and coeducational for senior secondary Years 11-12:

I've been at the school now 14 years. I don't have any roles of responsibility outside my teaching. I assist with, there was a mathematics competition that was run this year and I did quite a bit of organisation in that, but apart from that I don't have to worry too

much about my own classroom situation.

The interactions within his classroom teaching at this school were more motivating than the administrative tasks Ken perceived as prominent in the coordination of a subject such as mathematics:

I still get the motivation from being in a classroom, and trying to get interaction and a sort of a keenness to learn. I look at the head teacher's role and there's a lot of paperwork which I just find tedious and not very motivating.

In 2000, Ken accepted a house dean role in which he was responsible for the pastoral care of approximately 240 students from Years 8 to 12, but relinquished it when he found it not to his liking:

I found it very draining and I don't know if I didn't have the right personality to sort of switch off. ... You know from time to time people suggest to me that I should go for positions and I just say 'I don't want it'.

The stressful experience of this pastoral role determined Ken's future direction in not seeking promotional roles and their additional responsibilities. He recognised that the emotionally exhausting role strained his personal wellbeing.

In 2009, Ken requested a reduction to 80 percent full-time teaching role in order to decrease his workload outside of class time. He attended the school every workday for his part-time teaching of junior mathematics, but was not happy with his class allocation:

This is not from a personal view because a number of people have said to me 'it's ridiculous the classes you ended up with'. I don't know if it was inexperience or lack of communication [with the new head of

department] but I've ended up with all junior classes, which is not a problem but three of them were below what you'd imagine as an average class.

Often the recognition for years of teaching experience includes an allocation of a senior secondary class within a distribution of classes across year group and ability levels. Ken acknowledged that this is an assumption he has held over his 30 years of teaching experience.

Ken's teaching allocation presented a challenge, in that he had to manage a number of difficult students. This undermined his personal satisfaction with his teaching situation and he again considered taking leave from his role at the school in 2011. Subsequently, he accepted a 40 percent part-time role to job share with a teacher returning from maternity leave in 2012:

It seemed an attractive option. So I had to think about it and I've agreed to do it next year, which means I'll only have to go in Thursday-Friday of each week. I'm still uncertain about my long-term future of staying at this school.

After more than 30 years of teaching, Ken confirmed that his development focus was on classroom teaching. He acknowledged that he did not have the inclination or ability to deal with the stress of a teacher leader role. He quelled the doubts about remaining at his current school by accepting a job share role on a part-time basis.

8.2.2 Influences within new situations – “wanting to teach in not such an ideal school but try and make a difference”

Ken's first teaching appointment was in a government school in an area impacted by lower socioeconomic issues. His first head teacher of mathematics established a good reputation for the mathematics department within a difficult school environment. For Ken, this head teacher presented a

role model who significantly influenced the development of his teaching philosophy:

He once said to me that he had two ambitions when he started teaching, one was to be a head teacher and one was to teach in a tough area. And that's what he did. He went to a school that was hard to staff, that was having a lot of problems. ... He didn't do his three years or whatever that gave you enough clout to get to a school with less challenges. He stayed there for over 15 years, it could have been longer.

The role modelling of this first head teacher influenced Ken to remain in this challenging school environment and was influential in helping him to accept difficult situations in his career.

Dealing with discipline and behaviour management issues was a substantial part of Ken's learning during his early years of teaching. He considers the school principal at that time to have been unaware of the difficulties that teachers were dealing with:

There were situations that probably in my first school that I've rarely encountered since, just the environment ... There was one situation where this gang sort of just came into the school and started causing mayhem. The police came in to throw them out and even after it was all over, the headmaster didn't even know about it, didn't even know this had happened.

Ken recognises the significant impact of his first school environment on his learning in regard to student behaviour management. The mathematics head teacher's leadership contrasted to the negative exemplar of the principal's

leadership, and this contrast was formative in Ken's development and teaching approach.

After teaching for three years in this difficult school environment, Ken accepted a position at a neighbouring school in a similar socioeconomic area. After another three years, he decided initially against a transfer to a school of his choice.

So in the end I stayed there six years and I think part of the reason that I did stay there longer than most people was I was still thinking about his philosophy about wanting to teach in not such an ideal school but try and make a difference. But having said that I've done what a lot of teachers have done, the next school I was at was more academic and less socio-economic dramas and then where I am at now is by far, I suppose it's a private school, it's got good facilities."

Transitioning from a government to a private school environment left Ken somewhat compromised in his teaching philosophy of influencing the learning and future directions of students from less advantaged socioeconomic areas. However, at the private school he identified new challenges due to a range of academic and socio-economic issues. He gained insights into his students' home lives and their relationships with their parents when he was in a house dean role. His concerns centred on the effects of parenting for his students:

In some cases they would just throw money at the kids and think that was being a good parent. You've got to put a bit of time in too you know, you've got to get your priorities right.

In his role as house dean, he was aware of difficulties students experienced outside the school environment. He felt this was a privileged position that

provided opportunities for developing relationships with them. He directed his pastoral care to providing a safe and happy environment at school for the students who were struggling to improve:

So that sort of encouraged me to try and do the best I can because if I knew the home situation of a student I'd try and make the school environment as pleasant as possible for them, try and eliminate the outside factors. So when you're at school you're in a safe environment, you've got people that care about you, so that was the good part.

Ken's awareness of the differing personal situations of his students guided his ongoing pastoral approach. However, the emotional stress of bearing responsibilities for many students eventually led him to resign the house dean position. He then refocused his practice on the skills required to teach early adolescents of below average ability:

There's a skill that's probably taking me longer than most people to realise that you've just got to keep at it, keep working away, hoping that it's going to happen, that they're going to see the light, they'll understand what I'm trying to teach them.

Ken recognised that his learning entailed making mistakes and felt that his mistakes had diminished over time. He also searched for strategies to differentiate his teaching as required for varied learner ability levels:

I've got the skill to not always teach them some work but to use different strategies that, all right this is not working what will I do now, what can I do later on. ... Some of those students would be at a concrete level, they've got very little abstract thinking, so I can relate that to something that they'll understand. Whereas earlier in my

career, I'd be trying to teach them the same as students with more intelligence or more ability so I try and adapt to the class I'm teaching. There are some classes I make very little effort and yet they understand it because in some of the top classes, the students I am teaching are a lot smarter than me.

His experience in new situations allowed for learning through interactions with colleagues, students and parents. Ken continued to evaluate his professional learning through the complications and dilemmas of his teaching experience.

8.2.3 Reflecting on motivation and failures – “I always want to think well I've made an effort”

Early in his career Ken applied for the eligibility listing for a head of subject department leadership role in a government school. Colleagues encouraged him to put aside misgivings that he was not personally equipped or inclined to undertake a leadership role:

I didn't go for it with good intentions; it was almost like I'm supposed to go for my list and it went pretty badly. I think for quite a while I felt a failure that I'd gone for it and it had gone badly and it took a while for me to think well I never wanted it, I didn't want it in the first place and it's not going to make a big difference to my career.

This thought-provoking experience clarified Ken's personal disinclination for seeking a head of department role. He recognised that his unenthusiastic attitude and subsequent failure in the eligibility negatively impacted his teaching of a senior class:

I didn't do the right thing. I didn't push them hard enough. I didn't put the effort in ... I'd go into classes without any lesson plan and I don't do that. ... I can cope with alright I could've done better but I

don't want to look back and think well I didn't even put the effort in. I always want to think I've made an effort.

Recognising the negative impacts that poor motivation had on his teaching practice and his students' learning, Ken resolved always to contribute his best efforts. He questioned his teaching approach and was equally concerned about his own work efforts and those of his students. He believed that some students were not fulfilling their learning responsibilities:

I don't know if I'm being too hard on myself but I do feel as if I've had a lot of failures over the years. I sometimes get a bit despondent about that ... I did put time in, it wasn't as if I didn't make an effort, some of those students didn't do their part of the bargain.

Ken aimed to dedicate time and effort to his practice, but at times despondency presented a hurdle to maintaining his motivation. The thoughts of those previous failures impacted on his confidence. However, he directed his understanding of his failures into developing a better self-understanding of his personal professional capabilities. He reaffirmed his teaching approach with an understanding that his enthusiasm was reflected in his students' motivation for learning.

Ken's confidence and motivation were again challenged by the pressure and emotional strain of his house dean responsibilities later in his career. He was particularly drained by the dilemma of addressing one boy's unacceptable behaviour while also providing pastoral support for the boy and his father:

I think the worst case was where this boy had got into so much trouble that there needed to be some consequences ... He wasn't going to be allowed to go to the year dance on a Friday night. The father rang up

and said "oh he's really depressed about not going to this dance and I'm worried that he's going to do something to himself". And I said ... "if I turn around now he is not going to learn anything from this" ... In the back of my mind I kept on thinking "you know what if he does do something" and I went the whole weekend with it on my mind ... I probably took things a bit too personally but I just found it too stressful. I couldn't sort of switch off.

The experience of the house dean role provided Ken with significant realisations. He came to understand the detrimental impact of the emotional strain he experienced from critical incidents, though he still valued the personal and professional satisfaction of working with students in a pastoral care role. When he decided to resign from this role, the house dean coordinator for the school recognised Ken's commitment and encouraged him to stay. Although Ken experienced critical insights into the benefits he derived from student pastoral care he was also aware of the debilitating impact of the associated emotional stress in a pastoral care leadership role. This greater self-understanding influenced his ongoing approach to his teaching practice.

8.2.4 Accepting then relinquishing difficulties – "I knew that there was no point going on with it"

Teaching classes that comprised students of mainly below average ability presented a challenge for Ken. He initially accepted the role of teaching a particularly difficult junior class of immature development, lower academic ability and motivation levels. He found that *"it was just getting ridiculous to how much time I was spending not on teaching but on disciplining them"*.

Although it proved to be a continual challenge, the relationship Ken developed with a particularly difficult class led him to consider teaching the

same class in the following year. His focus was on improving the ongoing learning for the students as well as realising the benefits of the behaviour management he had put in place with these students:

But the head teacher said "no you've had enough of them and they've had enough of you, I'll put somebody else on." And probably in the weeks that have gone by I've realised that she was right ... I was almost relieved that she did say "look we'll put somebody else on there with a fresh start".

Ken aimed to spare his colleagues the challenge of managing such a difficult class, yet he accepted an alternate view that both he and the students would be better served with changing their class teacher. He continued to focus on classroom behaviour management and the pastoral care aspects of his teaching practice.

Ken was aware of weaknesses in the mathematical ability of some students. He perceived this as a learning opportunity, so he approached the school principal and proposed a professional learning initiative that involved contacting some local primary schools to share insights between teachers on ability levels, group work and student responsibility in learning. In proposing this initiative, Ken was eager to apply insights he had gained from previously implementing similar initiatives, but his efforts met with resistance from the principal:

I couldn't convince him that I had done this at other schools ... In the end he tells me the reason he says "I'm worried that you're going to go down there and tell them they're doing everything the wrong way". At that point I knew that there was no point going on with it.

Upset that his evaluation was taken as a criticism, Ken became frustrated and cynical with the principal's lack of professional support and trust. He lost his initial enthusiasm and eventually gave up on this initiative as *"it was nine months before he finally came out and told me that he didn't want to do it"*. This lack of support for Ken's proposed initiative represented another negative effect on his professional confidence and motivation. He believed that his pedagogical focus and experience as a classroom teacher were undervalued by those in leadership positions, so he continued to look for other possibilities to stimulate his interest.

8.2.5 Juncture for consideration – "It's one of the few times in my life just thinking 'what do I want out of my life?'"

In 2010, Ken was feeling guarded about the learning experiences possible in his job share arrangement for the coming year.

Initially, he acknowledged that he may experience *"a fairly steep learning curve"* but felt the reduced face-to-face time would be a bonus. Ken intended to use his substantial free time to investigate ongoing connections with the teaching of secondary mathematics. Up to the time of the third and final interview, he had been a member of a talented students committee for his professional mathematics association. He wished to investigate the input he could provide into activities for Year 12 HSC¹⁹ extension students. However, Ken's investigation did not eventuate into his envisioned possibilities of working in schools. In 2012, he took combined leave without pay and long service leave that allowed:

an interesting way to look at life ... Retiring early looks very attractive. I don't have an expensive lifestyle so it is possible with

¹⁹ Refer to Glossary. Higher School Certificate (HSC).

savings and super I could get along alright. Like not having to stick to timelines, not having to deal with any stressful work situations, even just having so much time now and being able to do things I enjoy.

Distancing himself from the demands of his teaching career and the personal stress he had experienced enabled him to envision a different future with activities he enjoyed or had postponed through work commitments.

Ken's time on leave also allowed him to come to an important revelation concerning the role of teaching in his life:

I'm surprised at how comfortable I am that if I didn't have anything to do with teaching or mathematics again I'd still be alright. I'd still have a good life. I always thought I want to stay in teaching, I want to stay in mathematics ... It's one of the few times in my life just thinking "what do I want out of my life?" From the moment I left school I wanted to be a maths teacher. It's probably getting older ... You know it's almost a significant change in my life that if it never happened again, well, worse things could happen.

The personal stress and ongoing demands of teaching became more unattractive as Ken contemplated retirement. The importance of teaching mathematics no longer provided him the personal motivation to consider ongoing connections to education, which also enabled him to find fulfilment in focusing on his personal interests and needs.

8.3 Narrative modes of storytelling

In this section, as in the preceding chapters, I use the ideational, interpersonal, textual or spoken context to analyse personal professional learning experiences. In regard to Ken, the ideational context shows the tensions between his established pedagogy and potential innovations for

practice. The interpersonal context relies on developing self-understanding and the learning achieved through relationships with an influential role model and with students. The textual or spoken context reveals his need for re-energising himself and maintaining the right and best approach in his teaching.

8.3.1 Ideational context: tensions between established pedagogy and innovative practice

Ken's early experiences were influential in formulating his desire to make a difference to the lives of less advantaged students, while his later years of teaching practice centred on motivating more difficult students to learn. His impetus was a belief that students at all ability levels are capable of achieving if they are encouraged to care about their learning. His pedagogical focus was on challenging student thinking through the established traditions of his teaching practice. He incorporated incremental changes in his classroom practice, but new learning technologies represented a tension to his established pedagogy. His ideational context incorporates a vision of sharing his experience across different schools. This idea is somewhat at variance with his reticence to embracing innovations for his teaching practice.

Ken envisaged a different future for his mathematics teaching and professional learning through different school environments:

Well I've had this bizarre dream for years, as time goes on it seems less likely that it will ever eventuate but I've had this goal of just sort of being freelance, going from school to school, taking year groups, throwing some ideas around, trying to cater for all the different levels. So it will never happen ... But it's still a goal, it's still there, it's still in my mind.

His aspiration was to share his established teaching practice with colleagues and to teach students of varying academic ability and maturity levels.

Ken's personal interests in other subjects, such as history and science, also influenced his teaching practice. He applied real-world examples to promote students' understanding of mathematical concepts. He aimed to motivate students in their learning and to encourage them to care about their learning:

I try and explain to them that it's a way of thinking that if you look in the real world, if a lot of people looked at things algebraically they wouldn't get into so much trouble. I mention things like the financial crisis²⁰ where if people had done the most basic of research they would have noticed this pattern of boom and bust, and the returns that were getting made by certain companies couldn't historically, just looking at patterns, couldn't possibly continue.

He created cross-curriculum links for his students, offering them real-world examples in order to develop an appreciation for the learning of abstract concepts such as algebra.

Ken believed that as students are capable of achieving in an occupational context, so they should be able to achieve within the secondary school environment:

I still have a belief that it is possible to get a lot more out of them. They can go and leave school and get a driver's licence or get an apprenticeship. I think to myself those things are a lot harder than doing simple arithmetic or a bit of secondary mathematics. So I suppose it's a matter of motivating them.

²⁰ Refers to the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) that commenced in 2007.

This broadening of student learning beyond their current context was aimed at envisaging future situations in which they could apply their learning. The important aspect for Ken's pedagogy was making this real-world connection for his students in order to motivate them in their learning.

Through encouraging his students to explain their thinking, Ken aimed to instil a more thoughtful approach to learning mathematics:

I'll try and get them to explain what they're doing rather than just repeat a few words. I'll say "What do you understand by this formula? What does it mean?"

Ken's teaching for understanding was aimed at improving the confidence and attention to learning of his adolescent students. He also compared the capacity of technologies such as an interactive whiteboard with the use of thoughtful pedagogy:

There are still things you can do on a whiteboard or blackboard that don't take hours of preparation, don't require modern technology. ... I can put on the board a trapezium, a quadrilateral with one pair of parallel sides and I can just say "write down three ways to work out this area, three different ways". And it's happened a couple of times where one boy has found four ways and I just think to myself that doesn't require expensive material, it doesn't require hours of preparation, it's relatively open-ended, it's giving students a chance to show what they know or what they can put together.

Challenging his students' mathematical thinking through problem-solving was more valuable to Ken than the technology used to pose the problem. In such ways, Ken expressed confidence: *"in the later years it's more fine-tuning,*

it's just adjusting the way I'm teaching slightly rather than making radical changes''.

The established aspects of Ken's teaching practice represented a proven pedagogical approach:

And that's one thing that worries me that these new ideas come in and everyone throws out the baby with the bathwater. I think that's a shame because there are some parts of teaching that will never be out of date, that will always play a part.

In comments such as these, Ken is alluding to an 'essential nature' of a teacher and aligning this to an established pedagogical approach. In his teaching practice he was cautious in adopting new practices in a faddish manner, although he recognised the possible benefits of technologies such as the interactive whiteboard. His approach involved initial investigation of some new practices, but caution about early adoption of new technologies led him to remain with his established practices.

Ken's teaching philosophy focused on accepting difficult situations existing in different school environments. He expressed confidence with his teaching practices and was comfortable with his proven pedagogical approach. He sought personal renewal in his practice more through investigating a possibility for a sharing approach to teaching mathematics than through the adoption of new practices.

8.3.2 Interpersonal context: self-understanding and learning from students

Learning in Ken's early years of teaching relied on observing teachers and being influenced by a head teacher. His later teaching did not involve peer observations, although he attested to the positive influence of role models and colleagues for his learning. His teaching philosophy centred on pastoral

care and motivating students to learn. He gained a better understanding of his students and developed greater self-awareness, though his relationship to leaders became contested.

Ken's reflection on his failures allowed for greater self-awareness regarding his personal professional capabilities. He recognised the importance of specific role models early in his career in determining his teaching philosophy and valued ongoing collegial support: *"in keeping a belief that things are going in a good direction at least some of the time"*.

His philosophy determined his teaching experiences within difficult school environments and influenced him to help students from less advantaged socioeconomic areas, despite difficulties:

I suppose I'd gone into teaching with a bit, probably a naïve view that I'd go out and help these unfortunate situations of students that weren't getting a fair go. But you soon realise that it's not just a matter of turning up and saying "here I am to save you and help you", you've sort of got to win them over.

Ken realised that student motivation was essential for improving student educational outcomes and future opportunities. This influenced his approach to teaching mathematics and his behaviour management of students of differing academic ability and maturity levels. Ken experienced both physical and emotional strains through these demanding interactions and was cognisant of resetting himself to the needs of each new class. He used periods of quiet written work at times as he believed them necessary for both students and teacher:

I know at least this will calm things down, they might not learn too much about it but I'll get through this hour of class with these boys

and not be drained at the end of it.

The behaviour management issues of teaching a difficult class later in his career prompted Ken to question the impact of the age gap on his teaching:

It's hard to get into their heads. It must be a factor because some of the students I'm teaching are 40 years younger than me. A lot of students I can relate to quite well, some of the harder ones you're thinking is the age gap a factor here.

The learning for Ken occurred through modifying his practice in order to address the intellectual and emotional needs of his students at varying academic ability and maturity levels.

Over his career, Ken developed an awareness that he was not equipped to undertake a leadership role. He also saw *"over the years, and it's in the minority, teachers that I think should not be teaching"*. As Ken could not relate to colleagues who did not share the same pastoral care approach, he also recognised that he did not want to manage colleagues who did not prioritise student relationships and did not adequately deal with behaviour management. His experiences in the house dean role allowed him to empathise with colleagues undertaking leadership roles:

I still think the job is almost impossible to do properly because there are just too many students, they've still got their own classes to teach and you just can't do it.

In the later stage of his classroom teaching, Ken found that he valued the *"release valve"* of shared humour with a like-minded colleague when dealing with a difficult class:

that in spite of all the dramas they've caused I can sit back and have a laugh with this colleague. I can say well it's not ideal but they're

worse things that can happen to you.

The camaraderie of this colleague provided positive support for Ken and enabled him to maintain a pragmatic perspective in evaluating this experience. In contrast, the lack of acknowledgement of his views and a lack of leadership support was disheartening for Ken:

Things that on their own wouldn't be major issues but when I add them all up I just think well nobody wants to listen to me.

Ken was deflated by his lack of influence with school leaders in implementing a new school initiative. He expressed increasing dissatisfaction with how student behaviour management was addressed, and was unable to confidently voice his ideas when he felt his expertise was not recognised by those in school leadership.

Throughout this time, though, he continued to look for cross-curriculum links to improve student understanding:

It would be good if I could go into other subjects just to have a look at the things that they're doing even if they're not directly related to my subject. I should do some observation ... [but] that's something that I don't do enough, I don't go and observe lessons and I should but for some reason early in my career I did that, I'd go and observe experienced teachers.

Motivating students to learn was central to Ken's ongoing learning for his classroom teaching within his established pedagogy. His interpersonal relationship with colleagues was dependent on sharing a similar teaching philosophy and approach to practice. He acknowledged that his observation of other teachers would broaden his teaching with new practices. He recognised that he needs to take the initiative to reap the benefits of this type

of collegial learning and support but was unable to harness the energy for this learning.

8.3.3 Textual or spoken context: re-energising and maintaining the right and best approach

Ken's spoken language reinforces his unique motivations and approach to his classroom teaching practice. He uses metaphor to convey the emotional underpinnings of his experience and uses more traditional idiomatic expressions to given meaning to his behaviours and those of colleagues and parents.

He uses the idea of energy to metaphorically represent his emotional state. He mentions several times a need for recharging his energy to carry on through the pressures of teaching and notes that he cannot emotionally disconnect from the stress of a demanding pastoral care coordinator role. Ken represents the revitalisation he experienced in new situation with metaphors:

... energise the batteries a bit too in a different situation.

I didn't have the right personality to sort of switch off.

I couldn't sort of switch off.

I don't know if at the end of each year I just switch off or as I said my memory mightn't be as good. I don't think a lot about individual classes unless they were a bit different to the norm.

Through metaphor Ken expresses the emotional impact of his pastoral care responsibilities. Conserving energy for emotional and physical aspects of teaching indicates Ken's concern for his longevity in the profession.

Ken's language expresses the significance of his teaching responsibilities, with the term 'cutting corners' being used to refer to his failing to meet the requirements for student care and learning needs:

I suppose everybody cuts corners but I wasn't going to cut corners to a ridiculous level.

It's not as if I've cut corners with the other classes.

I know in their minds they are probably thinking "I'm doing the right thing", it's not as if they are always cutting corners.

I'm going to cut this kid loose and not even make an effort.

His metaphorical use of 'cutting corners' implies that he feels he and others did not demonstrate the gamut of behaviours and attitudes needed to address the pastoral care needs of students.

Ken often refers to what is 'right' or 'best' in relation to his abilities and his attitudes towards his teaching practice:

... whether it was the best work I could do ...

So I just thought it wasn't the best for me necessarily.

... which possibly is not the right motivation.

I'm not the best at following things through.

I intend to do the best I can.

He also refers to his influence on his students' development and learning as being the 'right' or 'best' approach or desired outcome:

I sort of felt as if I did something to get them back on the right path that was satisfying too.

So that sort of encouraged me to try and do the best I can.

... think about what I'm supposed to be doing, what's in the student's best interests ...

I didn't do the right thing, I didn't push them.

I didn't do the right thing by those kids.

I'll still make an effort to direct them in the right path.

I'll still make an effort to direct them in the right way.

I probably should be going in and thinking well this is the best for the students, this is the best for the school, but I'm thinking well I like the idea of the release time.

With these terms Ken questions whether his personal professional attributes represent the most acceptable teaching efforts. His language also reinforces his established pedagogical approach as the standard for most appropriately addressing the needs of his students. However, with his most recent teaching challenges, Ken expresses concern that perhaps his intentions focus on his own needs rather than on those of his students.

Ken uses idiom to indicate the appropriateness of the actions of others for motivating adolescent students to learn. He acknowledges the influence of other teachers as well as the parents of students in their pastoral care responsibilities:

You're not doing the right thing by that student. Even though you're complaining about that student, you're not doing the right thing by that student.

Being a good parent; you've got to put a bit of time in too you know, you've got to get your priorities right.

These idioms reveal the standards of behaviour Ken values. He feels responsible for the adolescents' wellbeing and also for being able to adequately address their learning needs. His language also emphasises the emotional significance of student pastoral care on his own wellbeing.

8.4 Chapter discussion

In this section I explore how Ken's personal professional learning journey is distinctly different to those of the other teachers in my research. Similarly to the other four teachers, Ken was identified for his teaching and learning expertise by a teaching colleague. However, the interviews with Ken helped to foreground the different understandings of having *experience* and demonstrating *expertise*. Ken's overall approach to his own learning relies on an established pedagogy that reinforces aspects of his expertise in teaching mathematics. This supported his pastoral approach within the confined environment of a classroom, but failures in teacher leader roles reinforced his perceived limitations and focused his awareness mostly on his own teaching. The inclusion of Ken in my research necessitates consideration of the inherent value associated with years of experience as well as of the implications of achieving or not achieving promotional positions, in order to understand how these may or may not contribute to the development of expertise.

In the interviews, Ken recognised the positive influence of an early role model, along with significant incidents of failure, as shaping his personal professional learning. The defining nature of these influences in some ways overwhelmed the subsequent learning opportunities for him. Ken acknowledged that the pedagogy he established in his first teaching context was little altered through his middle and later teaching years. This in turn restricted his motivation for and acceptance of the need to develop his

practices through a professional learning community. He mostly relied on an established schema for understanding student learning, until his later challenges, when he came to understand the differentiation required in teaching practices for more challenging students. My analysis suggests that Ken's overall attitude to learning was to maintain the pedagogical approach of his early classroom successes in order to counter the emotional stress of his failures. His professional rewards in teaching were compromised by his belief of not being 'good enough' to achieve leadership eligibility, to meet the responsibilities of a pastoral care coordination role, or to influence future strategic directions for teacher learning through a proposed initiative. There is a noticeable difference between Ken and the other teachers in my research in the way they construct meaning from their personal professional development. For example, his approach to his professional learning shows less desire and capacity for innovation in teaching practice than the approach of the other teachers. The tendency towards limitations rather than envisaging personal opportunities in Ken's development and learning provides little empowerment. His tendency to reflect in isolation does not afford the reflexivity on his experiences possible through sharing with colleagues.

Ken's connection with the defining influences of his initial teaching context is not replicated within his later school contexts. His motivation to teach and make a difference to the lives of students underpinned the development of his philosophy of teaching in less advantaged schools. His choice to remain longer in his early school environments was based on the role model of his first head teacher of mathematics. In these early years Ken adjusted his classroom practice through observation of this role model and other teachers. The critical incident in which he failed to gain eligibility listing for a leadership role then reinforced a negative assessment of his

performance and capabilities. The influence of the role model teacher and Ken's failure within his early career context both influenced Ken's personal professional learning. Tsui's (2009) examination of the developmental processes of experienced teachers reveals "critical differences between expert and non-expert teachers (including novice and experienced teachers)" (Tsui, 2009, p. 424). She holds that there is a critical difference in expert teachers' connections with their teaching context and the understanding established within this context. A noticeable difference for Ken and other teachers in my research was their approach to each new context.

Ken's subsequent changes in teaching context did not appear to provide the impetus to act on his reflections. He reframes his formative learning experiences through an approach that reinforces his early successful teaching practices. He also perceived his move from teaching in challenging schools to a less difficult teaching environment as a compromise in the philosophy he forged with his first role model. His initial failure at eligibility listing and his later relinquishing of a pastoral care coordinator role also impacted on his self-confidence. He was reticent to compound this initial risk-taking with the possibility of further failure and expressed frustration about these disempowering experiences. Relevant to Ken's experience is Lortie's (1975) illustration of the 'ambivalence' of teacher sentiment in accepting "the hegemony of the school system on which he is economically and functionally dependent" although still yearning for greater control (Lortie, 1975, p. 186). For Ken, his perception of the different approaches to education in each new situation appeared to fall short of his initial experiences. He negatively reflected on the management of student behaviour by those school leaders responsible for particular incidents and issues outside his classroom. He held, however, a comparatively positive view of the empowerment and control he experienced within his classroom. This contrasted to his criticism

of school leaders; early in his career he had been empathetic to the demands of pastoral care leaders but when he felt misunderstood and unable to exert influence later in his career he presented a negative perception of the school leaders.

Ken's teacher education and early teaching experiences indicate the challenge of needing to continually reframe personal professional learning over many years of teaching experience. Shulman and Shulman (2008) highlight this shifting perspective in their understanding of an accomplished teacher:

An accomplished teacher is a member of a professional community who is ready, willing, and able to teach and to learn from his or her teaching experiences. (Shulman & Shulman, 2008, p. 258)

This appears to have altered for Ken as his career progressed. Ken's practice was influenced in his early years of teaching by his observation of more experienced teachers. He initially made adjustments to his classroom practice and in this way developed an acumen for his established pedagogy in teaching mathematics. The role of reflection was important to him in this early teaching practice. The literature (Berliner, 1987; Shulman & Shulman, 2008; Tsui, 2009) indicates the value of reflection for professional development. Berliner (1987) notes that "personal experience that is reflected on and examined, in order to derive ways to improve one's own performance, is a very valuable teacher" (Berliner, 1987, p. 60). Tsui (2009) holds that expert teachers demonstrate "capabilities to integrate various aspects of knowledge in relation to the teaching act" and "to engage in reflection and conscious deliberation" (Tsui, 2009, p. 424).

Ken identified in his interviews that the failures in his leadership experience adversely impacted his teaching at those times. Nevertheless,

although he did not allude to specific reflective periods through his middle teaching years, he described developing an awareness of learner differentiation during his later years of teaching difficult classes. Ken's experience exemplifies the reflection in isolation that is not productive for a teacher's learning, as indicated by Kotzee (2012). Kotzee (2012) is critical of the individual focus of professional knowledge as typified by Schön's (1987) theory, criticising that it "fails to be able to account for how people can learn to become part of social practices or can improve at them" (Kotzee, 2012, p. 15). He advocates a 'practice turn' that focuses on understanding tacit knowledge and the social dimension of learning (Kotzee, 2012).

Lave and Wenger (1991) represent socially situated learning as entailing the legitimate transformation of the learner through their participation "in becoming part of the community" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 111). In contrast, Ken's sharing of practice was not evident when he was at the two schools of his later career, where he was more guarded in interpersonal interactions with colleagues. He acknowledged the positive collegial support he received from one colleague in dealing with a difficult class and only reciprocated support for those colleagues who had previously supported him. On the whole, Ken remained aloof from the broader learning community and restricted his involvement to the direct sphere of his faculty. Ken's reflections on his later years of teaching focus on his reduced energy levels, which accounts for his restricted professional involvement within a restricted timeframe and with limited physical and emotional resources. This difference between Ken in his later teaching years and the other teachers in my research is indicative that 'full participation' in a learning community is mostly reassessed and renegotiated from early to mid-careers. Yet both Ken and the other teachers demonstrate an ongoing struggle in developing confidence and capabilities. The professional development experiences for

these teachers were entwined with accepting a 'master practitioner' character as represented by Lave and Wenger (1991):

Moving toward full participation in practice involves not just a greater commitment of time, intensified effort, more and broader responsibilities within the community, and more difficult and risky tasks, but, more, significantly, an increasing sense of identity as a master practitioner. (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 111)

Ken's demonstrated lack of confidence outside his classroom practice led to disengagement with colleagues and school leaders. Ken was derisive of the principal, characterising the principal's view of Ken as a "*lowly classroom teacher*" unable to implement an initiative he had proposed. He was also aware of creative and innovative practices of other teachers throughout the progression of his career. Despite his understanding of new education technologies and practices, he did not pursue opportunities for observation or team teaching in which to share and reflect on the use of new technology in teaching practice. In his later career, Ken experienced difficulty in learning to use new technology and did not envisage "*making radical changes*" to his practice. Ken's later learning was not characterised by a renewal of practice. It was not evident that he had achieved full participation in demonstrating expertise in his practice within a professional learning community – he was not able to persevere with his early career efforts to engage in learning with others outside his classroom. He did not transform into an 'old-timer' within a learning community as suggested by Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of legitimate peripheral participation:

The *person* has been correspondingly transformed into a practitioner, a newcomer becoming an old-timer, whose changing knowledge, skill and discourse are part of a developing identity – in short, a member of

a community of practice. (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 122; italics in the original)

Ken's development of practice occurred particularly within his early years of teaching and was limited through his middle and later years of teaching.

Berliner (1987) highlights the protracted and individual nature of developing expertise in his review of the demonstrated differences of novice and expert teachers in their understanding and use of knowledge. Ken's experience is reminiscent of a Berliner (1987) study, which proposed that:

experts have more elaborate *schema* (networks of knowledge for understanding practice), and a repertoire of *scripts* (knowledge that guides routine responses), which have been developed over years of experience and practice. (Calderhead, 1987, p. 8, italics in the original)

Ken initially developed 'schema' for understanding the needs of his secondary school students, and his philosophy and motivation for teaching were primarily focused on student learning. His significant learning occurred through interactions with students in the classroom and the development of 'scripts' for his mathematics teaching. However, he replicated the established pedagogy from his early career in his middle career. Ken was in jeopardy of portraying "the adage that "twenty years' experience is one year repeated nineteen times" is not far off the mark" (Calderhead, 1987, p. 8) following his failure in gaining promotional roles. It was the later challenge of teaching a particularly difficult class that provided a significant learning in his practice. In contrast to his earlier practice, his last few years of teaching broadened his understanding of differentiating learning needs for more challenging students. He expressed an awareness of catering for a range of levels in students' academic ability, maturity and motivation. Yet on the whole Ken presented a conservative approach in his

professional learning, relying on his established pedagogy rather than risk-taking for innovation and change. His tendency to reflect in isolation without the reflexivity afforded by peers and the collegial support to reframe possible failures was characteristic of his developmental experience. My observations of Ken align with Berliner's (1987) conclusion that "experience should not be a synonym for expertise", in as much as some experience is necessary yet is "certainly *not* a sufficient condition for expertise" (Berliner, 1987, p. 60, italics in the original).

Shulman and Shulman (2008) link the philosophical vision of a teacher with their motivation to learn. A disparity between a teacher's perception of their performance and their vision for teaching can lead to negative feelings. These feelings are represented by (Hammerness, 2006) in a teacher's "disillusionment and despair that can lead them to become jaded about the possible success of efforts in the future" and can also lead teachers "to feel deflated and discouraged, to lose confidence, and sometimes to become more conservative in their teaching" (Hammerness, 2006, p. 4). Ken's failure in the promotional eligibility listing for leadership negatively influenced his motivation from his early years of teaching. He acknowledged the incapacitating effect of this failure on his teaching efforts and the subsequent negative impact on his students' learning, and he began to perceive himself as 'not good enough'. This early failure and his later stressful leadership role destabilised Ken's personal contentment and confidence. These experiences were influential in forming his attitudes and beliefs about his ongoing professional learning and did indeed discourage learning in the way outlined by Hammerness (2006) and Shulman and Shulman (2008).

Zembylas (2005) uses the term 'emotives' for emotional gestures and statements that allow feelings to be easily expressed or dissipated. He

suggests that emotives are emotional expressions that “are the very site of the capacity to effect change” and when “repeated over years, have very profound effects on one’s identity, one’s relationships, one’s prospects” (Zembylas, 2005, p. 470). The concept of emotives is evident throughout the personal professional learning journeys of all teachers in my research. However, the significant difference for Ken is the more pessimistic characterisation of these emotives.

During the interviews, Ken presented a largely negative attitude to change and supported a conservative belief in maintaining an established practice. He attributed his early career failure to a naïve understanding of his capabilities for such a role. He also acknowledged his inclination for being influenced by his colleagues. He had accepted his personal limitations and professional capabilities by the middle phase of his career; he acknowledged that he could not balance the stress with the satisfaction of his pastoral care responsibilities for a large cohort of students. Of relevance here again is the work of Zembylas (2005), who represents the conflict between a teacher’s ‘emotional rules’ and the ‘normative rules’ of school culture as ‘emotional suffering’. The consequence of this suffering is low self-esteem and shame in which “one’s self has been exposed as having some kinds of flaws” (Zembylas, 2005, p. 475). In my research, this type of ‘emotional suffering’ is represented by the stress Ken experienced in coping with the responsibilities of a pastoral care leadership role. He put aside his previously expressed doubt as to his capability or readiness for such a role and accepted a promotion to this role based on his years of teaching experience.

Ken’s emotional suffering is also evident in his continuation of established practices although acknowledging that he should engage in learning through observation and the incorporation of new education technologies. He also

demonstrated a compliant approach in his engagement with leaders when a new initiative he proposed was rejected. Consequently, Ken fatalistically accepted that his views were not valued by others and was less assured of his teaching experience.

Zembylas (2005) goes on to present an equally plausible expression of emotives as 'emotional freedom', which contrast to the experience of emotional suffering:

Emotional freedom (or my preferred term of 'spaces for emotional freedom') is at the core of a teacher's capacity to act (or not to act) as one chooses or prefers, without being normalized by any external compulsion or restraint, although the existence of emotional rules or norms is clearly unavoidable. (Zembylas, 2005, p. 477)

Ken refocused on his classroom teaching in order to offset the emotional suffering of his early career failure and his later recognition of his personal professional limitations in pastoral care coordination. He can, then, be seen to experience an emotional freedom in reinforcing the expertise of his established practice. Zembylas (2005) acknowledges that "some teachers might be able to constitute spaces of emotional freedom that make their professional lives meaningful or tolerable" (Zembylas, 2005, p. 481). This emotional freedom is dependent on their intellectual and emotional rewards, and if not addressed can produce negative effects such as emotional exhaustion, professional demotivation or permanent withdrawal from the profession (Zembylas, 2005, pp. 478-481). This threat was evident for Ken when his teaching of more difficult classes in recent years challenged the emotional freedom he had established in his middle years of teaching. Ken then negotiated a new emotional freedom by initially gaining more free time

through a job share for one year and his subsequent year of leave to reflect on his life goals outside of teaching.

For Ken, the interpersonal relationships with students were the most significant element of his motivation to teach and to re-establish his self-esteem within his teaching. He held strong views on the pastoral care of his students, and this motivated him to undertake a coordination role mid-career and so afforded him an understanding of the limiting effects of emotional stress. Ken's teaching of difficult classes in later years also provided him with learning on differentiated learning needs.

Ken's approach to his own learning continually referenced the expectations and attitudes forged in his early career experiences. His lack of success in subsequent interactions with leaders and colleagues in his later school contexts established obstacles to the broadening of his interpersonal learning or of the embrace of more radical changes in his practice. In recent years, Ken's contribution to the mathematics association was also limited in the time and effort he offered. His professional development was influenced by an overwhelmingly negative self-assessment and his emotional response reinforced the 'safe place' of his established practice as suggested by Zembylas (2005). Nias (1996) found in a review of various studies that 'hostile passions' were represented in teachers' interactions with their colleagues and other aspects of education where:

teachers' most extreme and negative feelings appear when they talk about their colleagues, the structures of schooling or the effect of changing educational policies upon them (Nias, 1996, p. 300).

The studies she reviewed showed that:

teachers had experienced, or anticipated experiencing, loss: of status, of valued collegial relationships, of self-confidence, of reputation ... [and] ... an even more radical loss: that of self. (Nias, 1996, p. 301)

Aligning with the findings of Nias (1996), I found that Ken's 'hostile passions' were evident in his withdrawal from learning interactions with his colleagues and his perceived lack of influence with leaders and within the school system. Nias (1996) argues that the autobiographical nature of studies on teacher emotions demonstrates that storytelling:

can encourage understanding of individuals' social, historical and biographical contexts, facilitate, however painfully, the articulation of reasoned differences, [and] help the development of common technical knowledge, beliefs, values and moral principles. (Nias, 1996, p. 305)

Certainly, Ken's involvement in my research represented the necessary reflexivity with another that was long-suppressed in his personal professional development. His solitary personality encouraged more self-reflection than being able to trust his colleagues for support in his learning and in the sharing of ideas. Ken's experience points to the nuanced nature of expertise and is further highlighted by Ken's nomination for my study, in that teachers may be viewed as expert in different ways. In Ken's written response to the third interview question on what constitutes teaching expertise, he articulated specific aspects that were evident in the stories of the other teachers in my research, but these aspects were not present in his own story. From his representation of expertise Ken concluded that:

Having written these words, it makes me more convinced that you have asked the wrong person in your thesis if I am supposed to be an expert.

Ken's response also highlights that the 'personal' aspect of teacher development should not reinforce solitary pursuits. Most important is that years of experience should harness the contextually diverse responses of ongoing challenges to allow for unique approaches to teacher personal professional learning.

In this chapter, the construction of Ken's story illustrates a personal professional learning journey distinctly different to those of the other teachers in my research. My narrative analysis indicates that Ken's story is focused on an established pedagogy in order to maintain his perception of the 'right' approach for his students and an understanding of his emotional limitations in difficult situations. I have considered the pivotal influences of Ken's first role model and the critical incidents of failure as shaping his personal professional learning. The beliefs forged in his initial teaching years and his resistance to change limited his approach to his learning and so restricted his potential for personal professional development. The example of Ken challenges the conceptualisation of an expert teacher that readily equates expertise to the number of years of teaching experience. Ken's selection by a colleague as an expert seems to contradict Berliner's assertion that "Education, as it happens, is a field where there is a widespread belief that experience and expertise are quite different" (Berliner, 1987, p. 60).

The issues and possibilities of Ken's ongoing personal professional learning, and the contrast of his story to the narratives of the expert teachers who participated in my research, are discussed in Chapter 10. In the next chapter, I explore the meaning-making of all five teachers in my research and delineate the phenomenological constituents that each navigates in their personal professional learning journeys.

Chapter 9

Learning as central to being – constructing meaning in becoming an expert teacher

9.1 Introduction

Chapters 4–8 have provided a narrative analysis of the personal professional learning journeys of Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary, Barbara and Ken. In this chapter I explore conceptualisations of otherness in order to identify what constitutes meaning in the personal professional development of the teachers. Aligning with Giorgi's (1989, p. 55) analytical approach, I represent the teachers' experience "as lived through" the phenomenological constituents of their personal professional development and signify the influential interrelationships necessary for their personal professional learning.

In the first section, I explore the teachers' perspectives of empathetic understanding and non-competitive collegiality. I distinguish between experience and insight by drawing on the work of Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010), examining how the pre-reflective meaning of experience is constructed through insight in order to understand the significance of the relational and communicative spaces for the five teachers.

In the second section, I explore 'disruptive dissonances' of three ongoing problematics evident within the teachers' relational and communicative

spaces. I develop my notion of an ontological third space, as characterised through the work of Lefebvre (1991), Soja (1996), and Zeichner (2010), to argue that disruptive dissonances are phenomenological constituents of each teacher's lifeworld and are essential for their learning.

This chapter represents one version of possible phenomenological meaning-making about the personal professional development of the teachers. The relative importance and connections among their meanings emerge from my interpretations of their learning experiences. The quotes chosen for representing the phenomenological constituents in this chapter were based on the aspects of phenomenological inquiry discussed in the Chapter 3.

9.2 Experience and insight: perception within relational and communicative spaces

In this section of my phenomenological inquiry into expert teachers' development and learning, I distinguish between the meaning of experience and the understanding from insights on experience. Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) argue that the representation of an experience and the understanding revealed from experience are two "qualitatively separate phenomena", distinguishing between what is "experienced and what Buber refers to as insights" (Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2010, p. 52). This distinction between experience and insight is useful for understanding the relational and communicative spaces of the expert teachers in my research.

Distinguishing between the meaning of teacher experience and the insights gained from their experience reveals the entwined nature of their supportive perspectives and relational understandings, as well as the significance these play in their approach to their own learning.

In distinguishing between the experience and insight possible within a teacher's personal professional development, Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) acknowledge a 'gap' between the personally created contextual knowledge of a teacher and the reasonably accepted knowledge that is generically constituted within the profession. There is a space between this cumulative understanding of experience and the potentially insightful perspective that creates a teacher's unique contextual learning. A teacher's aspiration of fulfilling relationships is essential in the context of developing practical knowledge. Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) recognise this relational approach to reality for a teacher as articulated through two forms of understanding the concept 'I'. In the form of 'I-It', the expression represents the spectator view of describing their experience, while the form 'I-Thou' represents the participant perspective of forming insights from their experience. Lindqvist and Nordänger's (2010) analysis of teacher discussions on practical knowledge reveals the significance of 'insightful presence' expressed by a teacher as an I-Thou participant. They identify situations in which teachers displayed I-Thou participation through 'a state of uncritical relation'. They describe teacher insights on their experience as follows:

To the teachers these situations appear full of meaning and almost magical. These moments seem, in other words, to contain a fundamental meaning for teachers and thus they could also contain a source for learning. However, such experiences occur as offers that can only be received without being combined with strategic planning or conscious reflection. (Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2010, p. 53)

Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) recognise that teachers perceptions of meaningful situations in their experience provide essential meaning that is pre-predicative. That is, the experience is pre-reflectively received without

invoking calculated forethought or deliberations. The understanding achieved through 'insightful presence' is perceived by Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) as essential for a teacher's personal professional development. They support further investigation on the discursive nature of this phenomenon for teachers because:

If insightful presence is a core of teachers' practical knowledge it is of high relevance to try to understand how teachers talk about it.
(Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2010, p. 56)

Significantly for my phenomenological inquiry, this insightful presence is entwined within relational caring and supportive interactions. These perspectives reside within a 'state of uncritical relation' that Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) attribute to an I-Thou participant. In the following section, I discuss the experience and insight of the teachers in my research through their relational caring and support interactions.

9.2.1 Valuing relational caring and supportive interactions

The teachers in my research all exhibit relational caring and supportive interactions towards their students, colleagues and the broader school community. Their perspectives indicate the value they place on understanding the learner and on their professional relationships with colleagues. Their stories exhibit post-reflections on relationships that are used in new situations as developmental experiences. Additionally, the teachers present an 'outward' orientation in which they live and experience "encounters in a different way" (Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2010, p. 52). In this way, the teachers' perspectives also afford insights into their personal professional development. At times, being able to uncritically attune to the pre-reflective meaning of their experience occurs through insightful presences that provide greater self-understanding for the teachers. This

awareness also reverberates in their understanding of others. In this section, I illustrate how the perspectives of empathetic understanding and non-competitive collegiality provide meaning to the development of the teachers' expertise.

Empathetic understanding

The teachers' motivation for learning stems from emotional considerations and caring for their own and their students' development. They consciously explore the feelings of students and colleagues, and espouse the need for compassionate caring of others. They confront the difficulty of relating the different experiences of others to their own experience, and they negotiate possible insights that afford greater self-understanding.

Zembylas' (2005) ethnography of teacher emotions signifies the critical nature of emotions in understanding teacher development and learning. He describes an 'empathetic understanding' as follows:

first, becoming aware of how the other feels and moving into rhythm with these feelings—in a sense, 'feeling with'; and second, developing a passionate affection for the 'object' one studies—that is, being caring and passionate about what one explores. (Zembylas, 2005, pp. 478-479)

For Zembylas (2005), this "empathetic understanding" is indicated through a perceptive and compassionate understanding for another. The teacher shows relational caring in an intuitive communicative space for 'feeling with' and 'affection for' another. In this way, the teacher is able to understand their students through aspects of their own development and learning:

In short, empathetic understanding has to do with the existence of a non-verbal 'resonance' that allows for empathetic communication across possible gaps. (Zembylas, 2005, p. 479)

Empathetic understanding therefore encompasses the meaning of the experience and the insights for self-understanding and understanding of others. A teacher's empathetic understanding can form part of the development of their expertise and be indicated by a resonance between teacher and others. Their professional caring for the learner includes an understanding of their students as well as the parents and school community. In the discussion that follows, empathetic understanding is examined for each of the five teachers.

Sally places importance on relating to all students in order to support their learning. Her empathetic understanding allows her to identify the similarities and differences between qualities in herself and those of her students. She describes her empathetic understanding in the following excerpt:

*I think the art is actually finding qualities in kids that you can't see anything of in yourself, you know. I struggle with that sometimes. ...
I think I find myself unconsciously actually looking at kids, and identifying qualities that I've got, or that my close circle of friends has, and I don't know if that's good or bad, but it seems to work.*

Sally's empathetic understanding allows her to focus on individual student needs. This is especially valuable in relating to students who are dissimilar to her. Finding "a little pocket" for each student requires her resonance with each student within a relational space. This perspective allows her to establish connections with students, including those students who do not volunteer answers. She describes her empathy for these students as follows:

I'm really conscious of doing that to kids as well, like "and what do you think?" just because you think they're not listening, I won't do it because it's an awful feeling, I hate it.

Sally's response mirrors her own feelings in a similar situation. She projects an understanding of herself into an empathetic understanding of her students.

Sally also recognises the complexity in empathising with different students. She describes empathising with individual students in the following excerpt.

I think that's a real art. It's probably putting a label to what I've said earlier about trying to tap into a quality that I see of myself in a student or being able to empathise and things like that. I think that's an area that I'm always trying to develop and refine, just that emotional intelligence.

Sally refers to the notion of 'emotional intelligence', which was popularised by Goleman (1995). The concept of emotional intelligence was proposed and investigated throughout the 1990s by John Mayer and Peter Salovey. This type of intelligence incorporates "the capacity to reason about emotions" and the use "of emotions to enhance thinking" (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004, p. 197). Sally's recognition of the emotional aspect of understanding is significant for her relationships with students and is also a catalyst for her learning.

Sally's sentiment is similar to Lincoln's pastoral perspective. He feels that "it's about me as a person walking into a room and being able to relate and know that I'm able to do that". For Lincoln, the need for empathy is vital in order for

him to relate to each student's unique situation. He describes the success of his approach in addressing the needs of a student at risk as follows:

Being someone who showed her care when she hadn't been shown care before; being part of a school structure as well that was supportive of her and helpful to her, and making her feel important and things like that that you can't measure ... It's much more important, the relating to other people is much more important than any of the content or stuff that you're going to do, and I think that's where your satisfaction comes from as well.

Lincoln values his ability to address the emotional needs of students in order to assist their ongoing development. He places less significance on academic results and greater importance on enabling the student to develop into a healthy and happy adult. In the following anecdote he demonstrates how empathetic understanding is essential to assisting adolescent students in unique situations for their overall development:

Very difficult for me to relate to that but if you can empathise and if you can try and draw on, in that case I wasn't able to draw on my past life experience but that doesn't mean that I wasn't able to show empathy and to show care. I think a lot of the times that is your first track into helping somebody, is trying to relate to them in some way.

Lincoln's perspective allows for a mutual fulfilment – a constructive and affirming experience for his students as well as his professional satisfaction in relating to his students. Both Sally and Lincoln learnt the importance of cultivating an empathetic understanding towards their students.

Brenda also demonstrates her empathetic understanding in her respectful approach with students. She continually emphasises the need to be positive,

to avoid confrontation and to use humour in dealing with adolescents. She describes her approach in the following excerpt:

And being able to know that, boys in particular like to find out which buttons to press, don't have any buttons, don't lose your temper and shout: It's not going to do you or anyone else any good. Using a sense of humour in defusing the situation and dealing with it in a calm and rational manner: I always say to the boys "I expect the same amount of respect back from you as I give to you", so that's the thing you have to do.

Similarly to Sally and Lincoln, Brenda demonstrates an empathetic understanding in her focus on mutual respect and nurturing relationships for the development of both student and teacher. She continually notes that *"those little moments are really good"* in her relationships with students in which her feelings and understanding are represented as *"real"*. Another source of these emotional rewards is feedback from students and parents. Brenda describes the motivation felt through the positive feedback received from students and parents as follows:

If you didn't get positive feedback then you wouldn't be as motivated to continue doing what you're doing. And it is nice to get that back from students, to get it from parents, you know just the one email that says "thank you for doing a fantastic job" or "I really appreciate what you have done for so-and-so this term" or whatever. Yes, you only need that one.

Brenda's perception of the positive feedback from students and parents is an important motivator for her learning within a relational and communicative space.

Rosemary also demonstrates the significance of mutual empathetic understanding in the following description of her approach with parents of the adolescent girls residing in the boarding house she coordinates at her school:

You use a lot of empathy and you try to get to the specifics and you say "look, this is usual, this happens a lot". It's useless sometimes to say "this will happen again, your daughter will do this again and she will be upset like this again" but "if you speak to her the morning after, you'll find that she is most likely OK".

Rosemary's empathetic understanding enables her to estimate the emotional response of parents to their daughter's behaviour and to provide a supportive response.

For Rosemary, there is a continual need to empathise with adolescent girls throughout the school day and after hours in the boarding school. In the following extract, she describes how the pragmatic perspective offered by the school counsellor resonates with her own emotional perspective:

She's one of the school counsellors but she's got a phrase called 'compassion fatigue'. Because she listens to kids with problems five hours a day, day in and day out and all the rest of it, and she does a lot for them but she says sometimes that she has compassion fatigue because by the end of it you're like "oh, sort it out and get over yourself". You can be a bit, you can be thinking quite mean things about these kids who were upset.

Rosemary correlates the emotional strain felt from the constant requirements of empathetic understanding to the counsellor's description of 'compassion fatigue'. She recognises the importance of being "really sort of caring and

welcoming and nice and approachable and all the rest of it" but feels that her internal resources often fall short of her aspirations. Similarly, Sally alludes to the fallible nature of maintaining a perspective of empathetic understanding. In her behaviour management with students, she describes her approach as *"just being really honest and letting them see that I'm human"*.

Ken also presents an empathetic approach with students who are coping with various difficulties in their life outside of school. He emphasises that being able to provide a safe and caring environment for students at school is the one positive aspect of his role as house dean. He reflects on his efforts for developing student relationships throughout his career in saying *"I don't think there's ever been a situation where I've just said 'I'm going to cut this kid loose and not even make an effort'."*

However, the effort required for empathetic understanding became increasingly difficult for Ken later in his career. He questioned his ability to deal with the difficulties of adolescent students in more challenging environments in contrast to earlier in his career: *"So I don't know if I could go back to those schools now"*. He recognised the age difference between him and his students and felt that *"it's hard to get into their heads"* and questioned whether the gap in age is part of the difficulty he felt in relating to his students. Ken noted that his student behaviour management became more emotional bargaining in that *"you've sort of got to win them over"*. He also realised that he was unable to consistently maintain this emotional drive. Ken contrasted being *"a bit overextended"* in his earlier approach to his later years of teaching:

I'll still make an effort to direct them in the right way but I'm not going to disrupt the lesson about it, I'm not going to spend a lot of time in or out of class trying to change that one or two students. I'll

just, within reason, I'll probably tolerate a bit more."

Although Ken maintained a perspective of empathetic understanding, his later career approach was to endure what he had previously deemed as unacceptable behaviour in order to cope with the associated emotional strain as he contemplated his retirement from teaching. He understood that he was emotionally challenged in his practice but continued to espouse the significance of being able to draw on emotional resources in dealing with adolescent students:

As important as education is, it must be remembered that the clientele we are dealing with are human beings. School aged students will have all the issues of growing up and attempting to find their place in the world while attending classes will not always run smoothly. There will be times where incomplete homework, poor class behaviour and lack of academic success will take second place to the welfare of the individual.

All the teachers in my research consider empathetic understanding to be central to their relationships with students and parents. Empathetic understanding is a motivator for influencing the developmental and life outcomes of their students. Ken and Lincoln want to *"make a difference"* for their students. Sally describes *"a genuine desire to want to do the best for the kids"* and Rosemary values *"teaching the next generation how to live"*. Brenda describes the significance of being *"much more aware of student development emotionally, and physically, and psychologically"* and *"aware of differentiation in the biggest sense possible"*. Their perspectives also extend to parents and the broader school community. Brenda describes the broadening of her understanding as follows: *"so you're still aware of all those classroom issues, pastoral care, parents, you then start to become aware of the school as a whole"*.

Lincoln values *"being able to make a difference in people's lives"* in which his influence may extend to *"a great grandson that I'll never know and they'll never know me"*. Sally relates her own childhood to how she teachers, *"wanting the same things for kids that I had given to me by teachers and my community and that kind of thing"*. Rosemary acknowledges the understanding of herself and others within her relational space that *"does have a nice social aspect to it and once you get to know the families as well. That can make a difference."* This perspective of empathetic understanding in turn provides meaning for their ongoing personal professional development.

Critically, this perspective of empathetic understanding also provides tensions within their ongoing personal professional development. Rosemary, Brenda and Sally all refer to the exertion and fallibility associated with their empathetic understanding of students, yet they cushion their personal disappointments and emotional fatigue with an understanding of student development and learning. Ken's emotional strain, however, does not necessarily transform his empathetic understanding of students into new approaches to learning, and at different times he alleviates the emotional difficulties in maintaining his empathetic understanding through comparison with others. He feels, for example, that some parents *"didn't take responsibility for being parents"*, that some colleagues were *"coming to me from a selfish view point"* and *"not doing the right thing by that student"*, and that some students *"didn't do their part of the bargain"*. This ambiguity in Ken's empathetic understanding represents a more distant stance than is evident among the other teachers. This apparent inability to address the emotional overload often associated with maintaining empathetic understanding may also align to an inability to access support networks available through professional networks and relationships, as discussed below.

For the teachers in my research, empathetic understanding is an important characteristic for understanding their students' development and their own personal professional development. This perspective aligns with Lindqvist's and Nordängers' (2010) 'state of uncritical relation', which for the teachers in my research is represented through their empathetic understanding for students, parents and the broader school community. The following discussion focuses on the teachers' 'uncritical relation' with their teaching peers.

Non-competitive collegiality

The teachers in my research place significant value on relationships with colleagues, with a perspective of non-competitive collegiality influencing the development of their expertise. Supportive and nurturing relationships with colleagues have been important to varying degrees for each of the teachers throughout their personal professional development.

Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) contend that I-Thou participation through uncritical relation represents a learning impetus for the teacher:

... in these I-Thou meetings when you 'connect' and when the teacher is 'seen and confirmed'. It is often himself or herself the teacher refers to when he or she talks about 'becoming'. (Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2010, p. 53)

There is a positive influence in teachers connecting with others. The relational value of connecting is a self-awareness that is part of becoming. For the teachers in my research, their responsiveness to a state of uncritical relation is influential for their becoming. Adapting past experience to new situations is central for the development of their personal practical knowledge, as demonstrated through the stories of the teachers in my research. Significantly, their orientation towards a non-competitive

collegiality makes visible their pre-reflective perspective on experience that affords insights for self-understanding.

Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) argue that the disruptive nature of insightful understanding provides the impetus for transformative learning. The literature discussion in Chapter 2 presents transformative professional learning as incorporating the insight afforded from the unique emotional nature of experience as described by Mezirow (2009) and the paradoxical interplay of being and becoming as described by Jarvis (2009). The insightful understanding of transformative learning also allows for relational possibilities with colleagues and students. Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) further describe the possibilities of harnessing the potential of transforming a teacher's personal practical knowledge:

In other words, experience can be stored and, at a latter stage, be transformed into discursive knowledge and used to deal with new situations. Insights, on the other hand, can demolish everything that has been built in this arduous way. Like a bolt out of the blue they make reality take on new shapes. To always exist in a state of insight seems impossible, or, if it were possible, positively dangerous. A more feasible and desirable position would be the will to be present, the desire to create a relationship, to aspire to a situation where the pupils always experience that the relationship is there – as a possibility.

(Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2010, p. 54)

The findings of Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) primarily focus on the relationship between teacher and student. However, for the teachers in my research the desire to create a relationship with colleagues is also important. The creation of situations that foster non-competitive collegiality are essential for the teachers' personal professional development and necessary

in their approach to their own learning. The possible moments of 'insightful presence' in relationships with colleagues enable the sharing of imaginative vision on the teachers' philosophical approach to learning and on intuitive judgements within pedagogical prowess. This 'discursive' sharing of experience further develops their personal practical knowledge. Below I discuss the different perspectives of non-competitive collegiality for each of the five teachers.

The teachers in my research note their need for positive relationships within supportive environments. Lincoln highlights the personal professional fulfilment made possible through teachers creating such environments:

I think that's probably a big part of it as well, that's where the satisfaction of the job comes from, in having positive relationships and working together. I've worked in environments where people are very competitive and they want their kids to do better so they don't share any resources and they write exams and then cater their classes towards the exam. It's a very untrusting environment and it's not a nice one to work in. I think if you can work in a collegial one so if you're relating to the people around you it's a lot better.

Lincoln demonstrates that the need for positive relationships also requires the recognition of colleagues with whom these possible relationships may be created. Similarly, the fostering of positive interpersonal relationships is influential in Sally's personal professional development and learning. She values "being made to feel worthwhile" when colleagues willingly mentor her in their free time.

Non-competitive collegiality is important in mentoring relationships for both Sally and Lincoln. Lincoln endeavours to create relationships that

enable others to feel worthwhile. As a leading teacher mentor he perceives his approach as providing positive and supportive relationships to others:

I think that I always wanted the person that I was mentoring to feel that they were lucky to get me as a mentor. And so I was always working really hard to really support them as much as I can and to really be as helpful as I could.

Lincoln acknowledges that some teachers within defined mentoring positions may not necessarily be people who can create a relationship for professional development. Although these people may act as the official support person he feels that the teacher should choose other colleagues who could provide mentoring for their development:

And maybe if the person who was helping you to get your accreditation doesn't have to be your only mentor, maybe there's other people around who you can get advice from and you can get help from.

Lincoln demonstrates a strategic approach in differentiating between people in official mentoring roles and those teaching colleagues who offer learning support.

Sally focuses on individual relationships in her belief that successful learning is negotiated between colleagues. Her relationships with colleagues require the same honesty, human fallibility and time efficiency that she exhibits in her own practice with students. Sally describes her need to find a principal who is able to mentor her to be inspiring as a principal as follows:

It depends on who or what I'm learning from, if you are looking at my previous relieving boss, he wasn't the holy grail of principals. There were flaws and obviously there was a lot more positive than negative.

So I think he showed his human side like I try and do with my students as well. I don't think I would take any notice of anyone that came across as not ever having made a mistake or not practising what they preach or that kind of thing.

Sally respects mentors who are able to acknowledge mistakes and demonstrate the beliefs they espouse through modelling these behaviours. She contrasts these mentors with people who assert they never made mistakes or are disingenuous. Sally believes that her selection of a mentor enables the formation of a relationship to support her in becoming the principal she aspires to be. Her mentoring relationships initially arose from friendships with more experienced teachers who shared similar values, sense of humour and beliefs around teaching.

Brenda recognises the need for the same teaching focus and shared vision in creating relationships with colleagues. She describes the non-competitive collegiality required to work in a team and create positive relationships in the following extract:

Here in the curriculum team I think we've got a group of people who work very, very well together, all with the same focus and drive ... And I think you have to have that for everyone to improve. And that's the other thing, is not to see yourself in competition with another teacher if you are teaching the same course or the same year group but as a colleague you should be supporting each other. And everyone's teaching gets better if everyone shares and supports each other.

Brenda values positive relationships with colleagues that enable sharing of learning and promote personal professional development. She suggests that the increased emphasis on "school performance, student performance" makes teachers as professionals "much more publicly accountable than any other. Your

results and what you do are under public scrutiny now aren't they?" She feels this is an additional pressure in fostering relationships to support professional learning. This makes her focus on positive relationships and reducing competition as *"still very difficult and getting more difficult all the time"*. Brenda perceives greater difficulty in fostering non-competitive collegiality for improving teaching practice when the relationship focus moves beyond learning and into performance accountability measures.

Brenda's perspective of non-competitive collegiality is also shared by Lincoln, as expressed in the following comment:

If you can have an environment where people are a bit more secure in themselves and they're happy and they say "I have good ideas". ... There are some teachers here who will just go up to other teachers and say "Hey I know you do this, can you come to my class and talk about that to the kids?" That's a much better environment for the kids and for your own sanity and your own satisfaction in the job. So it comes back to a relationship, so it's having those positive relationships.

Similarly to Brenda, Lincoln sees non-competitive collegiality as meeting both student and teacher needs.

Lincoln also realises the isolating nature of being alone in an office rather than a shared work area. He describes how a change in office sharing arrangements highlights his reliance on relationships for his happiness at work:

I didn't realise that what I was missing was that no one was in the office with me! ... It shouldn't be surprising to me that not having a relationship, being stuck on my own was the thing that was eating away at me. But it was so obvious when you look at it now but it just

makes a big difference to every day and to how happy you are to be here.

Lincoln identifies the importance of not being in isolation and sharing ideas with colleagues for fostering his learning and professional contentment.

The independent nature of classroom teaching may also lead to isolation outside of the classroom, as demonstrated in Ken's approach to his learning. At one point he described the camaraderie shared with a colleague in his more recent dealings with difficult students. However, he did not express the need for non-competitive collegiality despite the significance of one influential colleague on his personal professional development in his early teaching years. He did not seek to create relationships with colleagues, and he did not exhibit the desire for relationships throughout his middle and later career, tending instead to place his experience in opposition with those around him. In the following excerpt, Ken places the perception of his experience as being in competition with school leaders and colleagues:

My experience well that's a frustrating part of it, I am often in situations where I have some idea about the best path to take, maybe not the solution but the one that's going to get the best result ... So people listen to me, people will say yes, but then too often that advice gets ignored. I don't know if it's just peculiar to my school or whether it's common to a lot of schools but at times I've just got to bite my tongue and not say something that I know may be interpreted the wrong way or maybe interpreted offensively.

In this way Ken expresses the relational and communicative tensions he has experienced with colleagues, a perspective which does not incorporate collegial relationships. He discusses his relationships with colleagues using the I-It language of a spectator as described by Lindqvist and Nordänger

(2010). His focus is on his frustrating experiences, his view of situations, his decision not to accept leadership responsibilities and his being misunderstood by those in leadership positions who are mostly younger than him. Furthermore, Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) signify that becoming requires the teacher to 'connect' with others in order to be 'seen and confirmed'. For Ken, his understanding of being an experienced teacher was not shared through non-competitive collegiality with his peers and was also not acknowledged in his interaction with teacher leaders. He does not seem to be 'seen and confirmed'. This then impedes a sense of becoming for Ken in contrast to the other four teachers in my research.

Rosemary exhibits a cautious disposition and more selective collegiality similar to Ken's. This influences her approach to collegial relationships. She feels less confident and "*intellectually intimidated*" by some colleagues in non-supportive and competitive school environments. In the following extract she describes how this resulted in a guarded approach with colleagues and selectivity in developing relationships with colleagues:

I have to feel that I can approach a person and I have to feel that I can be a bit relaxed with them as well because a lot of it's about admitting that you don't know something, and that's a big thing because a lot of people would feel embarrassed about that. As well I do think that a lot of people would sort of try to make someone else feel a bit useless if they said "I don't know this text, I don't know this concept, what does that mean?" and so on. Some people are a bit superior.

When Rosemary feels a colleague is approachable, she is relaxed and secure in identifying the learning needed to further her personal practical knowledge. Her collegial learning requires non-competitive relationships with teaching peers. She describes her enjoyment in sharing ideas with

colleagues from other schools at professional development courses and then fostering this learning with her school colleagues as follows: *“So I think that’s the big thing really; try to make a point of passing it on”*. Overcoming this vulnerability in developing collegial relationships requires risk-taking, which will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

In contrast to Ken, the other teachers in my research all seek to create collegial relationships that are non-competitive. They pursue relational and communicative spaces to continue to develop their expertise. These teachers maintain a perspective that allows the possibility of a relationship and the affordance of insights for greater self-understanding and understanding of others. Their aim to create relationships is interwoven with their perspective of empathetic understanding.

For my phenomenological inquiry, I refer to the distinction made between experience and insight (Buber & Kaufmann, 1970) as the basis for Lindqvist and Nordänger’s (2010) relational creation of reality. I use Lindqvist and Nordänger’s (2010) notion of I-Thou participation of teachers to identify insightful presence through a state of uncritical relation. This desire of teachers to create relationships allows for insightful understanding within communicative and relational spaces. For the teachers in my research, empathetic understanding and non-competitive collegiality give meaning to their personal professional development.

Furthermore, a teacher’s ability for insightful presence provides a basis for learning as it creates a potential space for a teacher’s becoming (Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2010). For the teachers in my research, their becoming relies on the insightful understanding gained from experience. For Lincoln, Sally, Brenda and Rosemary, their particular perspectives of emotional understanding and non-competitive collegiality afford insightful

understanding of their experience in shaping their approach to their personal professional learning. For Ken, stifled communicative and relational perspectives are evident when empathetic understanding of others provides emotional overload at various times throughout his career and also is seen in his unwillingness to access the insights afforded by non-competitive collegiality. In the next section of this chapter, I discuss how 'disruptive dissonances' within their experience stimulate the teachers' insights into their approach to their own professional learning.

9.3 Learning through risky, uncertain and seemingly impossible 'disruptive dissonances'

In this section, my phenomenological analysis identifies unique disruptive dissonances. I constitute these as three problematics that are negotiated by the teachers as follows:

- To what extent is there a risk in isolating my experience from communicative, collaborative pedagogy?
- In what ways should I approach uncertain challenges as developmental opportunities?
- How do I articulate being an expert through the seemingly impossible possibility of becoming an expert?

I uncover phenomenological constituents of disruptive dissonances and explore the meaning-making for the teachers that stems from their experience of these dissonances. Disruptive dissonances are apparent in the relational and communicative spaces in which the teachers interact in teaching and learning: peopled classrooms, school communities, professional cooperatives and societal discourses. Characteristically, the relational and communicative spaces require the teachers' openness to developing awareness of self and others, the crossing of boundaries, both practical and

theoretical, and the negotiation of contested meaning surrounding personal professional expertise. A dissonance may have certain degrees of positive and negative disruption depending on the way in which a teacher responds to it.

In the following subsections for each question, I draw on the characteristics of an ontological third space as represented by Zeichner (2010), Soja (1996) and Lefebvre (1991). Lefebvre's disruption of "either/or logic" presents a philosophy of "openness of the both/ and also" possibilities (Soja, 1996, p. 7). Soja builds on this to conceive of a 'Thirdspace' as "a limitless composition of lifeworlds that are radically open and openly radicalizable; that are all-inclusive and transdisciplinary in scope yet politically focused and susceptible to strategic choice; that are never completely knowable but whose knowledge none the less guides our search for emancipatory change and freedom from domination" (Soja, 1996, p. 70). Zeichner's (2010, p. 89) third space thinking for teacher education envisions the hybridity of "a new epistemology" in order to expand opportunities for learning that require "enacting complex teaching practices".

I develop my notion of third space thinking to frame the three problematics that became obvious in my phenomenological analysis of the teachers' relational and communicative spaces. The nature of these spaces allows for the creation of disruptive dissonances, which require an ongoing response within the teacher's personal professional development. For four of the teachers – Lincoln, Sally, Brenda and Rosemary – the learning they experience is perceived as an insightful response to their unique disruptive dissonances. For Ken, a retreat from and an avoidance of disruptive dissonances means that the possibilities for personal professional development are limited and so foreground a stifled approach to learning.

9.3.1 To what extent is there a risk in isolating my experience from communicative, collaborative pedagogy?

For the teachers in my research, the idiosyncratic nature of teaching poses a potential risk by isolating their experience and stifling their personal professional development. Within their stories they represent an environment of educational accountability that poses an ongoing dilemma between individual responsibility and the personal professional learning possible through communicative, collaborative pedagogy.

Developing communicative and relational spaces for communicative, collaborative pedagogy provides several forms of disruptive dissonance. This pedagogy incorporates learning through reflexive practice with colleagues as well as being open to critique from students. Initial collaborative learning experiences, such as modelling by a mentor, present a preliminary risk. In these situations a teacher needs to develop self-confidence in their personal professional development. The affirmation from these initial learning experiences provides security in developing further professional learning relationships. However, negative experiences or lack of positive learning experiences early within one's communicative and relational spaces poses a potential risk for cultivating a communicative, collaborative pedagogy. The challenge of reflexivity with others may also pose a risk in becoming a mentor for colleagues. The following discussion highlights how these disruptive dissonances have been negotiated by the teachers in my research in order to cultivate a communicative, collaborative pedagogy as a prerequisite of learning.

Lincoln experienced a disruptive dissonance within his first few years of teaching. In the following comments he highlights the stress he felt from being pressured by one mentor to model behaviours that were unnatural to him:

The year eleven coordinator was somebody who was very much the best mentor that I've had ... And then when I started working with and for Stan as his assistant year coordinator, I saw somebody who worked in a way that made sense to me, in a way that I thought "yeah, I can be like that" and not exactly the same but I can operate a lot more like him. He was on side with the kids, not against the kids, and through that there was a building of respect and because of the respect then the behaviours that he wanted would follow ... I think it's just like different personalities teach in different ways and the big thing was that after a couple of years of being told that the way that I was working was wrong, I saw somebody who was working the way that I could work and that was right.

Lincoln recognised the powerful impact of Stan's mentoring in providing a model that aligned with his personal attributes and the relationship focus of his teaching. Watching Stan model a pastoral approach to a whole year group, in contrast to his previous mentor teacher, resonated with Lincoln's own philosophy. Lincoln was able to develop self-assurance in his teaching philosophy and approach through the influential mentoring of Stan.

Lincoln responded productively to the disruptive dissonance of differing mentor role models. He confirmed his belief and ability in creating a classroom environment through modelling the teacher he aspired to be and so provided meaning for his personal professional development. This formed part of a continuing cycle for building his confidence in his teaching practice and further motivated his professional learning.

Similarly, Rosemary is aware of the significance of role models for her personal professional development:

But it's been very interesting modelling myself on the colleagues who

I respect and the colleagues who I see as successful, how they would handle situations and interpret situations and their reading of different students or situations. When I've seen colleagues who have not been able to handle or understand or interpret situations as well it's made me see more clearly perhaps the right sort of way to conduct myself with classes and in meetings and in training and everything that goes into the profession and the daily work. It's a very constant thing. It's always happening.

For Rosemary, the comparison between role models affords the disruptive dissonance necessary to determine how to successfully behave and respond in various situations. Recognising this contrast also provides an ongoing positive influence for her personal professional learning.

Sally acknowledges the risk of not being able to observe characteristics that are positive models for teachers' ongoing development. She also recognises the complexity of professional judgement and breadth of pedagogy that needs to be incorporated into developing practice through exposure to expertise of professional mentors: *"You need to be able to see it to sort of work out whether you're there or not quite there"*. The risk for Sally is not being able to draw on the expertise of another colleague as pertinent to her personal professional development needs of aligning personal practical knowledge to theoretical understanding. She is aware that communicative, collaborative pedagogy enables productive learning experiences throughout a teacher's career.

The role model of an initial mentor and negligible observation of other teachers early in his career represented a minimal response to a disruptive dissonance for Ken. This foreshadowed the risk of remaining more isolated rather than cultivating a communicative, collaborative pedagogy. Ken

observed “a couple of experienced teachers that took on head teacher roles” in his early career but noted that “I didn’t try and change my teaching to their way but I’d pick things up”. Similar to the other four teachers in my research, Ken adapted his practice to role models. However, unlike the other teachers in my research, Ken does not seek specific collaborative learning situations with colleagues to maintain the disruptive dissonance for his learning through his middle to later career.

Brenda expresses her belief in “opening up the doors” to enable communication and collaboration with colleagues and ongoing reflexive practice. This represents a disruptive dissonance in that she is open to critique from others. She recognises that the productive potential for learning relies on the teacher being open to “constructive criticism” in order to act on feedback and new developments for teaching practice:

I think constantly reviewing and changing and keeping up to date, obviously making sure you keep up to date through in-service. Something that we’re trying to introduce is a lot of observation of each other’s teaching practice. We’re hoping to expand that so I’d like to become more involved in that. Having somebody watch me and give me feedback and vice versa. Also student feedback is very important. Asking your students to evaluate how you’re teaching something and then reflect on their assessment of you. Often that is very informative.

Similar to Brenda’s use of feedback for self-evaluation, Lincoln values feedback from students and colleagues. He recognises the shift from needing external accolades for nurturing his confidence from his earlier years of teaching to now:

I think I’m less needing of big moments for me to feel affirmation. I am more able to get affirmation from my student’s reactions to things

and from noticing that they learn and things like that but I think the mentoring thing is big for that as well.

A necessary disruptive dissonance for Lincoln is acknowledging interactions with others as central to the development of his own expertise. His observations and responses to students and colleagues in mentoring relationships propelled his ongoing personal professional development. His immediate relational and communicative spaces allowed for communicative, collaborative pedagogy as a prerequisite for his learning. He recognised the risk of teaching in isolation and so actively sought out other teachers to ask their advice. Throughout his career, Lincoln consciously avoided isolating himself and consulted with his colleagues to further his learning. He also felt less isolated when a colleague observed his lesson and valued the opportunity for feedback that would improve his teaching. He is aware that some colleagues may be reticent to experience the disruptive dissonance of another teacher observing their classroom:

I really enjoyed having someone watch my lessons and talk to me about it. Most people are really, would be really frightened to do that and it is a very daunting thing. I think because you can be really isolated but I was just, this is helping me become such a better teacher and I enjoyed that.

The enjoyment Lincoln experiences when others observe his teaching represents the positive potential of this disruptive dissonance. In addition to alleviating the isolation of teaching alone, this observation of his practice supports his learning. Sharing a critique of his practice enables Lincoln to draw on the experience of his colleagues and mentors.

By way of contrast to the other teachers in my research, Ken expressed reticence regarding team teaching with novice teachers or those with whom he had not interacted professionally:

Well probably a bit with my own inadequacy. I don't know if I'd do my part of the job properly and then not so much that they're first year out but that I don't know anything about them. So they might be the best first year out and I might be missing a golden opportunity but it could be somebody with 30 years' experience but if I didn't know anything about them ... I'd need to know something about them and just how they view what I think would be important: procedures or ideas, even classroom management.

Ken's guarded approach does not use the disruptive dissonance to potentially enrich his personal professional development. He remains apprehensive and unforthcoming in sharing his teaching approach. His lack of engagement and unreceptive mindset shields his experience from perspectives or practices different to his own. Ken's personal professional learning in his later teaching years is not indicative of communicative, collaborative pedagogy.

Sally portrays being a mentor as a risk for her own learning and in so doing somewhat reduces the possibility of learning from another disruptive dissonance. She does not feel developmentally ready to mentor on the philosophical aspects that underpin her approach to teaching:

I know that I've mentored the sports coordinator about processes and things like that, but in terms of big picture, deeper things I don't think that's going to happen quite yet. I don't think I'm quite ready. I'm still learning. I'm still trying to get my head around stuff. So there are always opportunities for it but I don't like it when it's

forced, or when you feel obliged or just because I'm someone's head teacher that they put me down as a mentor, it doesn't work.

Sally's reticence to engage in such discussion with graduate teachers indicates her lack of confidence in representing her expertise in a theoretical realm. This represents a shift in the disruptive dissonance of communicative, collaborative pedagogy. For her, further development would be acceptable within a mutually selected professional relationship. She needs to negotiate this shift in disruptive dissonance for her mentoring role to have the productive potential of communicative, collaborative pedagogy.

Lincoln identifies the learning he experienced through the disruptive dissonance presented in his role of mentoring teachers through their professional accreditation process. His belief is that providing advice to another teacher enables reflection on his own teaching practice:

I really found that when I observed lessons, I'd pick up some little things that people do ... and it's something that I hadn't thought of trying but it's something that I've picked up from watching somebody else. So I think sometimes you're giving advice to the other person that you need to listen to yourself.

Lincoln's reflexive process affirms the confidence he feels in his teaching and reinforces the positive aspects of his practice. This process also enables identification of improvements in his own practice and so provides a disruptive dissonance that is productive for his learning.

By way of contrast, Ken does not negotiate disruptive dissonances to cultivate a communicative, collaborative pedagogy. He reinforces his standoffish approach by seeing himself as a spectator:

Well a lot of young teachers come in very enthusiastic. I don't know if

they always get the support that they need. ... And now I have just seen too many young teachers who leave teaching and I've never discussed it fully with them but I get the impression that they came in enthusiastic, they got sick and tired of coping the same abuse from kids day after day, they didn't get the support and they'll never come back.

His description identifies another 'someone' to support new teachers. He refers to what "*I have seen ...*" but notes that "*I've never discussed it fully with them but I get the impression*". Although Ken has concern for the development of young teachers, he did not actively represent his involvement or inclination to engage in these relational and communicative spaces.

In contrast to Ken, the other teachers in my research identify the negotiation of communicative, collaborative pedagogy as necessary for their learning. This disruptive dissonance within their communicative and relational spaces requires philosophical thinking within an ontological third space, as discussed below.

Ontological third space philosophy: openness in the development of expertise

For the teachers in my research, the cultivation of a communicative, collaborative pedagogy, rather than the isolation of expertise, requires the negotiation of disruptive dissonances within their communicative and relational spaces. These spaces are aligned with characterisations of openness. I develop my notion of an ontological third space philosophy as an openness towards possibilities within the development of expertise. This philosophy is representative of third space thinking that Lefebvre (1991) conceptualises as disrupting "either/or logic" and so provides "both/ and also" openings rather than conclusions (Soja, 1996, pp. 7-9). In the following

discussion, I propose that the openness afforded by the communicative, collaborative pedagogy is central to the development of expertise for the teachers in my research.

Research into understanding collaborative teacher learning use the notion of third space as a device to “augment specific notions of community” (Levine, 2010, p. 127). Levine (2010) relates his use of third space to Vygotsky’s (1978) concept of the zone of proximal development, which “characterizes mental development prospectively” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 87). Significantly, this prospective development of expertise requires collaboration in learning with others in order to achieve individual potential. For the teachers in my research, their third space thinking is characterised by the unique ‘contrapuntal harmonies’ and the productive potential of disruptive dissonances within their relational and communicative spaces. The teachers’ third space thinking is characterised by openness to connecting with others and to critiquing of ideas within a reflexive practice. This openness is not perceived as a personal vulnerability or professional indecision, and it does not generate irrefutable dictates for their personal professional development. Rather, being open to others affords the ‘both/ and also’ possibilities of cultivating insights within their relational and communicative spaces. Each of the teachers recognises unique factors shaping their personal professional development. These insights unleash the productive potential of the disruptive dissonances within their relational and communicative spaces, and so represent more than the sum of shared experience. The teachers’ openness to rethinking “conventional binary opposition” (Soja, 1996, p. 31) is apparent in their relational and communicative spaces. They do not strive for an amalgam of experience in order to constitute definitive insights. Rather, they elucidate what is representative of the ‘both/ and also’ in their own development as well as

that of their students and colleagues. This is apparent in the previous discussion: Rosemary's constant iterative process of interpreting and responding to situations; Brenda's continual efforts to transform her existing practice with recent changes and potential trends; Lincoln's avoidance of isolation in order to generate dialogue and reflect his observations of others into his own approach; and Sally's broaching of the philosophical underpinnings of practice to extend understanding within her teacher leader role. Third space thinking allows Sally, Lincoln, Brenda, and Rosemary the possibility of negotiating philosophical and pedagogical understanding with others. Their openness to disruptive dissonances within relational and communicative spaces enables the creation of meaning for their personal professional development.

The openness of third space thinking is apparent in the disruptive dissonances of the teachers' communicative, collaborative pedagogy as they evaluate the necessary aspects of their personal professional development, analyse alternate examples, and continue to consider and consolidate their shifting requirements for learning. I identify disruptive dissonances as phenomenological constituents of their relational and communicative spaces. These dissonances present disparate potentials for personal professional development throughout the teachers' careers: Lincoln's successful development of his approach to practice and professional learning despite the pressure to conform to a model aberrant to his philosophical approach; Rosemary's continual assessment of behaviours she wishes to model and ongoing interpretation of situations for her personal professional learning; Sally's learning with colleagues as positive models of practice and the need to nurture philosophical aspects of her own mentoring; and Brenda's openness to the critique of others by engaging in opportunities for student feedback and reflexive practice with colleagues. The language they use

continually references the possibilities for their understanding, in talking and observing and problem-solving with colleagues. Although Ken's early teaching years involve observing colleagues, his ongoing personal professional learning is characterised by a predominately conservative perspective and little or no pedagogical interaction with colleagues. He presents a distinctly different approach to negotiating disruptive dissonances: there is little indication of reciprocity in his relational space and stilted interaction in his communicative space. For four of the five teachers, then, the negotiation of their relational and communicative spaces is indicative of third space thinking in being open to the 'both/ and also' possibilities presented by others for their personal professional development.

In the following discussion I explore how the disruptive dissonance of approaching uncertain challenges as developmental opportunities represents another problematic within the lifeworld of the teachers.

9.3.2 In what ways should I approach uncertain challenges as developmental opportunities?

For the teachers in my research, challenges in their teaching practice and philosophy present tensions in their professional confidence and personal motivation to learn. Discursive reflection on practice and sharing of vision with others allows them to address the often uncertain challenges they face in their personal professional development. Negotiating new teaching practices and encountering broader role responsibilities represents disruptive dissonances within their relational and communicative spaces. Their responses within these spaces presents productive development opportunities. The discussion that follows explores how the disruptive dissonances of uncertain challenges present potential developmental opportunities throughout the careers of all five of the teachers.

Sally expresses an eager and somewhat spontaneous approach to developmental challenges: *"I tend to jump into things and then go 'oh maybe that wasn't a good idea'."* Her *"we'll see"* approach opens up the disruptive dissonance to the possibility of success or failure, as demonstrated in the following excerpt:

Look, there's been plenty of things that I have organised that might be to do with sport and coordinating a large group of coaches and no one turns up. There've been plenty of those ones. And it comes back to my high level of expectations ... I have a work ethic that says "well, if I organise an afternoon tea to give the coaching packs out, and it starts at three and finishes at four, well what's the big deal". Then no one shows up and you think, "oh, okay". So I've found that's happened often, it doesn't happen as much anymore. I don't know whether that its people now know what I expect and they have seen maybe the outcome of having those expectations or whether, and I know, I've adapted.

Sally's self-study enables interpretation of her own high expectations against the organisational expectations of her colleagues. Her reflection on this challenge allows for a development opportunity in terms of understanding and managing expectations. After some lack of success, Sally reached a compromise in the organisation of meetings that reframed her expectations and enabled positive involvement from her colleagues.

Throughout her career, Brenda embraced the disruptive dissonance of uncertain challenges via the integration of information and communication technologies (ICT). She accepted the challenges as developmental opportunities – being an early adopter of ICT in her teaching, mentoring colleagues as a leading teacher of ICT, and creating professional

development situations for colleagues by facilitating learning in ICT. She describes ICT as an “*extra dimension*” that has broadened her approach to her practice and her learning by:

... utilising something other than the traditional teaching space; ... So there's an extra dimension and although it doesn't sound like space it is, it is space.

Brenda associates the physical and virtual space afforded by ICT to her practice as a new space for learning. She embraces the disruptive dissonance of this developmental challenge as a space that provides additional meaning for her practice and learning with colleagues.

In contrast, during his career Ken did not respond to the disruptive dissonance of ICT challenges in order to generate a developmental opportunity. He found the continual changes in ICT throughout his career as an overwhelming confrontation for his learning:

I look at my time in teaching as a time of fair amount of change, I suppose technology wise. ... There is a lot of resource available but I find it hard retaining it all. I get to master one thing and suddenly another thing comes up. Not getting enough opportunity to practice it enough I suppose ... And younger teachers you notice they've got a bit of intuition about the technology. They can work out themselves what they've got to do sometimes. I need that instruction or that guidance.

Ken reconceived the challenge of integrating ICT into his practice as too precarious: the changes were too frequent, his retention of new information was limited, and his time for practice was too restricted. He set himself apart from his colleagues in this possible developmental opportunity, creating a division through the greater number of years of his teaching experience and

the limitations of his technological ability. He was unable to draw on communicative and relational spaces to harness this disruptive dissonance as a productive development opportunity. In doing so, he was distinctly different from the later-life computer learners participating in Russell's (2008) research who embraced the opportunity to learn.

During her career, Rosemary's approach was similar to Brenda's in that she sought out the disruptive dissonance of uncertain challenges rather than remaining passive towards her development opportunities. She exhibited an alternative view to Ken in her willingness "*to try something new and different*":

So I did want to experience something different. I suppose it's been quite brave to do these things but as well I've always been quite scared of just sitting and doing nothing, and wasting my time or my years or what have you, so that's been a big thing.

Rosemary's fear of missed opportunity and squandered time was the impetus for seeking different teaching environments. She is aware that her current teaching environment does not require struggling with behaviour management and allows for development of innovative practice to achieve student learning:

It's the possibilities of what you can do, you shouldn't really, if you're teaching, you shouldn't really have to take care of behaviour or discipline at all [emphasised] because that's not what it's about. But that's what, in my experience everywhere I've been, that's what most teachers spend a lot of their time doing and it's not even the job.

The challenge of managing difficult student behaviour in varied environments has represented a disruptive dissonance for Rosemary during her career. Her current role allows her to experience fewer behavioural

difficulties but also provides the challenges of a different relational space within a boarding school environment. Her initiative in taking on possible uncertain challenges enables this disruptive dissonance to be productive for her personal professional development:

I mean if you haven't got it within yourself to be willing to find these things out and look for them and do it yourself, you're not going to develop and you're not going to learn more.

Like Sally, Brenda and Rosemary, Lincoln relishes the unpredictability of challenging spaces. He pursues the disruptive dissonance of a less conventional or typically traditional path, seeing uncertain challenges as development opportunities:

I think like a lot of those early things were, you can see them as challenges but they were also very big opportunities as well. So I think that if you can pull those things together and say some of them are positive and some of them are negative but if you've got spaces where you are facing challenges, some of them can be sink or swim kind of challenges, and some of them can be opportunities too. ... But to have a wider expertise; an expertise feeling like I could take on something because I've taken on things before. ... Those opportunities, they were really the things that drove my learning more than anything else.

Lincoln's negotiation of uncertain challenges is the disruptive dissonance that enables the nurturing of adaptable characteristics of his teaching and learning. Drawing on communicative and relational spaces, he is able to reframe his understanding of his teaching expertise. Essential to his approach is accepting that learning requires making mistakes:

I think the big thing is that I'm not really afraid of messing up and

making a big mistake ... that doesn't really faze me ... I think learning from my mistakes, learning from positive experiences as well.

Adapting the things that I do and trying new things and building a set of skills that I can use to walk into a classroom and be able to handle that classroom effectively.

Lincoln reframes his teaching and learning approach with his students, creating a space for representing learning as a mutual investigation that requires risk-taking.

In contrast, Ken's uncertain challenge with a new role presented a disruptive dissonance in which his response did not provide potential for a development opportunity. He tentatively noted that he saw his new job-sharing role "as sort of new ground" that was "going to be on-the-job experience" in which "apart from teaching the shared classes a lot of it's going to be a new experience". Distinctly different to the approaches of Sally, Brenda, Rosemary and Lincoln, Ken's approach to this challenge was much more pessimistic. He represented working with another teacher as an uncertain challenge to his practice:

I'm possibly not thinking enough about what's involved in the job. I know that it will involve doing things, know having to be more organised and having to communicate with the other teacher ... I think I realise that when I get into this job-sharing it's going to require me making, I don't know for how long, but making regular adjustments that I'll have to assess; "is this working?" I think at the moment it's difficult to understand what problems are going to arise.

Ken recognised that his approach to his teaching procedures, communication and classroom practice may require modifications. However, rather than

representing an optimistic perspective, he assumed that “*problems are going to arise*”.

In critiquing my discussion of the harnessing of uncertain challenges to foster personal professional development, I will turn now to the notion of ontological third space.

Ontological third space confrontation: struggle in the development of expertise

For the teachers in my research, generating developmental opportunities from uncertain challenges has required the harnessing of disruptive dissonance within their communicative and relational spaces. These personal professional development spaces are characterised by the confrontation embedded in my notion of an ontological third space. The disruptive dissonance of approaching uncertain challenges as developmental opportunities represents this struggle in the development of expertise.

Zeichner (2010) portrays the need for ‘border-crossing’ of theoretical discourses that reinforce divisive practices and structures to create the ‘hybrid spaces’ for personal professional development and learning. Zeichner (2010) argues for a new epistemological basis for teacher education “where there is a nonhierarchical interplay between academic, practitioner, and community expertise” (2010, p. 89). Zeichner (2010) proposes that this new model of teacher education allows for the creation of ‘hybrid spaces’. His appeal for the integration of ‘competing discourses’ uses the hybridity of a third space as conceptualised by Bhabha (1990, 1994). Zeichner (2010), in proposing that the divide often created between teaching theory and practice requires border-crossing into a hybrid third space, argues that establishing hybrid spaces for practitioners and academics allows for developing a ‘both/also’ point of view (Zeichner, 2010). Similarly, Engeström (2009)

envisions boundary-crossing of tacit and explicit knowledge across temporal and socio-spatial dimensions. He addresses the complexity of the learning occurring “within a changing mosaic on interconnected activity systems” (Engeström, 2009, p. 59). My research indicates that the disruptive dissonance for the teachers in my study similarly requires border-crossing to confront uncertain challenges as positive opportunities in the development of their expertise.

Ikpeze et al. (2012) draw on Zeichner’s (2010) conceptual frame for a discursive and relational space in their self-study of teacher education in a school and university partnership. They refer to the tension and resistance in a contested space, and drawing on Soja (1996) they suggest that it is “a space for critical coming together” (Ikpeze et al., 2012, p. 277). For Ikpeze et al. (2012), this offers a perspective for understanding the communicative and relational practices of their self-study space. Their self-study represents a space “in which a shared vision can be developed with potential for positive change” (Ikpeze et al., 2012, p. 277). Furthermore, Martin et al. (2011, p. 309) propose a third space to support the creation of “transformative settings for teacher learning” rather than “clinical practice” structures that focus on content and processes. The relational and communicative spaces for the teachers in my research allow this ‘critical coming together’ in the ‘transformative’ setting of an ontological third space. This enables the teachers to harness the productive potential of an uncertain challenge as a disruptive dissonance. Additionally, Flessner (2014) draws on Soja (1996) and Zeichner (2007) to position his learning in a third space between university and school classrooms. His self-study of pedagogy within teacher education provides a critique to enable an expanded understanding of reflective practice for himself and the pre-service teachers.

Various disruptive dissonances of confronting the struggle in the development of expertise are evident among the teachers in my research: Sally risked success and failure in her learning approach, Brenda was innovative in integrating ICT into developmental opportunities, Rosemary proactively sought different experiences to develop her understanding across contexts, and Lincoln reframed understanding of his personal professional expertise and continued to seek learning that requires making mistakes. These four teachers harnessed their relational and communicative spaces to explore learning with colleagues and students. This provided greater self-understanding and a revisioning of their practice. In contrast, Ken's inability to engage in supportive interactions was evidence of his unmalleable approach. His often tentative and pessimistic characterisation of challenging situations reinforced a conservative perspective towards educational changes and encouraged a reticence in adapting his teaching practice.

Four of the teachers in my research negotiated the disruptive dissonance of a contested space in approaching uncertain challenges as developmental opportunities – as unique responses within their communicative and relational spaces. The tension and resistance they experienced enabled learning: Sally acknowledged that *"I've adapted"* in her approach to collegial compromise; Brenda recognised her motivational need in that *"you'd get bored if you didn't have a challenge"*; Rosemary considered new spaces where *"if a really random opportunity came up for me to leave teaching altogether and try something new then I might go for that"*; and Lincoln welcomed a *"critical coming together"* in becoming a teacher mentor that *"was now saying 'well the doors open, you can go and try that now'"*. For these teachers, the border-crossing of contested spaces has occurred throughout their personal professional development, continually seeing uncertain challenges as

development opportunities. Lincoln perceived his movement into a leadership role as altering his learning modality. He could not learn in the same way as previously, where he had learned from his mistakes, but instead had to evaluate his ideas with leader colleagues. Ken likewise experienced difficulties in his border-crossing into leadership roles, yet in contrast to Lincoln he avoided the opportunity to mentor novice teachers. Their attitudes and beliefs to their own learning are central to negotiating the disruptive dissonance of approaching challenges as developmental opportunities.

In the third and final problematic, I explore the unique responses of the teachers to being an expert teacher despite the seemingly impossible possibility of becoming an expert teacher. The discussion investigates the transformative possibilities of disruptive dissonances for the teachers.

9.3.3 How do I articulate being an expert through the seemingly impossible possibility of becoming an expert?

In this problematic, the disruptive dissonance is the disjunction between a teacher's notion of ongoing learning as essential for developing expertise and the sociopolitically accepted acknowledgement of expertise represented through successful achievement in teacher leader roles. All the teachers in my research perceive that their expertise lies within their classroom practice. Ken's reflection based on his involvement in my research resulted in his questioning of the expert identification due to his unsuccessful leadership experience and his expertise solely within classroom teaching. Lincoln, Sally, Brenda and Rosemary are reticent to accept the title of expert because they see learning as ongoing and see development as requiring challenges. Furthermore, there is a quandary in their career progression in terms of their leadership roles. They are happiest in continuing to learn as teacher leaders

within the relational and communicative spaces that include classroom teaching and they continually negotiate the seemingly impossible possibility of becoming an expert teacher. The portrayal of their professional experience lacks the language to articulate the meaning of their developing expertise throughout their careers. However, the teachers found it difficult to reconcile accepted notions of experience as representative of expertise. This notion did not align with the development of self-understanding they realised through ongoing learning and so was a disruptive dissonance for them. Furthermore, through participation in my research, they recognised different aspects of their expertise.

For Sally, the disruptive dissonance required resolving the fraudulent feelings about her expertise as she undertook leadership roles in a relieving capacity. She acknowledged the difficulty in reconciling her perception with that of her colleagues.

I've had lots of practice. That's what I keep saying, "lots of pretending" ... Well, they can't see, they don't understand why I think like that either. ... I sort of sit there and go "well, I'm not actually a head teacher, I'm just relieving". I don't know. I don't know why I think like that.

She attributed her development to the chance aspect of gaining roles and receiving support from more experienced colleagues:

I think partly being in the right place at the right time and having a changeover of very experienced staff. I was really fortunate to have that mentoring and someone showing a genuine interest in bettering my capabilities in the classroom. I think also obviously having a desire to improve and learn continually myself contributed to it.

Sally recognised her growing confidence gained through mentoring support and her own motivation for learning as contributing to her expertise. She was conscious of the need for continually sharing with colleagues for her ongoing development. She commented that this required “[pause] More time [pause] more time.”

Sally perceived “a strong base” in her existing network of friends in leadership positions to assist her future development but was “conscious of consuming their time”. However, for her there was no time to access this support in undertaking her first permanent leadership role. Her continuing development of expertise involved notions of being “conscious” and “aware” of the significance of her communicative and relational spaces.

Sally recognised that her approach to teaching and learning led to her nomination by her former mentor Gerard for my research:

I think because Gerard recognised that I was continually trying to find ways to improve what I do and perhaps a bit of self-reflection and reflection on how things have progressed would help me in that. I think also out of a desire to help you and just for a different way to reflect on how I'm progressing professionally.

She also indicated that her participation in my research would contribute to her learning.

Brenda attributed her nomination for my research to her colleagues' acknowledgement of her ICT prowess and contribution to collegial professional learning:

I suppose they must have known that I came here from the UK and was part of the initial really big push to start using technology more widely in the classroom and sort of revamp teaching practice so

perhaps that's the reason why.

Brenda experienced the disruptive dissonance of broadening her understanding from specific classroom aspects of “*getting into teaching*” to “*thinking outside that*”. She was aware that aspects of practice become intuitive, such as supporting the intellectual quality, a quality learning environment, and the significance of learning as articulated in the quality teaching framework (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2003). She recognised that teachers are aware of the theoretical foundation supporting pedagogy but that this may not necessarily be demonstrated in conversations among teachers:

I think often you go to professional development sessions or you listen to lectures on education and they use terminology and think “I don't know what that is!” Then when it's explained you're like “Oh well I actually do that”. I think most of us who are teaching we do a lot of these things without realising that we're doing them.

During her career, Brenda continued to make connections between her practice and emerging educational theories. She realised that incorporating rapid change within curriculum, assessment and pedagogical practice required an ability to specifically target individual learning. Her developing expertise often required personal stamina to cope with her own expectations, along with the sociopolitical changes in the breadth of responsibility and accountability for teachers:

I think as you go through the different stages of your career you become more and more aware of all of these aspects and more and more aware of what you need to incorporate. There are times when it is overwhelming and everyone says it is. Particularly at the moment, the pace of change is so rapid that I think there are some people myself

included, probably that will never get to grips with all of it because there is just too much to try and do at once. So you're better off just stepping back and saying "right, I will do this one new thing well" rather than trying to do a bit of everything that's new and end up not doing any of it very well.

Brenda became aware of all she had to learn as she progressed through her career. She described the effect of this awareness as contributing to her "lack of sleep" and "nightmares [of] being late for class or getting to a class and for some reason not knowing what on earth I am going to teach. I think they are probably your anxieties coming out in your dreams." The disruptive dissonance for Brenda was represented in her ability to maintain confidence in her expertise while balancing the everyday demands of her teaching with the emotional, physical and intellectually challenges of change.

Rosemary's ongoing disruptive dissonance concerning her notions of expertise focused on reconciling expectations within relational and communicative spaces. She described the significance of personal abilities in fostering professional relationships as part of the development of expertise:

I think another thing to do with the selection of being an experienced teacher would be that people have some quite good powers of analysis, of insight into trying to read other people and read situations. And that will inform their professional judgement and professional behaviour and relationships with colleagues and students.

Rosemary saw her development within the relational and communicative spaces as part of the ongoing nature of becoming an expert teacher. She acknowledged that the need for stamina and the ability to moderate her personal feelings at challenging times was important for her professional learning and expertise:

I think we'll always keep figuring things out and learning things. It can depend sometimes that you're in a bit of a mood yourself.

Sometimes you're not really, you don't have the energy or what have you, so even if we learn certain things we're not always being perfect ourselves. It's got to do with stamina as well I guess in a way.

She also expressed reticence in portraying her developmental experience as definitely positive or negative:

It's very difficult to sum things up. I don't think you can deal with anything and think that was good and that was bad because it's just got so many outcomes for what you do in your life and your time.

Rosemary's personal and professional attributes and overall approach to challenges in life illustrate a formative approach for becoming an expert teacher. Her disruptive dissonances regarding the notion of expertise are the ongoing personal and professional challenges that represent becoming. Rosemary perceives that being an expert teacher requires proving herself as a "decent teacher" and demonstrating her pastoral abilities in her current head of boarding house role.

Rosemary's response to my email (refer to Appendix D.7) represented self-selection as a teacher leader:

Well to be completely honest, what it was, there was an email that came around to the senior staff, saying is anyone interested in taking part. I wasn't singled out in any way at all. I just saw the email and thought that might be quite interesting. Because I also didn't have much of an idea what a PhD involved so I thought it might be quite nice to do. So that's why really.

Lincoln acknowledged the peer recognition of his teaching expertise regarding his nomination for my research:

“I think they asked me because I’d been teaching for a while and I had a range of experiences that fit into the thing you were talking about”.

Lincoln’s disruptive dissonance concerning notions of expertise was reconciling school and university experiences with his approach to teaching. He acknowledged a compulsion to be a better teacher than his colleagues:

I can remember four or five teachers where I sat in their class watching them thinking “I can do this better, I could do that, I can picture myself setting up and doing that and this is how I’d do it”. And I always think that that was my calling to say “this is what you’re going to do”. I look back and I can strongly remember that and the only other time I’ve really had that similar feeling was at the end of the economics degree I did a Dip Ed ... And I remember thinking I can see myself doing that job.

Lincoln has been aware of the development of his expertise over time. During the interviews, he also recognised a continuing desire to improve his teaching:

I really want to be a better teacher all the time [emphasised]. I know that I’m a much better teacher than I was when I was first year out. I know that I’m getting better all the time and that’s what I want to do: I want to learn things and I want to take things in. I don’t want to be in that position where I’m just in cruise control and go “no, I know everything”.

He identifies a formative approach to learning in always becoming and developing his expertise. Yet Lincoln feels that his family and friends did not

know “*the real me*” and that the leaders at his current school did not have “*the whole picture*” of him and his approach as a teacher leader. He enjoyed reading through the narrative I created of his personal professional learning journey as it enabled him to acknowledge the significance of articulating the self-understanding of his teaching expertise through story:

I loved the story. Every once in a while I open it up and read through it again. It's been a really affirming process to look over all of that. I really enjoyed the picture that got built when you wrote that so I was happy with all of that. ... I would love for that to be in my résumé, for somebody to read it and say “Hey that Lincoln guy, I'd really like to employ him”. And I'd like to say to somebody “if you employed me as a teacher, this is the package that you get” ... When I read the story and interpretation I was like ok, I feel really understood by that piece of writing.

Lincoln emphasises the importance of revealing this self to others and of confirming the teacher he is. However, for him there was a disruptive dissonance regarding the future projection of his positive agency as a teacher leader. His self-understanding and his aspirations for leadership did not align with how he felt understood and perceived by others. His conception of who he is in being an expert teacher is also at odds with his formative approach to learning in terms of always becoming and always developing his expertise.

During the interviews, Ken queried the alignment of characteristics he attributed to an expert teacher with his demonstration of these characteristics:

*So from what I've written, I think, so how much of that do I really do?
I try and do most of it so I suppose it's just the word expert I don't feel*

comfortable with. I said I'm flattered that the person asked so I'm sitting both sides of the fence saying "I'm not worthy but isn't it good someone thinks that I might be".

He did not allude to a formative notion of developing expertise and also shied away from the use of the term 'expert'.

Ken's disruptive dissonance for being an expert became problematic when he was forced to reflect on a story that did not portray ongoing possibilities for becoming. He did not respond to the disruptive dissonance within relational and communicative spaces despite his perception of being a "team player". His perspective was different to those of the other teachers as he was wary of personal and professional change. He was cynical about the trends associated with ICT and perceived change cycles in education as something to be endured. He believed that the essential nature of the teacher's role was the same as "200 years ago". Furthermore, his lack of desire to continue in a teacher leader role focused his notion of expertise on the years he spent in classroom teaching. He perceived his expertise as the accumulation of his past experiences, and he described his classroom expertise through his optional lecture session offered to Year 12 mathematics students prior to their final exam for matriculation to tertiary studies. Ken found that double the number of students attended his sessions as compared to his expectations for a class of 30:

It's a situation where I think I must be doing something right for that many to turn up. I think anyone could have run it but I just had a feeling that this topic would be popular. I suppose over a number of years I've seen so many students struggle with that topic and so when you're doing a lecture session I think that students are going to look at topics that they find difficult and say "well I'll go to that session".

In his summary of what constitutes being an expert, Ken included the demonstration of content knowledge as well as attributes similar to ones identified by the other four teachers in my research. However, the recounting of his teaching and learning experiences led him to the following conclusion:

Having written these words, it makes me more convinced that you have asked the wrong person in your thesis if I am supposed to be an expert.

Ken expressed a disruptive dissonance in not attaining his notion of being an expert after reviewing his personal professional learning journey.

In the following discussion, I investigate how the disruptive dissonance for being and becoming is a problematic within the lifeworld of the teachers in my research.

Ontological third space development: the concepts of being and becoming an expert teacher

For the teachers in my research, articulating the concept of being an expert through the seemingly impossible possibility of becoming an expert was an ongoing problematic represented in disruptive dissonances throughout their careers. The teachers articulated meaning for their personal professional development that did not posit a binary opposition of expert and experienced non-expert (Tsui, 2009). Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary and Brenda continually negotiated this disruptive dissonance as to the accepted notion of their expertise in their interactions with the school and broader community, and in professional and societal discourses. In contrast, Ken was presented with a disjunction between what he believes an expert to be and his position as an expert in the research. His involvement in my research forced him to reflect on the notion that years of teaching experience does not necessarily

represent the ongoing development of expertise within a learning journey. My notion of an ontological third space is characterised by the continual negotiation of being and becoming in the relational and communicative spaces of the teachers. The third space thinking that recognises the hybridity of these spaces, allows for ongoing construction of meaning from the teachers' personal professional development. Zeichner (2010) characterises hybridity as essential to third space notions that allow for border-crossing and negotiating resistant boundaries of meaning. The teachers in my research negotiate the meaning of expertise through interweaving their theoretical understandings with the practical aspects of their personal professional development.

I draw on the hybridity of third space thinking to explore the personal professional development of the teachers and investigate this space as accommodating the evolving concepts of being and becoming an expert. There is no point at which the teachers recognised themselves definitively as an expert teacher. Throughout their personal professional development there are disruptive dissonances in the continual negotiation of meaning in their becoming rather than being an expert. Sally struggled with the notion of being a 'fraud' while still requiring ongoing personal professional development to become an expert. Rosemary perceived relationships as essential for being an expert while also recognising the tenuousness of being. She acknowledged the fraught nature of personal attributes while continuing to enhance her understanding of developing relationships with students through professional learning. Both Sally and Rosemary saw further study, in the form a Master's degree, as an opportunity to reframe their teaching using theory and research. However, they were not able to continue in this learning. The constant demands of their teacher leader roles stifled their ongoing efforts at becoming through professional learning and so

compromised their acknowledgement of being an expert. The teachers' openness to the continual negotiation of the meaning of their expertise is indicative of the 'both/ and also' thinking that Soja (1996) characterises as essential within the hybridity of a third space.

In their careers, Brenda and Lincoln thrived on the challenge of critique and reflexive practice in terms of the teacher they continually aspire to be. Realising their competence in teaching allowed them to strive for another situation in which to learn, as a mentor or by assisting in the professional learning and accreditation of their colleagues. However, Sally, Brenda, Rosemary and Lincoln did not represent themselves as being an expert in these roles, but rather described themselves as co-learners. So there was a constant tension between how they appeared to be to others and how they perceived themselves. In contrast, Ken perceived his content knowledge as a central aspect of expertise and envisaged applying this beyond the school environment to benefit gifted or struggling students.

Zeichner (2010) illustrates the possibilities of dealing with competing discourses through a third space that bridges the theory and practice divide. Third space notions prove useful for addressing an enduring issue of the practice-theory divide in order to envision non-traditional approaches that negotiate the border crossing between curriculum and practice, and between university teaching and professional practice (Klein, Taylor, Onore, Strom, & Abrams, 2013, p. 89). Building on this notion, Ikpeze et al. (2012) characterise third space as a 'contested space' that is 'discursive' and 'relational'. Along this line, the teachers in my research expressed their apprehension at being called experts. Accountability frameworks placed them in competition rather than nurturing communicative and relational spaces for learning. Throughout their personal professional development they have negotiated

the concept of ongoing learning while being identified for the development of their expertise. They have approached their professional learning as a way to extend their teaching and learning expertise rather than accommodating themselves to performative benchmarks. For these teachers, the achievement of an accreditation level is not representative of the reality of their lifeworld. This third space thinking comprises continually questioning what is perceived as being an expert and approaching learning as central to becoming in the teacher's relational and communicative spaces. The hybridity and contestation within this space provide meaning to their personal professional learning.

For the teachers in my research, the meaning associated with being an expert within their profession is a disruptive dissonance that is covertly articulated within this third space. Their relational and communicative spaces are representative of a third space hybridity that allows for the ongoing construction of meaning from their personal professional development.

Significantly, these disruptive dissonances are ongoing problematics within the lifeworld of the teachers required for their learning. These dissonances do not become undisruptive through final resolutions but undergo continual reassessment within the relational and communicative spaces inhabited by the teachers. I propose that disruptive dissonances within relational and communicative spaces allow articulation of meaning of the teachers' unique personal professional development.

The three significant problematics represent the phenomenological constituents of disruptive dissonances that the teachers negotiate to construct meaning throughout their personal professional development. These dissonances represent possibilities for articulating being an expert and

also suggest a central impossibility within the amorphous nature of becoming an expert teacher. My analysis indicates that the insightful response possible through disruptive dissonances represents productive potential for the teachers in approaching their professional learning

9.4 Chapter discussion

This phenomenological inquiry has explored the lifeworld constituents within the personal professional development of the teachers in my research and denotes an interconnectedness with their personal professional learning. Jarvis (2009) contends that the philosophical aspects of learning in being and becoming “are inextricably intertwined, and human learning is one of the phenomena that unite them, for it is fundamental to life itself” (Jarvis, 2009, p. 30). Significantly for the teachers in my research, learning is a central part of being a teacher in their lifeworld and in the creation of meaning in becoming an expert teacher.

The first section of this chapter explored the meaning given to experience, as well as to insightful understanding gained from experience for the teachers in my research. Lindqvist’s and Nordängers’ (2010) conceptualisation of reality through relational space provided the basis for my phenomenological analysis; they differentiate the experience of teachers from insights that represent I-Thou perceptions through instances of insightful presence. These occurrences are not tactically planned nor combined with conscious reflection but rather are received as ‘offers’ in which the teacher “talks about ‘becoming’” (Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2010, p. 53). Insight extends beyond teachers narrating on their post-reflective experience. Their insightful presence makes visible the pre-reflective meaning of their experience. Regarding the teachers in my research, I explored their perspectives of empathetic understanding and non-

competitive collegiality as being representative of insightful presence. I revealed that the pre-predicative meaning of each teacher's insight allows for varying connections with others through experience and also provides awareness for self-understanding. Aspiring to create relationships enables their insightful understanding of others as well as self. For the teachers in my research, the pre-reflective meaning of experience is expressed through insight. Their relational caring and supportive interactions provide an articulation of meaning for each teacher's personal professional development. Significantly, the construction of meaning that occurs within relational and communicative spaces is necessary for the ongoing personal professional learning that characterises their teaching expertise.

The second section of this chapter argued that 'disruptive dissonances' are phenomenological constituents of each teacher's lifeworld. These dissonances were represented within three ongoing problematics as evidenced by the teachers' learning within their relational and communicative spaces. These spaces were analysed by specifically using the characteristics of an ontological 'third space' as individually conceptualised by Lefebvre (1991), Soja (1996), and Zeichner (2010). The unique disruptive dissonances represented as ongoing problematics within the lifeworld of the teachers in my research were illustrative of third space philosophy, confrontation and development.

Lincoln, Sally, Brenda and Rosemary were the teachers in my study who exhibited the openness of third space thinking as characterised by Soja's (1996) rejection of 'either/or logic' to allow for a 'both/ and also' philosophy. These four teachers developed communicative, collaborative pedagogy rather than isolating their expertise. They faced uncertain challenges as development opportunities. My representation of these attributes within the

first two problematics of this chapter aligns to the 'contrapuntal harmonies' and 'disruptive dissonances' characterised within Lefebvre's (1991) notion of space. The teachers in my research negotiate different developmental experiences, continually refining their notions of expertise, confronting ambiguous ideas and traversing diverse avenues for learning. Reconciling their teaching philosophy and practice, and the negotiation of meaning for themselves as well as with others, illustrates the difficult 'border-crossing' that Zeichner (2010) argues is essential for professional learning within a third space. Additionally, articulating being an expert alongside the apparent impossibility of becoming an expert poses a third problematic within the teachers' relational and communicative spaces. These spaces were similarly characterised by the 'tension and resistance' of Soja's (1996) 'contested space' and the 'hybridity' for creating meaning across diverse and often competing discourses. The teachers in my research confronted this ongoing problematic in a third space as a disruptive dissonance in their development through the evolving concepts of being and becoming an expert. My phenomenological inquiry contends that each teacher's response to disruptive dissonances within their relational and communicative spaces afforded unique possibilities for transformative learning in developing and realising their expertise.

Ken was the one teacher who restricted his empathetic understanding to students, at the exclusion of colleagues and self, and maintained an unengaged stance with respect to non-competitive collegiality. He demonstrated a stifled and negative response to the disruptive dissonances within his relational and communicative spaces, and isolation within practice for Ken was at the expense of a communicative, collaborative pedagogy. This in fact presented an ongoing problematic for all of the teachers in my research within the context of increased pressure due to

accountability and competition with colleagues. Although this may not have represented a continual problematic as it did for Ken, there was the danger that isolated practice would not provide a disruptive dissonance that required traversing to afford the insights of a communicative, collaborative pedagogy. An ongoing perspective on learning allows teachers to respond to the necessary disruptive dissonance of negotiating uncertain challenges as developmental opportunities. Additionally, the articulation of being an expert with the seemingly impossible possibility of becoming an expert may represent an ultimate disruptive dissonance for all of the teachers in my research. There is an ongoing problematic in viewing expertise as only gaining knowledge through experience and promotional role achievements at the exclusion of a formative learning perspective that continually supports the growth of expertise. Ken could not perceive of himself as an expert teacher after checking the narrative of his personal professional learning journey and seeing a disjuncture with his description of teaching expertise, a description similar to that provided by the personal professional learning journeys of the other four teachers. Ken was able to maintain his current approach, which reinforces a notion of expertise based on his content and practice knowledge gained through years of teaching experience, until he paused to reflect as part of this research. As Dall'Alba (2009) notes:

Acquisition of knowledge and skills is insufficient for embodying and enacting skilful professional practice, including for the process of becoming that learning such practice entails. (Dall'Alba, 2009, p. 42)

The characteristics of an ontological third space represent one means of understanding the ways in which the teachers in my research create meaning through ongoing problematics in their lifeworlds. For Ken, the inaccessibility of a 'both/ and also' philosophy of third space prevented an exploration of

expertise in several ways – through the avenue of a teacher leader, in the sharing of practice with novice teachers, and through being open to alternative approaches from colleagues. Promoting an ontological focus throughout his personal professional learning journey may have enabled the border-crossing required to create the hybrid spaces for reconstruction of meaning in becoming an expert teacher.

In the final chapter of this thesis, I explore the implications of contested notions of experience versus expertise provided in the dichotomy that distinguishes between expert and experienced non-expert. I present recommendations that align with the approach of researchers such as Dall’Alba and Sandberg (2010), who argue that:

A lifeworld perspective also highlights the centrality of the integration of epistemological with ontological dimensions for learning to engage in practice. Our learning extends beyond what we know and can do to who we are. (Dall’Alba & Sandberg, 2010, p. 117)

My research explores the requirements of teachers’ personal professional learning arising in response to their unique disruptive dissonances. This then necessitates the ongoing formation of unique responsive spaces for the continued personal professional development of teachers. I maintain the significance of an ontological perspective for understanding the lifeworld constituents within the personal professional development and learning of teachers.

Possibilities for practice, policy and research within teacher personal professional learning

10.1 Introduction

My research represents the perceptions of five expert teachers regarding their ongoing personal professional development, and their attitudes and beliefs about their own learning. This thesis makes an original contribution to knowledge by:

- Uncovering new understanding on the development of expertise by interrogating expert teachers' personal professional learning
- Using a dual methodological stance to reveal representations of the teachers' constructions of meaning within their lifeworld, and
- Positing the centrality of personal professional learning within the lifeworld of expert teachers.

This chapter begins by revisiting the notion that complementary hermeneutic understandings are accessible through the use of dual methodologies. The compatible theoretical underpinnings of narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry enable gathering of meaning representations through the expert teachers' reflections on story as well as uncovering the understanding or pre-reflective sense existing within their experience. I propose that my methodological responsiveness in terms of

using the lens of hermeneutic phenomenology represents a revisioning within the prescribed paradigmatic perspectives discussed in Chapter 3. I also reveal the fraught nature of identifying 'experts' within the research process for this small-scale study.

I then advocate the personal aspect of expert teachers' professional development and learning. My narrative inquiry findings highlight the mutuality of being and becoming within each personal professional learning journey for the expert teachers in my research. The discussion distinguishes the experiences of Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary and Brenda from those of Ken. These first four highlight the personal professional development they experienced from a variety of environments and relationships. They reveal these contextual factors along with their attitude towards ongoing learning and their belief in taking risks as contributing to their expertise. They emphasise a dynamic approach to learning that is open to change in pedagogical approaches and to creating links between theory and practice. Their approach to learning continues to nourish their expertise by combining their reflexivity in discussions with others with their responses to challenges as opportunities to learn.

My re-imagining of what constitutes teacher expertise through phenomenological findings then distinguishes insight from experience and so reveals the pivotal nature of disruptive dissonances within the development of expertise. The application of third space thinking for expert teachers enables their construction of meaning by traversing the disruptive dissonances of three problematics, as explored in Chapter 9. Encountering these problematics requires third space thinking represented by:

- A philosophy of openness in order to create communicative, collaborative pedagogy and avoid professional isolation

- The confrontation of uncertain challenges to undergo the struggle for developmental opportunities, and
- A developmental awareness of prevailing through the seemingly impossible possibility of becoming to accept the acknowledgement of being an expert.

The phenomenological findings also reveal that four of the five teachers in my research value the greater self-understanding afforded by their developing expertise and their ongoing personal professional learning. I conceptualise the emerging and interdependent nature of the concepts within my findings and conclusions through Figure 4: Expert teachers' personal professional development and approach to learning, as seen on page 311 . This visualises the teachers' experience in a three-dimensional shape that continuously reblossoms over time. This illustration merges the hermeneutic understandings, developed from my findings and their implications, with my recommendations to provide some necessary conditions for teachers' professional development.

I propose that the disruptive dissonances for developing expertise, as phenomenological constituents within the lifeworld of expert teachers, require essential support through the following professional learning principles:

- Sharing the language of teaching and learning through storytelling
- Living with the uncertainties of being and becoming whilst rejecting the dichotomy of expert versus non-expert, and
- Promoting professional learning communities that encourage the linking of theory and practice, the resonance of individuality and collegiality, and the mutuality of being and becoming.

Promoting these professional learning principles will harness the possible benefits and impacts of my research for the personal professional development and learning of expert teachers. I then suggest future research possibilities for understanding the incidental and emancipatory nature of expert teachers' personal professional development and learning. Within my conclusions, I acknowledge the 'others' within their lifeworld: students, colleagues and teacher leaders and mentors. I recognise that an interactive research process allows for reflexivity on lived experience.

10.2 Theoretical compatibility and complementary understandings

I have used dual methodologies to enrich the exploration of my research questions and contribute to the methodological responsiveness necessary to understand the complexity of phenomena within our lifeworlds.

Chapter 3 situated my research within a constructivist perspective and detailed the use of narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry within the lens of hermeneutic phenomenology. The use of these dual methodologies enabled the creation of complementary hermeneutic understandings of how expert teachers construct meaning from their personal professional development and approach to their learning. The use of narrative inquiry allowed for an examination of the unique human experience of the five teachers in the study through the co-construction of their personal professional learning journeys. An analysis of the phenomenological meaning-making that traverses these five narratives then garnered the constituent of disruptive dissonances across the teachers' experiences. The construction of meaning representations required the blurring of boundaries of culturally imposed understanding of experience.

My phenomenological analysis revealed the insightful understanding often repressed or constrained within the experience of the teachers.

Additionally, Chapter 3 articulated the qualitative principles of rigour that I applied throughout my research process. Maxwell (2002) disregards the empirical validities of external generalisability and evaluative validity for qualitative research methodologies. He argues that accuracy of representations provides descriptive validity, that the perspective of participants represents interpretive validity and that theoretical validity is achieved with plausible and legitimate research explanations in attempting to establish new concepts, principles or theoretical frameworks (Maxwell, 2002). For my research, the qualitative principles of rigour – verisimilitude, appetency, and transferability (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007) – have underpinned the trustworthiness of my analysis when representing and interpreting expert teachers' views. This methodological stance will enable teacher recognition of my findings at local, thematic and global levels.

10.2.1 The fraught nature of identifying 'experts'

My research highlighted the fraught nature of identifying 'experts'. My detailed construction of the meaning occurring through the development of expertise for five teachers reveals the need to distinguish between the meaning of expertise from years of teaching experience.

My research contains detailed descriptions, as is typical of small-scale qualitative research (Denzin, 2002; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Lichtman, 2010; Riessman, 2002; van Manen, 1997). As discussed in Chapter 3, this approach allows for more extensive analysis on the meaning constructed by the participants of the study (Yates, 2003). The use of criterion sampling and a snowballing process enabled the nomination by colleagues of teachers for

my research. The recognition of expertise within the experience of those teaching and learning with their expert colleague was supported by the teaching expertise criteria I developed (refer to Appendix B.1). The decision to invite only five teachers was made after initial interview transcription and analysis, where the gathering of considerably varied representations of expert teachers' experience for interpretation negated any need to expand the number of participants.

Importantly, the findings presented in Chapter 9 demonstrate the teachers' perspectives as to why they were nominated. Sally, Brenda and Lincoln acknowledged the aspects of their expertise recognised by colleagues, Rosemary attributed her self-selection to her recognition by others as a teacher leader, and Ken recognised his nomination as being due to years of teaching experience. The teachers' representations of their personal professional development and their understanding of the reasons for their nomination also highlighted the differing perceptions of the term 'expert'. Four of the five teachers recognised that expertise in teaching and learning included the continual recontextualising of competence in practice, along with developing self-understanding through ongoing challenges. The findings question the perception that expertise is exclusively achieved through years of teaching experience.

In the next section, the findings from the personal professional learning journeys for each teacher are discussed in relation to the notions of being and becoming.

10.3 The personal nature of professional development and learning: narratives of being and becoming an expert teacher

My research highlighted the personal nature of the professional development and learning of the five teachers through the creation and

interpretation of individual narratives for each teacher. This section reviews the findings of the five personal professional learning journeys with regard to the contextual factors the teachers recognised as shaping their personal professional development, the attitudes and beliefs the teachers exhibited towards their own learning, and the way in which their unique approach to learning influenced their personal professional development.

10.3.1 Teacher recognition of contextual factors

During their interviews, the teachers all recognised contextual factors as significantly shaping their personal professional development. They identified their personal motivations in being a teacher, the responses they received from their students and their relationships with peers. They also shared notions of mentoring and selection of mentors based on personal professional relationships rather than system-stipulated roles. Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary and Brenda concurred that generic professional development courses do not wholly meet their unique learning needs. They endorsed tailored opportunities for theorising about their practice, such as university study, mentoring relationships and targeted practice-based learning, such as before- or after-school sessions with colleagues on ICT or reviewing pedagogical approaches within their specific subject areas.

For the teachers, the nurturing of relationships and reflective responses to their context has been central in shaping their personal professional development. Lincoln identifies the emotional nature of personal practical knowledge and the significant influence of relationships for personal professional learning. Sally maintains that mentoring is central for her learning. Brenda believes that the emotional needs of herself and her students provide the impetus for her learning. Rosemary's story demonstrates the importance of sociocultural diversity across micro- and

macro-contexts and their relationship to her personal professional development. Ken's focus on his early years of practice with only one role model teacher and his exposition of critical incidents of failure are influential in shaping his personal professional development.

Loughran (2010) notes that expert teachers learn about their professional practice through communicative interaction with colleagues and students. Essentially, this entails collaboration in teaching practice with "a valued colleague" and facilitation of feedback from "students as active learners", as well as from peers (Loughran, 2010, pp. 213-215). In my research, Lincoln, Sally and Brenda each confirmed the importance of obtaining student feedback. They each talked of valuing the learning available to them through positive feedback and constructive criticism. These teachers, along with Rosemary, demonstrated self-regulated learning Zimmerman (2002) and are indicative of Moore's (2004) "reflective practitioners" who are able to engage in "'productive', constructive, or 'authentic' reflection". Moore argues that developing the capability for broad reflexivity with colleagues allows for teacher "reflection within wider personal, social and cultural contexts" (Moore, 2004, pp. 111-112). Lincoln, Sally, Brenda and Rosemary described actively seeking discussions with other teachers and students. They exhibit an openness to sharing ideas and practices in their collaboration with colleagues. Such dialogue is described by Swaffield (2008) as being "at the heart of critical friendship"; Swaffield represents Alexander's (2004) dialogic process as "being collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful" (Swaffield, 2008, p. 334). For Brenda, Lincoln, Sally and Rosemary, dialogue is central to pedagogy. Their personal professional development involves communicating their shared teaching purpose and approach, as well as their personal dispositions towards learning. By contrast, Ken does not engage in such sharing, instead progressively

isolating himself from professional development interactions with colleagues. Lieberman and Pointer Mace (2009) contend that teacher isolation does not nurture developing expertise, which requires the fostering of a collaborative learning environment as evident when teachers share accomplishments of their teaching practice within their school community by “going public” (Lieberman & Pointer Mace, 2009, p. 469). The findings of my research suggest that, for Lincoln, Sally, Brenda and Rosemary, contextual sharing of practice relies on collaborative relationships, which develop through mutual trust and respect.

10.3.2 Teacher attitudes and beliefs about learning

For the teachers in my research, their attitudes towards and beliefs about their own learning contribute to their notion of developing expertise.

Lincoln, Sally, Brenda and Rosemary believe that their learning requires that the certainty of accepted practice is challenged and that they are pushed to explore alternatives. They accept the possibilities of failing and succeeding, and consciously reflect on their experience for insights into their own learning.

Shulman and Shulman (2008) propose five concepts within their developmental theory for teaching accomplishment. They argue that the personal professional learning of an accomplished teacher requires the development of a number of traits:

Ready (possessing vision). Willing (having motivation). Able (both knowing and being able ‘to do’). Reflective (learning from experience), and Communal (acting as a member of a professional community). (Shulman & Shulman, 2008, p. 258)

The recognition of these traits highlights the entwined nature of teachers' perceptive abilities within the context of their learning and their capabilities to harness development opportunities within their professional community. My research findings emphasise that such traits are evidenced in unique ways throughout the personal professional learning journeys of Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary and Brenda. In contrast, Ken did not fully engage in the reflective and communal aspects, and demonstrated the other traits to varying degrees due to his inconsistency and lack of drive at different times throughout his narrative.

Lincoln, Sally, and Brenda place emphasis on reflecting by contextually framing and reframing their understanding. Rosemary shifts her early career focus of classroom management and curriculum content to the reflection possible through her pastoral care interactions with students and in her collegial relationships. Ken's perceptions align to being a 'competent craftsman' for whom pedagogical skill is central to teaching competence. His stance contrasts to the attitudes and beliefs of the other four, which align with the beliefs of a 'reflective practitioner' (Moore, 2004). Tsui (2009) holds that expert teachers demonstrate "their ability to integrate aspects of teacher knowledge in relation to the teaching act; their response to their contexts of work, and their ability to engage in reflection and conscious deliberation" (Tsui, 2009, p. 421). Furthermore, Loughran (2010) contends that expert teachers are able to reframe their understanding. This capability is demonstrated when a situation "is viewed from alternative perspectives so that different ways of acting are more readily apparent" (Loughran, 2010, p. 212).

Lincoln espouses the fostering of happiness and wellbeing for development of the whole person as central to his learning. He represents his

expertise as broader than specific content knowledge, which he believes to be a limited form of expertise. He consciously acknowledges that there is no line of demarcation or point at which you arrive that delineates you as an expert. Lincoln's understanding of being an expert entails the proviso that you are always learning and so supports his receptive attitude to challenges.

Sally's experiential orientation to learning entails feedback on tangible experiences. She attributes her development to a personal desire to improve, in combination with an appreciation of the specific context and the suitability of her mentor. She believes she demonstrates expertise through her desire to learn and in recognising that there is always more to learn. Her genuine interest in student wellbeing and her recognition of appropriate opportunities for learning contribute to developing her expertise.

Brenda demonstrates a resilient attitude to change, a positive response to challenges, and a core belief in the value of experiencing a variety of collegial learning opportunities. She attributes her development to continually learning and recognising that there is a lot more to learn. She acknowledges being "*tired*" in trying to cover the breadth of role requirements and the requisite ongoing learning. She also believes her expertise encompasses characteristics such as content knowledge, understanding people, communication skills, and a rational approach exemplified by humour, calmness and a resolve to defuse situations.

Rosemary shifts her focus from content and behaviour management to a belief in the personal significance of pastoral care and the satisfaction gained from nurturing relationships. She perceives that developing expertise entails "*growing into your profession*", as well as constantly enriching yourself and your learning. She believes her expertise is demonstrated in her ability to figure things out for her learning. She acknowledges that her expertise is not

representative of a flawless individual but is influenced by her personal moods, energy and stamina, and that she is “*not always being perfect*” as a teacher.

Ken demonstrates a resistant attitude to change and maintains his beliefs in traditional pedagogy forged in his initial teaching years. His learning focuses on developing teaching expertise in the knowledge of his subject and an ability to identify the content areas that students experience difficulty in understanding and so require extra revision. In this area of teaching Ken acknowledges the ongoing nature of developing expertise: “*I’m guilty of reinventing the wheel, making the same mistakes over again but as I get more experienced I do feel that I’m making less mistakes.*”

The similar attitudes and beliefs of Lincoln, Brenda and Sally emphasise being ready, willing and able to engage in reflection, both personally and within a professional community. For Rosemary, creating a productive attitude towards community redirects the difficulties of her early teaching experience and restores a positive belief in pastoral relationships for her learning. Each of these four teachers indicates that their motivation to take on challenges requires ongoing stamina to support adjustments in their personal professional development. However, Ken is unable to envision change within his practice or sustain a motivational willingness to take risks through professional learning with colleagues.

10.3.3 Teachers’ approaches to learning

The teachers’ approaches to learning influence their personal professional development. Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary and Brenda emphasise learning as a dynamic process. Learning entails reflection on past experiences in order to accept the uncertainties of present challenges and to project these as opportunities to positively influence the future. These four teachers are open

and reflexive towards their experience, which in turn enables greater self-understanding. However, Ken's reticent approach to engage in collegial learning throughout his career has ramifications for his personal professional development.

My research found that the teachers' interrogation of their expertise improves their confidence and provides a positive perception of their ability. They seek understanding of their teaching from others, encouraging feedback in order to foster the self they aspire to be. Lincoln's emphasis on pastoral care in his learning places health and wellbeing as central to construction of the self. Sally's involvement with selected mentors, in combination with self-regulated and experiential learning, assists in developing her confidence and in reframing her fraudulent feelings, though not overcoming them altogether. Rosemary's determination of her professionalism enables her change of focus from behaviour management to greater involvement in student pastoral care. Brenda continually expands her learning horizon through different contexts of classroom teaching and considerations for the school community and collegial learning. In contrast to each of these teachers, Ken restricts his learning by not accessing alternate pedagogical practice and the potential of collegial reflection. He feels that "*I just need to know someone before I work with them*" and does not like to work with others who may do things differently. He appears unaware that in sharing understanding with others he may better understand himself and so enrich his personal professional development. Loughran (2010) maintains that fundamental to the professional development of expert teachers is the enrichment of their self-understanding. He represents teacher perception and awareness of self by noting that "*who we are is an integral element of how we teach*" (Loughran, 2010, p. 215).

Sally, Lincoln, Rosemary and Brenda embrace change and reflect on both positive and negative aspects for their learning. This encompasses a greater awareness and understanding of self in reflecting on what is known and accepting that there is always more to know. English (2009) draws on Dewey's concept of reflective learning as representing the space provided by an interruption of experience. The interruptions of difficult, unforeseen or unexpected happenings represent the space between a reflective and pre-reflective mindset. English (2009) asserts that:

Reflective inquiry transforms pre-reflective interruptions in experience into reflective forms of negativity of experience, which we can define then as 'problems' for examining and exploring. (English, 2009, p. 78)

Therefore, the impetus for examining the opportunity as a contextual problem enables reflective inquiry. Loughran (2010) further supports the development of expertise as an exploration process, stating that expert teachers engage in "the problematic nature of teaching", which in itself is "an educative rather than rudimentary training process" (Loughran, 2010, p. 213). This aligns to Moore's (2004) 'reflexive turn' in which a teacher's professional learning acknowledges the broader socio-cultural-political context and enables reflexivity on self with others.

My findings demonstrate that it would be simplistic to assume that developing expertise is based on defined factors within a prescribed path. For Lincoln, Sally, Brenda and Rosemary, in contrast to Ken, the multifaceted influences on their individual approach to learning all determine how each is able to develop. This presents questions, then, as to ways that Ken could have been put on a different path and also ways that some gruelling stretches, such as experienced by Rosemary, may have turned out

differently. The five narratives suggest that recognition of the contextual factors, specific attitudes and beliefs, and particular approaches to learning are all essential in being and becoming an expert teacher.

In summary, the personal professional learning journeys predominantly highlight that Ken's experience is different to those of Sally, Brenda, Lincoln and Rosemary. The findings indicate the uniqueness of each teacher's learning experiences: Lincoln's motivation for learning focuses on happiness and the whole person; Sally's orientation to learning includes tangible experiences, feedback and self-regulation; Rosemary's professionalism focuses on resilience and life enrichment; Brenda's emotional positivity and acceptance of change continually refresh her learning horizon; and Ken's emotional suffering, established pedagogy and resistance to change limit his learning opportunities.

The next section reconsiders how the identified phenomenological constituent of disruptive dissonances enables third space thinking for teachers' personal professional development and learning.

10.4 Distinguishing expertise from experience: expert teachers' third space thinking

The personal professional learning journeys for the teachers in my research highlight their perspectives on empathetic understanding and non-competitive collegiality within their personal professional development. Additionally, the pre-reflective meaning-making of the teachers highlights the unique disruptive dissonances they experience as phenomenological constituents that propel their personal professional learning. The different needs for the ongoing personal professional learning of each expert teacher suggests alternative third space thinking is necessary for their personal professional development. In this section I discuss third space thinking as an

enabler for the development of teaching expertise. Once again, the findings in relation to Ken's personal professional development and learning are different to those for Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary and Brenda.

Fundamentally, the phenomenological inquiry of my research suggests that harnessing an ontological third space is central for expert teachers in creating meaning through the disruptive dissonances of their lifeworld. They negotiate these dissonances through three problematics, as explored in Chapter 9.

I identify the first problematic as: 'To what extent is there a risk in isolating my experience from communicative, collaborative pedagogy?' The responses of Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary and Brenda exhibit an openness to the development of their expertise in teaching and learning. They demonstrate a third space philosophy through an intentional search for and nurturing of communicative, collaborative pedagogy. They do not aim for a fusion of their experience with that of others but strive to remain receptive to the possibilities presented through sharing experiences with others. The harnessing of such 'both/ and also' openings rather than conclusions (Soja, 1996, pp. 7-9) is indicative of their ontological third space philosophy. In contrast to the other four teachers, Ken recognises his expertise through his knowledge of content and as being synonymous with his years of teaching experience. However, he does not acknowledge that his expertise could be shared with a less experienced teacher to assist the development of their expertise. The teachers all demonstrate the notion of *Bildung* in aiming to make a difference in the life outcomes of their students and in addressing the needs of the whole learner. However, in contrast to the other four teachers, Ken does not apply the same reasoning to his own personal professional learning by sharing his developmental experiences with colleagues.

Wahlström (2010, pp. 296-307) argues that Dewey's concept of experience, along with the "democratic potential" of *Bildung*, illuminates "a fundamental similarity in some of the problems that people face". Ken does not recognise the similarity of experience in responding to challenges as developmental opportunities or acknowledge the self-transformation possible within professional development.

The second problematic, 'In what ways should I approach uncertain challenges as developmental opportunities?', requires confrontation within an ontological third space. The teachers all experience struggle and resistance when facing uncertain challenges as developmental opportunities. Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary and Brenda recognise the need for confronting accepted practices and understandings, contesting alternate approaches with colleagues, and making mistakes in order to learn. Ken's perspective, however, does not encourage further self-understanding or transformative learning possible through third space thinking.

A response to the third problematic, 'How do I articulate being an expert through the seemingly impossible possibility of becoming an expert?', represents an ontological third space through the awareness of the teachers as they negotiate the recognition of being an expert while acknowledging the evolving nature of becoming an expert. Sally, Rosemary and Brenda each refer to the development of their expertise as an ongoing process rather than attaining a fixed end state. Expertise is conceptualised by Tsui (2009) as "a process rather than a state" in which competence is developed by undertaking "increasingly difficult problems" (Tsui, 2009, p. 423). Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary and Brenda experience changes in self-understanding and understanding of others at different times within their lifeworld. They encounter changes incrementally over a long timeframe as well as through

instantaneous experience, which I represent in their negotiation of the first two problematics. However, Ken's invitation to participate in my study was based on the assumption that his more than 30 years of teaching experience equated with high levels of expertise. His understanding of his expertise focused on pedagogical skills for targeting the learning needs of his students. His broader omission of sociocultural change and sharing collegial understanding was therefore limiting for his own ongoing personal professional development. His experience of limited development after 30 years of teaching may have been prevented through the negotiation of disruptive dissonances to embrace the formative nature of becoming.

For four of the five teachers in my research, ontological third space thinking enriches their teaching and learning expertise through a philosophy of openness, a conceptualisation of uncertain challenges as developmental opportunities, and an awareness of the mutuality of being and becoming.

10.4.1 Embedding professional learning principles: implications for expert teachers' personal professional development

For my research, the three problematics inform my conceptualisations illustrated through Figure 4 on page 311.

The pivotal constituent of Figure 4 is the encountering of disruptive dissonances for the teacher within the being and becoming of their lifeworld. This visualisation represents the budding nature of being and becoming, where the blooming associated with contextual, dynamic and reflexive influences on teachers' developing expertise is intermingled with the blossoming of third space thinking in order to negotiate the problematics within their lifeworld. The teachers' personal professional development is enclosed by three professional learning principles that, I propose, are needed to provide the necessary support and encouragement for the ongoing

development of teaching expertise. The next three sections discuss each of my proposed professional learning principles.

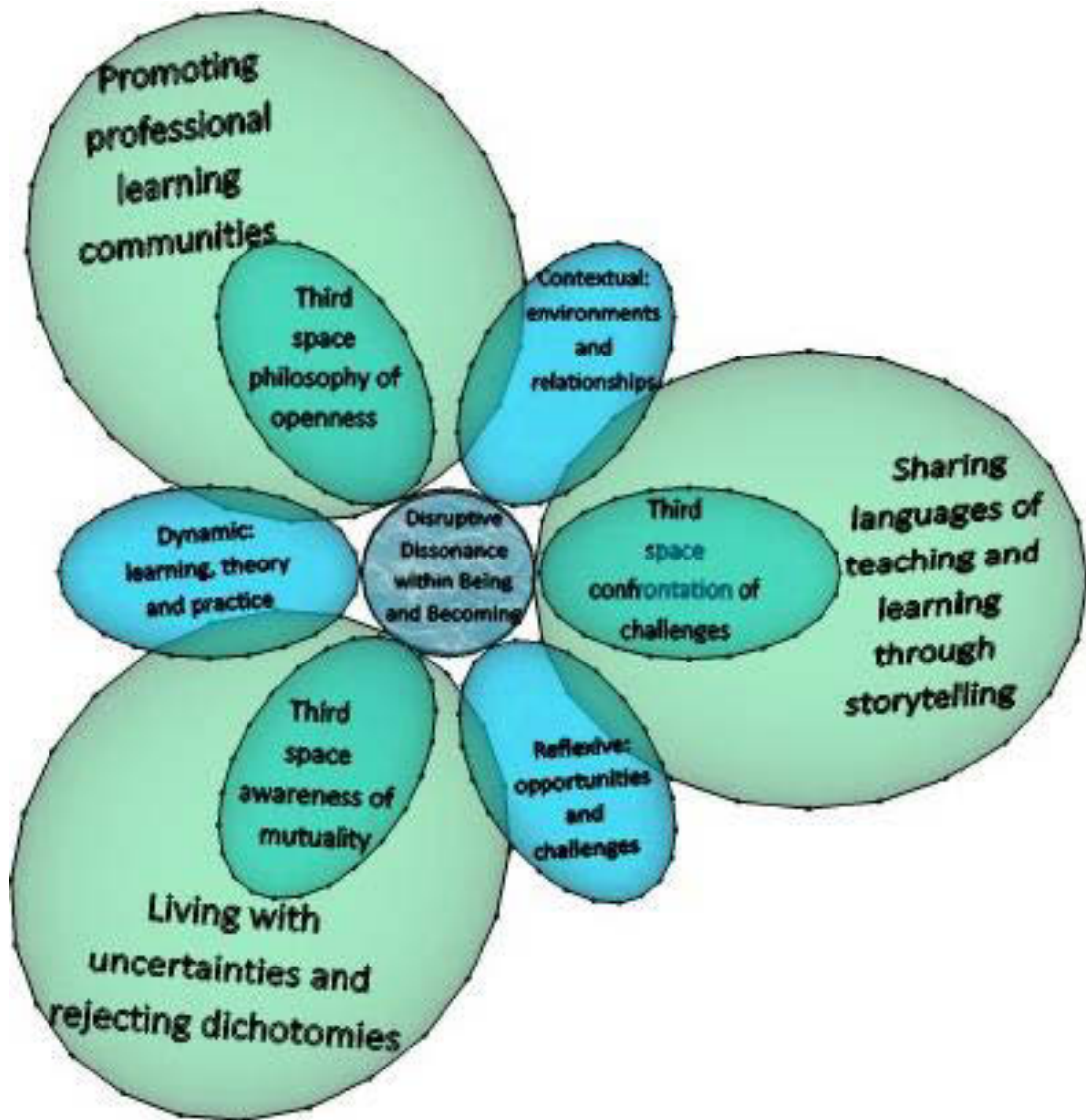


Figure 4: Expert teachers' personal professional development and approach to learning.

10.5 Sharing the language of teaching and learning through storytelling

The narrative inquiry of my research was designed to enable each expert teacher to articulate and reflect on their personal professional learning journey. My interpretative analysis suggests the importance of storytelling and the use of metaphor and idiom as representative of the search for a

language of teaching and learning and in signifying the unique nature of each teacher's experience.

My research enabled the teachers to articulate the unique nature of their experience and provided amendments to the representation of their story through the checking of their stories as part of the interview process. They also shared reflections on my interpretative analysis of their stories in the ideational, interpersonal, and textual or spoken contexts. McCormick (2004) acknowledges that analysing interview transcripts allows for the creation of interpretive stories that form "a personal experience narrative", and argues that teacher narratives "highlight both the individuality and the complexity of a life" (McCormick, 2004, p. 219). Sharing of teacher narratives identifies the significance of others in providing "opportunities for fostering critical consciousness of praxis" (Latta & Kim, 2009, p. 142). Furthermore, story enables an exploration of the emergent and complex nature of reality and creation of meaning. Understanding this meaning of personal professional development and learning within teacher narratives represents a "grappling with the relational immediacy of this negotiation" (Latta & Kim, 2009, p. 143). The teachers in my research all provided positive comments on the opportunity to share and reflect through reading and discussion of their personal professional learning journeys. Additionally, they continued their communication with me in order to garner information on ICT, leadership specific literature and avenues for professional development.

My research reveals the need for a space to develop a professional language for teaching and learning. Berliner (1987) suggests that exemplary practice be recorded through case studies or "pedagogical laboratories" to enable the creation of "some language to describe lessons" (Berliner, 1987, pp. 78-81). Loughran (2010) reasons that ridicule of a "specialised language

of teaching and learning” further creates a perceived gap in theory and practice, and he contends that understandings shared through a language of teaching and learning would provide purposeful and “more informed examination of the pedagogical intent underpinning practice” (Loughran, 2010, p. 48). For the teachers in my research, the scarcity of a shared language often required the use of metaphors to explain pedagogical expertise or the intuiting of developmental opportunities not overtly articulated. There was also little time or opportunity to expressly develop a language with peers or as mentors with novice teachers. During the interviews, the teachers would often seek clarity of their own understanding and that of others when expressing themselves during the interviews. Lincoln commented that “*I actually never thought about that*” when reflecting on his need to communicate with peers. Sally repeatedly said “*I don’t know*” and “*I guess*” when sharing her experiences. Brenda asked “*Does that make sense?*” when she used metaphoric or proverbial expressions. Rosemary echoed the need to “*try*” to find ways and opportunities to share learning with peers. And Ken described his inability to engage in collegial discussion “*unless I knew something about them*”, and expressed surprise at his use of language within his personal narrative after reading my analysis of the textual or spoken context of his story.

During the interviews, all five teachers used specific language within the space of their personal professional development in place of a dedicated language of teaching and learning. In particular, they revealed their developmental experience through the use of metaphor or idiom: Lincoln’s being “*unfazed*” by challenges and accepting of universal difference; Sally’s expressing doubt in reconciling her feelings of fraudulence with her expertise; Rosemary identifying “*clues*” in her search for understanding; Brenda describing important incidents as “*little*” experiences and speaking of

“juggling” her workload; and Ken expressing his emotional needs in terms of being able to *“switch off”*, to do the *“right”* or *“best”* thing, and not to *“cut corners”*. Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) argue for the ‘enunciative agency’ of a professional language in order to understand the tacit knowledge of teaching practice and to articulate the characteristics of personal professional learning. They contend that the use of metaphors within teaching is not purely *“a poetic embellishment”* but a way of enabling the meaning created by the teacher to be understood (Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2010, p. 56).

Understanding how actions are affected and characterised through metaphor provides personal clarity in the understanding of teachers’ professional development. Although descriptions vary between teachers and change over time, the understanding is essentially represented within context. Focusing on individual teacher language also demands an interrogation of the language within different discourses at the institutional and system levels of education. This includes addressing the ongoing differences between understanding of years of experience and expertise, and the persistent dichotomous use of the terms expert and non-expert. This lack of clarity tends to reinforce more traditional notions of an expert teacher and hinders a progressive language of teaching and learning. This language should authentically draw on the metaphor and idioms that reflect how teachers think about learning, as well as the storytelling that meaningfully represents the conditions for learning in the development of teaching expertise. Nias (1996) identifies storytelling as important in studies investigating feelings and emotions regarding teaching. Teacher narrative provides the opportunity to share reflections on professional self-understanding. Significantly for teachers:

the shared construction and discussion of their narratives can help them deal productively with the 'politics of identity'. It can encourage understanding of individuals' social, historical and biographical contexts, facilitate, however painfully, the articulation of reasoned differences, [and] help the development of common technical knowledge, beliefs, values and moral principles. (Nias, 1996, p. 305)

Therefore, storytelling provides a source for understanding personal professional development as well as a rich foundation for the development of a language of teaching and learning.

10.6 Living with uncertainties of being and becoming whilst rejecting the dichotomy of expert versus non-expert

Chapters 1 and 2 detailed the contentious sociopolitical use of the word 'expert'. The teachers who participated in my research were reticent to identify themselves as experts due to an understanding of the dynamic nature of their personal professional development. Their emphasis was on ongoing learning that continually links their practice to their theoretical understandings. I suggest that the development of expertise requires the revelation of insight on experience and also encapsulates third space thinking for dealing with the disruptive dissonances central to personal professional learning.

My initial phenomenological findings focus on the teachers' revelation of insights afforded by their experience. Lindqvist and Nordänger (2010) contend that insight resulting from experience is demonstrated through the insightful presence of teachers and reveals the pre-reflective meaning of their experience. This is further evidenced by Pinnegar and Hamilton (2011) who contend that teacher story is 'research' that "develops new ways of being and identifies new avenues for becoming through exploration of

understandings” (Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2011, p. 66). The analysis of the personal professional learning journey for the teachers in my research reveals their relational caring and supportive interactions. Lincoln, Sally, Brenda and Rosemary emphasise empathetic understanding and non-competitive collegiality throughout their stories of personal professional development. Ken espouses the importance of perceiving the learner as a whole human being, though he is unable to extend this to fostering relationships with his peers for collegial learning.

Being and becoming for the development of expertise in teaching and learning requires the third space thinking demonstrated by Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary and Brenda in their ongoing personal professional development. Dall’Alba (2009) represents the process of becoming as fundamental for teachers in constructing meaning from their personal professional development and learning. She argues that:

Attending to, and dwelling with, these ambiguities – while recognising them as ambiguities, not simply conflicts to be resolved – can open possibilities for enriching professional education. (Dall’Alba, 2009, p. 38)

For the teachers in my research, the three problematics demonstrate the mutuality of being and becoming in the development of expertise. Ken was flattered to be nominated for my research, however it was his third interview reflections that implied it was his participation in my research that provoked the problematic of being and becoming in developing expertise. His narrative suggested that he did not successfully negotiate disruptive dissonances when he remained isolated from his teaching colleagues and did not embrace the challenges of integrating ICT, job-sharing or the possible mentoring of novice teachers. His notion of being an expert focused on his

established practice and the associated learning as central to his becoming. Early in her career, Rosemary was at risk of leaving the teaching profession or replicating the experiences of the young Ken when her challenging environments make her hesitant to engage with colleagues. However, she broadened her experience internationally and was then more responsive to the learning she experienced in the relational spaces of the boarding school. She continues to aspire to succeed in coping with her disruptive dissonances. The unique experiences of Lincoln, Sally, Brenda and Rosemary provide opportunities for growth and allow insight into pedagogical understanding and understanding of self.

My research presents the transformative personal professional learning for the teachers in being and becoming experts in their profession. Dall'Alba and Sandberg (2010) contend that the "multiplicity of practice" presents both challenges and opportunities for learning, and that the juxtaposition of being and becoming necessitates professional development in the midst of uncertainties in order to enable "rich opportunities for critically reflecting upon existing forms of practice and how they can be improved" (Dall'Alba & Sandberg, 2010, p. 117).

My research displays how the personally challenging approach of Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary and Brenda enables them to engage with their disruptive dissonances in a progressive way. In contrast, Ken is allowed to inhabit a space with a traditional approach focused on his isolated classroom practice. These findings have significant implications for how the personal professional development of teachers is conceptualised in the discourses at the institutional and system levels of education. Ken is an individual example representative of broader systemic influences that can restrictively and oppressively lock in people to generic pathways and disregard

individual needs and learning contexts. The frustration of not being heard or recognised can limit individual motivation for interrogating their personal professional learning and so negatively influence individual development. Equally important is that Ken's participation in my research presented a disruptive dissonance that challenged his accepted space as normative. The research challenged his notions of being and becoming within the development of his expertise. In this way, my findings highlight that this type of research is a practice that generates new knowledge on the phenomena within our lifeworld as well as a conceptual exploration for participants that influences the understanding of their lifeworld.

10.7 Promoting professional learning communities: linking theory and practice, resonating individuality and collegiality, and the mutuality of being and becoming

My research calls for professional learning communities that interweave practice and theory for teacher leaders, that value individual approaches to personal development within communicative, collaborative pedagogy, and that resonate with the mutuality of being and becoming.

For the teachers in my research, there are not consistent opportunities for the linking of their pedagogical practice with current theory and relevant research. Early in their careers, the link between educational theory and practice was pivotal in their personal professional development. Their development then became structured by the remuneration and accreditation progression through their teaching careers. The experience of Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary and Brenda in teacher leader roles acknowledged recognition of their expertise and experience. They articulated that in their development path as teacher leaders their focus was to continue to teach along with pastoral care leadership roles. Greater responsibilities in teacher leader roles represent the challenge of a new developmental opportunity, although in

such roles risk-taking is less acceptable and there is an expectation of deferring to the accepted wisdom of more senior colleagues. Hammerness (2006) argues that the gap between teacher vision and their contextual practice is fundamental for creating a cycle that applies new pedagogical interpretations of teacher vision and provides motivation for learning. She contends that teachers require a 'reasonable' gap between their theoretical vision and pedagogical practice in order to:

recognize small successes, appreciate their own growth and identify accomplishments in relationship to their visions. Those teachers feel inspired to reflect upon past practice and to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. (Hammerness, 2006, p. 8)

My research shows that all five teachers encountered times in their careers when it was not acceptable to be seen to make a mistake. Ken's confidence was shaken through his perceived failures in teacher leader roles that undermined his expertise, and he reacted by centring his personal professional development on the pedagogical practice of his classroom teaching. Ken's experience in this regard highlights the need to reassess the personal nature of the professional learning spaces for the ongoing development of teaching expertise. For teacher leaders, their ongoing developmental need to continually engage in classroom teaching necessitates alternative professional learning that provides the required role structure and time to explore their teaching and learning.

The personal professional development of Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary and Brenda demonstrates the continual balancing of their isolated practice with collegial and collaborative approaches to their learning. Rosemary's difficult teaching environments early in her career fostered a professionalism in which she could embrace relational and communicative spaces for her

learning. Brenda's collaborative learning with colleagues was enriched through various modes of team teaching, in contrast to the previously strained experience of predetermined programs that aligned to an accountability regime of professional learning. Both Sally and Lincoln discovered that they needed to renegotiate the risk of being isolated in their teacher leader roles. Sally and her selected leader mentors had restricted time and opportunity to address her professional learning needs, while Lincoln had limited role models and restricted parameters for taking risks to further his personal professional development. Ken's isolated approach to his learning continued to limit opportunities for his personal professional learning throughout his career. Fraser et al. (2007) offer a sociocultural lens for analysing teacher learning that highlights "the dominant globalised agenda of managerial professionalism and institutionalised efficiency"; they promote "individual teacher autonomy within an environment characterised by collaborative, collective decision-making" and where "the necessary renegotiation of professional meanings is both an individual and a social process that is enacted in a variety of culturally defined contexts" (Fraser et al., 2007, p. 166).

The findings of my research reveal the ontological significance of being and becoming for teachers' personal professional development. The somewhat tentative framing of experience by the expert teachers demonstrates the uneasy nature of disclosing their self-awareness. However, the interrogation of their experience enabled the articulation of greater self-understanding. Lincoln was aware that he was initially naïve and unconfident but that later he recognised his competence and expertise. Sally was aware that others viewed her as capable when she did not, but also acknowledged the recognition of her teacher leader roles. Brenda was aware that others perceived her as an ICT expert whereas she recognised the

broader aspects of her expertise, including meeting the ever-demanding requirements of her learning. Rosemary was aware of her personal fallibilities and instances of feeling “*intellectually intimidated*”, but she also recognised the development of her pastoral care capabilities. Ken acknowledged that a peer recognised his teaching expertise, although he believed he was “*not worthy*”; yet he still recognised his years of teaching experience. My findings support the promotion of professional learning communities that enable the linking of practice with theory, embrace individual needs within communicative, collaborative pedagogy, and so resonate with the mutuality of being and becoming. My research supports the conceptualisation of professional learning that integrates “knowing, acting and being” (Dall’Alba, 2009)

My research reveals the value of transformative learning possibilities and so necessitates a revisioning of approaches for systems, schools and teachers to enable third space thinking within personal professional learning. The narrative of Ken’s professional development and learning prompts questions as to how his journey may have taken another path, such as: Would different mentors throughout his career have provided different role models? How could he have been encouraged to share teaching practice with others? Would greater interaction with colleagues, including novice and beginning teachers, have enriched his approach to learning? How could the sharing of a multitude of personal development experiences avoid such a disenfranchised approach to teaching and learning? My research proposes at least four alternatives to Ken’s experience. The championing of the lifeworld experiences of Lincoln, Sally, Rosemary and Brenda requires the promotion of professional learning communities that encourage the linking of theory and practice, the resonance of individuality and collegiality, and the mutuality of being and becoming.

10.8 Suggestions for future research

Two avenues for future research are suggested by my research. Previous research into teachers' continuing professional development has found that:

The nature, extent and role of informal incidental opportunities in teachers' professional learning are currently under-researched and therefore remain unclear. (Fraser et al., 2007, pp. 165-166)

The three central themes and the proposed professional learning principles explored in this thesis provide the basis for investigations to develop ideas on expertise and use research methods for sharing of findings between participants, along with the use of an interactive research process.

Future research could further develop the themes developed in this thesis. Learning is central to being and becoming within the personal professional development of teaching expertise, in which disruptive dissonance is necessary to learn. Research could further explore living in disjuncture through the early to mid-career of participating teachers. A longitudinal timeframe would enable the ongoing revelation of living with uncertainties and rejecting the dichotomy of expert and non-expert through the unfolding experiences within the lifeworld of teachers.

Research proposes that the development of self-understanding may be viewed as a constant rewriting and reinterpretation of the 'text' of the 'self to be constructed' (Tennant, 2009). Significantly, this development is contextually situated and enables continual challenging of meanings proposed by the self and others in which "one which can legitimately contest, say, dominant meanings" (Tennant, 2009, p. 155). Research over a longitudinal timeframe could allow participants to actively shape their ongoing personal professional development by sharing different approaches to personal professional learning. The publication of the findings throughout

the timeframe would also contribute to dialogue on the professional ownership and inscription of a language of teaching and learning. Kvale (1983) argues that a phenomenological and hermeneutical approach to the qualitative interview process allows for interpreting meaning rather than presupposing the research phenomenon. This represents a “critical social science” for understanding the uniqueness of phenomena beyond the socially accepted meaning and acknowledges “critical consciousness-raising, depending on the knowledge guiding interest” (Kvale, 1983, p. 195).

Significantly, he argues that:

A social science guided by an emancipatory knowledge interest would, however, aim at communicating the critical insight obtained about the life-world of the interviewees back to the groups concerned. (Kvale, 1983, p. 194)

Participating and co-publishing research would enable teachers to promote the role of professional learning communities in guiding and re-creating professional learning principles pertinent to insights on their lifeworld experiences.

Additionally, my research methods may be expanded to include the sharing of expert teachers’ narratives among participants to focus on the personal nature of their professional development and learning. This should include the phenomenological interpretations of both participants and researcher, as well as publication of personal professional learning narratives for the teaching profession. This approach could build on my recommended professional learning principle of sharing the language of teaching and learning through storytelling. Using narrative and phenomenological inquiry in an interactive research process draws on individual and collective learning to enable epistemological and ontological revelations of “shared

understanding and new affordances for acting and learning” (Ohlsson & Johansson, 2010, p. 253). An interactive research process could benefit the personal professional development of participating teachers by allowing them to be part of a professional learning community actively involved in researching their own practice. This would also support my recommended professional learning principle of promoting professional learning communities that resonate with individuality and collegiality, and link theory to practice. Furthermore, publication within the professional literature would allow a wider sharing of the narrative and phenomenological meaning-making afforded by this research approach and enable professional dialogue on the mutuality of being and becoming in the development of expertise.

10.9 Conclusions

My experiences as a secondary school teacher and a corporate development and learning project consultant motivated my investigation into the lived experience of teaching and learning. My desire to understand the construction of meaning from expert teachers’ personal professional development and their approach to learning led to this hermeneutic phenomenological study of lived experience. Harnessing narrative inquiry and phenomenological inquiry as dual methodologies has allowed me to reveal complementary hermeneutic understandings of the lived experience of the five teachers in my research. The primary conclusions of my research conceptualise an ontological third space as necessary for traversing the constituent disruptive dissonances within the personal professional development of expert teachers. I propose three professional learning principles for the development of teacher expertise, as visualised in Figure 4.

This thesis highlights the pivotal position of disruptive dissonances within the lifeworld of teachers in regard to being and becoming experts. The narrative interpretation of the personal professional learning journey for each of the five teachers emphasises the contextual factors they recognise as shaping their personal professional development, their belief in risk-taking for developing expertise, their formative attitude towards learning, and their dynamic approach to change within their personal professional development. My phenomenological analysis distinguishes teacher insight from experience and also identifies three problematics representative of the disruptive dissonances necessary for the development of expertise. Figure 4 illustrates the emerging nature of these concepts by visualising the budding nature of lifeworld influences and the blossoming of third space thinking. The intertwined nature of these concepts is also dependent upon a type of professional learning that attends to and inspires the unique needs of each teacher. Therefore this thesis recommends three professional learning principles as necessary for the development of teaching expertise, as illustrated in Figure 4.

In conclusion, I appreciate the experience and associated insights that this doctoral thesis has afforded me within my own lifeworld. I have learnt to deal with unforeseen issues and the changing nature of a planned research project as the process has unfolded in practice. My new understanding of the interactive nature of research in which lifeworld perspectives are open to change – for me as well as the research co-participants – provides impetus for my continuing research.

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Appendices

Appendix A

UTS research documentation

Appendix A.1 UTS ethics approval letter

18 June 2010

Associate Professor Sandra Schuck
Education Group
KG02.02.94
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY

Dear Sandra,

UTS HREC 2010-190 – SCHUCK, Associate Professor Sandra, CURRIE, Dr Janet (for PATTERSON, Ms Carmel, PhD student) – “Expert Teachers’ Personal professional Development, and Learning”

Thank you for your response to my email dated 17/06/10. Your response satisfactorily addresses the concerns and questions raised by the Committee, and I am pleased to inform you that ethics clearance is now granted.

Your clearance number is UTS HREC REF NO. 2010-190A

Please note that the ethical conduct of research is an on-going process. The *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans* requires us to obtain a report about the progress of the research, and in particular about any changes to the research which may have ethical implications. This report form must be completed at least annually, and at the end of the project (if it takes more than a year). The Ethics Secretariat will contact you when it is time to complete your first report.

I also refer you to the AVCC guidelines relating to the storage of data, which require that data be kept for a minimum of 5 years after publication of research. However, in NSW, longer retention requirements are required for research on human subjects with potential long-term effects, research with long-term environmental effects, or research considered of national or international significance, importance, or controversy. If the data from this research project falls into one of these categories, contact University Records for advice on long-term retention.

If you have any queries about your ethics clearance, or require any amendments to your research in the future, please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Secretariat at the Research and Innovation Office, on 02 9514 9772.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Peter Trebilco
Deputy Chairperson
UTS Human Research Ethics Committee

Appendix A.2 Information letter

EXPERT TEACHERS' PERSONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND LEARNING UTS APPROVAL NUMBER HREC 2010-190

WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?

My name is Carmel Patterson and I am a PhD student at UTS. My supervisors are Assoc. Professor Sandy Schuck and Dr. Janet Currie.

WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH ABOUT?

My research is to investigate the notion of expertise within the teaching profession: what contributes to teachers' expertise, how should teachers nourish their expertise, what is possible for teachers and the profession to gain by recognising expert teachers, and what are expert teachers' views on their expertise and own learning.

IF I SAY YES, WHAT WILL IT INVOLVE?

The research will require a total time commitment of approximately four (4) to four and five (5) hours. Comprising two 60 to 90-minute interviews, 30 to 60 minutes for review of interview transcripts, and 30 to 60 minutes contact time through emails and phone calls. You will need to nominate a public area such as quiet library meeting space or café, to complete the interviews that will be audio recorded. You may wish to nominate to use the internet to complete the research interviews via an online medium (such as Skype).

ARE THERE ANY RISKS?

There are very few if any risks because the research has been carefully designed.

However, it is possible that you may feel uncomfortable when talking about yourself or about any negative experiences in relation to the research topic. Also, if you advise other people, such as family, friends or colleagues, of details of your participation, there is a slight chance of unintentional identification. If these people read any of the research publications related to my research, they may be able to identify you from the revelation of your experiences.

WHY HAVE I BEEN ASKED?

You are able to provide the information I need from your views of your personal development and professional development, and your approach to your own learning.

DO I HAVE TO SAY YES?

You don't have to say yes.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I SAY NO?

Nothing. I will thank you for your time and won't contact you about this research again.

IF I SAY YES, CAN I CHANGE MY MIND LATER?

You can change your mind at any time and you don't have to say why. I will thank you for your time so far and won't contact you about this research again.

WHAT IF I HAVE CONCERNS OR A COMPLAINT?

If you have concerns about the research that you think my supervisors or I can help you with, please feel free to contact me (us) on:

Carmel Patterson	Assoc. Professor Sandy Schuck	Dr. Janet Currie
carmel.patterson@uts.edu.au	sandy.schuck@uts.edu.au	janet.currie@uts.edu.au
Mobile: [REDACTED]	Office: 02 9514 5218	Office: 02 9514 5192

If you would like to talk to someone who is not connected with the research, you may contact the Research Ethics Officer on 02 9514 9772, and quote this UTS HREC approval number 2010-190.

Appendix A.3 Consent form

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY

CONSENT FORM – PhD STUDENT RESEARCH

I _____ agree to participate in the research project Expert Teachers' Personal professional Development, and Learning being conducted by Carmel Patterson of the University of Technology, Sydney for her degree Doctor of Philosophy in Education.

I understand that the purpose of this study is to investigate the notion of expertise within the teaching profession: what contributes to teachers' expertise, how should teachers nourish their expertise, what is possible for teachers and the profession to gain by recognising expert teachers, and what are expert teachers' views on their expertise and own learning.

I understand that my participation in this research will involve a total time commitment of approximately four (4) to four and five (5) hours. Comprising two 60 to 90-minute interviews, 30 to 60 minutes for review of interview transcripts, and 30 to 60 minutes contact time through emails and phone calls. I understand that I will nominate a public area such as quiet library meeting space or café, to complete the interviews that will be audio recorded. I understand that I may nominate to use the internet to complete the research interviews via an online medium (such as Google video chat or Skype). There is a slight chance of unintentional identification as a research participant if I advise other people, such as family, friends or colleagues; where they may be able to identify me from the revelation of my experiences.

I am aware that I can contact Carmel Patterson or her supervisor(s) Assoc. Professor Sandy Schuck or Dr. Janet Currie if I have any concerns about the research. I also understand that I am free to withdraw my participation from this research project at any time I wish, without consequences, and without giving a reason.

Carmel Patterson	Assoc. Professor Sandy Schuck	Dr. Janet Currie
carmel.patterson@uts.edu.au	sandy.schuck@uts.edu.au	janet.currie@uts.edu.au
Mobile: [REDACTED]	Office: 02 9514 5218	Office: 02 9514 5192

I agree that Carmel Patterson has supplied all the relevant information regarding my participation and answered all my questions fully and clearly.

I agree that the research data gathered from this project may be published in a form that does not identify me in any way.

Signature (participant)

_____/_____/_____

Signature (researcher or delegate)

NOTE:

This study has been approved by the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (ph: +61 2 9514 9772 Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au) and quote the UTS HREC reference number. Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix B

Identifying research participants for my research

Appendix B.1 Teaching expertise criteria

The categories of criteria below represent the variety of expertise relevant to a teacher's field of practice or teaching discipline. This is not an all-inclusive or an exhaustive list in representing people's ideas of a really good teacher.

Current teaching role.

Value attributes and diverse abilities.

- Learning orientation: to challenge their expertise for their own learning; to mentor other teachers, demonstrate learning leadership and encourage learning in others
- Creative: to develop original approaches without prompting; to leverage their strengths to forge their area of expertise; to utilise diverse improvisational ability
- Critically perceptive: to show multidimensional awareness and sensitivity to the learning context; to appraise and analyse information and arguments
- Initiative: to embark on new ideas or approaches without prompting; to sustain and complete a self-initiated project
- Reflective: to reflect on their goals and achievements through continual reappraisal
- Perseverance: to work in difficult circumstances; to monitor and modify for success; to frame their experience against mistakes and failures

Teaching knowledge and practice.

- Demonstrate knowledge of their subject content and how to teach that content
- Demonstrate knowledge of their students and how they learn
- Plan, assess and report for effective learning
- Communicate effectively with their students, parents and colleagues

- Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments through the use of classroom management skills
- Continually improve their professional knowledge and practice
- Actively engaged members of their profession and the wider community

Professional achievements.

Professional knowledge application.

- Using knowledge in original ways to problems of acknowledged importance or new expressions of knowledge or creative insight
- Sharing knowledge to a professional or academic community
- Contributing to collaborative or educational research projects or involvement in commercialisation of educational knowledge
- Drawing on knowledge from a range of sources and applying it to professional practice, and acknowledged by appropriate peer recognition
- Serving on committees or panels, in relation to research/professional activity

Professional knowledge exposition.

- Contributions of a scholarly kind to a professional organisation, learned society or community group, or to scholarly journals and other professional publications
- Authorship, direction or execution of performances, productions, exhibitions, or designs appropriate to the discipline or medium concerned
- Original publication of a book, audiovisual recording, or computer software, or technical drawing/architectural and industrial design/ working model
- Individual exhibition of original work or representation of original art

Openly competitive awards.

- University or school awards, competitions, or teaching prizes; International or national competitive awards

Appendix B.2 Snowballing email to identify research participants

Dear [first point of contact person],

As recently discussed, for my PhD research project I am investigating the professional development and learning experience of high school teachers who are not classified as new scheme. I am interested in teachers who are continually challenging themselves to teach and learn in new ways and are further on from their initial teacher registration and accreditation years.

I would appreciate you identifying those teachers you know and who you believe to be really good in their teaching and forwarding on my email below. You can [view my wiki](#) for some ideas on teaching expertise that may be exhibited at various times throughout a teacher's career.

When nominating teachers I would ask you to limit it to ONE per school although I know many schools have may have several teachers who would be suitable. For the purposes of my research I would like to limit it to one teacher in each school otherwise the research findings could be badly skewed by local variables.

It would help me if you could delete this section of the email and then forward on my email below the dotted line to any teachers you know of who are particularly good in their teaching and learning.

Thanks for your assistance.

Carmel Patterson

I am sending you this information on behalf of Carmel Patterson, a former teaching colleague of mine, who is undertaking her PhD research project investigating the development and learning experience of teachers. Carmel is particularly interested in speaking to high school teachers who have progressed beyond their initial teacher registration and accreditation years.

I believe you exhibit expertise in your teaching and learning, and may be interested in participating in Carmel's doctoral research project.

Your participation in Carmel's research would involve two meetings of approximately one hour each that would be 2-3 weeks apart. The meetings should be in a quiet location off the school site possibly in a library, park or cafe. The time frame is during Term 4.

If you are willing to participate in Carmel's research or wish to discuss any aspects of her research, please contact her via email: carmel.patterson@uts.edu.au

Thank you for your consideration.

Appendix C

My PhD Wiki

The following screen shots were taken from my PhD wiki site:

<http://carmelpatterson.wikispaces.com/>

Appendix C.1 Home page

Expert Teachers Professional Learning - home

<https://carmelpatterson.wikispaces.com/>

You are not a member of this wiki. [Join now](#) [Dismiss](#)

[guest](#) | [Join](#) | [Help](#) | [Sign In](#)



[home](#)

Edit	0	0
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Carmel Patterson's PhD Wiki

I am currently undertaking my PhD investigation on the development and learning experience of teachers. I am using this Wiki to share information with people interested in my doctoral research project.

[Read](#) about educational research in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS).

UTS Doctoral Candidate carmel.patterson@uts.edu.au
Doctoral Supervisor: Associate Professor Sandy Schuck

This study has been approved by the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee with clearance number HREC REF NO. 2010-190A

If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (ph: +61 2 9514 9772

Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au), and quote the UTS HREC reference number. Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence, investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix C.2 Teaching Expertise Research Criteria page

Expert Teachers Professional Learning - Teaching Expertise Research C... <https://carmelpatterson.wikispaces.co>

You are not a member of this wiki. Join now Dismiss



Teaching Expertise Research Criteria

Edit 0 0 16 ...

The below categories of criteria represent the *variety of expertise* relevant to a teacher's field of practice or teaching discipline. This is not an all inclusive or an exhaustive list in representing people's ideas of a really good teacher.

Current Teaching Role

Value Attributes and Diverse Abilities.

- Learning orientation: to challenge their expertise for their own learning; to mentor other teachers, demonstrate learning leadership and encourage learning in others
- Creative: to develop original approaches without prompting; to leverage their strengths to forge their area of expertise; to utilise diverse improvisational ability
- Critically perceptive: to show multidimensional awareness and sensitivity to the learning context; to appraise and analyse information and arguments
- Initiative: to embark on new ideas or approaches without prompting; to sustain and complete a self initiated project
- Reflective: to reflect on their goals and achievements through continual reappraisal
- Perseverance: to work in difficult circumstances; to monitor and modify for success; to frame their experience against mistakes and failures

Teaching Knowledge and Practices.

- Demonstrate knowledge of their subject content and how to teach that content
- Demonstrate knowledge of their students and how they learn
- Plan, assess and report for effective learning
- Communicate effectively with their students, parents and colleagues
- Create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments through the use of classroom management skills
- Continually improve their professional knowledge and practice
- Actively engaged members of their profession and the wider community

Professional Achievements

Professional Knowledge Application.

- Using knowledge in original ways to problems of acknowledged importance or new expressions of knowledge or creative insight
- Sharing knowledge to a professional or academic community
- Contributing to collaborative or educational research projects or involvement in commercialisation of educational knowledge
- Drawing on knowledge from a range of sources and applying it to professional practice, and acknowledged by appropriate peer recognition
- Serving on committees or panels, in relation to research/professional activity

Academic Publications.

- Contributions of a scholarly kind to a professional organisation, learned society or community group, or to scholarly journals and other professional publications
- Authorship, direction or execution of performances, productions, exhibitions, or designs appropriate to the discipline or medium concerned
- Original publication of a book, audiovisual recording, or computer software, or technical drawing/architectural and industrial design/working
- Individual exhibition of original work or representation of original art




Openly Competitive Awards


- University or school awards, competitions, or teaching prizes; International or national competitive awards

Appendix C.3 References page

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Appendix D

Emails for participant confirmation and review

Appendix D.1 Confirming offer to participate in PhD research

Hi [participant teacher]

Thank you for your interest and offer to participate.

I am keen to speak to high school teachers who have progressed beyond their initial teacher registration and accreditation years and who are not classified as new scheme.

I am targeting these classroom teachers for my research project to bridge a gap in current research literature which focuses on pre-service, recent graduate or leadership level teachers.

I would like to discuss your expertise in your teaching and learning, during two meetings of approximately one hour each that would be 2-3 weeks apart.

The time frame is anytime from now until the end of the year, so please think of a time frame that would suit you.

I would prefer to meet you in a quiet location off the school site possibly in a library, park or cafe.

For the initial meeting I would visit you. For the second meeting, I would like to use a video call through Skype if that is possible from your home or workplace.

Please either call my mobile or advise your contact number so we can determine a time and place that suits.

Thanks

Carmel Patterson

Mobile:

Appendix D.2 Keeping your details for a later research stage

Dear [non interview teacher]

Thank you for your initial reply.

Currently I have received more than one reply from the same school which I hadn't anticipated.

My research supervisor has advised me not to interview many teachers from the one school as my research findings could be badly skewed by local variables. I need to limit my interviews in order to avoid the production of findings with limited application.

I appreciate your offer to participate in my research and I am sorry that I cannot include you in my research at this stage.

I will keep your contact details on file and may contact you if my initial data collection indicates I should talk to more teachers.

I am very encouraged by your interest and the overwhelmingly positive response to my initial request.

I wish you well in your teaching career.

Thank you

Carmel Patterson

Appendix D.3 Confirming meeting: time and place

Hi [participant teacher]

Thank you for your offer to participate in my research project.

I would like to confirm our two meeting times as follows:

0:00 pm day date

0:00 pm day date

I am meeting you at address: [meeting venue]

I have attached a copy of my research information letter. I will bring a consent form to our meeting so that we can sign it together.

Please let me know if I need to amend any of these details. Please contact me on my mobile 0000 000 000 if you have any last minute change of plans.

Thanks

Carmel

Appendix D.4 Reviewing interview transcript

Hi [participant teacher]

Thank you once again for the help you have given me with my research.

I am sending you an account of the recording of our meeting (see attached).

Please feel free to advise me of amendments on any points that may not accurately represent your experiences or thoughts as expressed during our discussion.

Attached is a Word document in a Questions (Q) and time of answer (00:00) format. In order to maintain confidentiality, the file name is coded with the date and a pseudonym. Let me know if you do not wish to know your pseudonym and I will change it my final thesis.

Please contact me on my mobile or Skype if you have any queries.

Thanks

Carmel

Skype: Mobile:

Appendix D.5 Reviewing second interview transcript

Hi [participant teacher]

Thank you once again for the help you're giving me with my research.

The attached Word document is in a Questions (Q) and time of answer (00:00.0) format recording of our meeting, with transcript numbered items.

Please be aware that transcribed oral language is characterised by sentences that flow freely and do not follow conventional written language structures. Feel free to advise me of amendments on any points that may not accurately represent your experiences or comments as expressed during our discussion.

In order to maintain confidentiality, the file name is coded with the date and a pseudonym. Let me know if you do not wish to know your pseudonym and I will change it my final thesis.

Please let me know if you have any further feelings, thoughts or experiences you would like to share with me around your personal professional development and learning.

Please feel free to contact me on my mobile or Skype if you have any further queries.

Thanks

Carmel

Skype: Mobile:

Appendix D.6 Thank you

Dear [participant teacher]

Thank you for generously contributing your time in meeting with me, reviewing interview transcripts, and maintaining contact through emails and phone calls.

I am conscious that sharing such personal experiences may sometimes seem daunting. I appreciate your candid and thoughtful reflection on your teaching and learning experience.

As I continue to work through my findings this year, I will email you the narrative that I write of your experience. I would like you to edit your narrative as you see fit in order to ensure that I am co-constructing your story with you.

As a token of my appreciation, I have made a combined donation to the Nepcam Trust Aid Fund on behalf of the teachers who have participated to date in my research. The below emails and attached letter from the Nepcam Sponsor a Teacher project acknowledge this donation as part funding of their second course to be run in 2011.

Thank you

Carmel Patterson

Appendix D.7 Reviewing text: professional development and learning journey

Hi [participant teacher]

I would like you to review the attached file that is my narrative of your professional development and learning journey as a participant in my doctoral research study.

Please consider the questions below and feel free to provide your feedback on the text.

Are there any aspects of your experience that require further clarification or do any words need to be amended in the text?

Are there any aspects of your experience that you would like added to this text?

I'd like you to reflect on the original invitation you received from a colleague encouraging you to contact me in order to participate in my research study.

Why do you think your colleague encouraged you to participate in my research study?

Given that this is a study about expert teachers, what do you think the criteria should be for being an expert?

Which of these criteria do you feel that you meet?

Please take your time to review the text and formulate your thoughts. I will contact you in a few weeks to arrange a suitable time to phone you and record your feedback.

You may wish to refer to the confidentiality approach of my doctoral research study in your signed consent form that I have attached.

Thanking you again for your time in participating in my doctoral research study.

Carmel

Appendix E

Semi-structured interview guides

Appendix E.1 Narrative oral history experiences

<i>Participants are able to detail their experience from the questions listed below.</i>	<i>Interviewer taking notes and/or guiding question review as indicated below.</i>
<p><i>Could you describe your current teaching role?</i></p> <p><i>Could you describe the changes experienced in your teaching roles? WAIT</i></p> <p><i>Remembering your novice years of teaching through the intervening years, could you describe your developmental experience of teaching expertise? WAIT</i></p>	<p>OPEN ENDED PROMPTS.....</p> <p>Could you elaborate on:</p> <p>People Places Time</p>
<p><i>Could you relate one or more defining experiences in your teaching? WAIT</i></p> <p><i>Could you describe how these aspects influenced your practice? WAIT</i></p> <p><i>With your current expertise, under what circumstances do you feel the most challenged or extended in your teaching? WAIT</i></p> <p><i>... The most rewarded in your teaching? WAIT</i></p> <p><i>How do you view failures / placing unsuccessful experiences?</i></p> <p><i>How do you go about improving aspects of your practice?</i></p> <p><i>Describe any examples? WAIT</i></p>	<p>Could you elaborate on:</p> <p>People Places Time</p>
<p><i>Reflecting on a typical day/ week in your teaching, how would you describe your learning experience? WAIT</i></p> <p><i>Under what circumstances do you undergo the most change in your teaching? WAIT</i></p> <p><i>What aspects of the professional learning you have experienced assisted in your growth in expertise? WAIT</i></p> <p><i>Could you describe other elements or aspects that could improve your learning experience? WAIT</i></p>	<p>OPEN ENDED PROMPTS.....</p> <p>Could you explain/ elaborate on [select as appropriate]:</p> <p>Abstract: synopsis</p> <p>Orientation: inclination or direction</p>

Participants are able to detail their experience from the questions listed below.

Interviewer taking notes and/or guiding question review as indicated below.

Thinking back over recent years, could you describe your experience of sharing your own teaching expertise? WAIT

Complicating action: crisis/hurdle

Evaluation: valuation or assessment

Coda: afterthoughts or redirection

Is there anything else you'd like to comment on in terms of your development and learning?

Appendix E.2 Phenomenological lifeworld

<i>Participants reflect on connections and meanings from the questions listed below.</i>	<i>Interviewer taking notes and/or guiding interview questions as indicated below.</i>
<p><i>After the previous interview, do you have any thoughts you would like to add?</i></p> <p><i>From the last interview ... Could you elaborate on ...</i></p>	<p><i>Review any further thoughts from previous interview.</i></p> <p>OPEN ENDED PROMPTS.....</p> <p><i>Clarify feedback as per previous narrative.</i></p>
<p><i>Please feel free to think out loud as you consider your ideas and reflect on your experience.</i></p>	<p><i>Encourage reflection to focus on participant experience, thoughts and reflection.</i></p>
<p><i>Thinking across your teaching career, could you describe your expertise as it relates to the people around you? WAIT</i></p> <p><i>Colleagues? Students? Parents? Family? Friends?</i></p> <p><i>Imagine you are writing your own reference in support of your teaching expertise, what attributes would you include and how would you describe these attributes? WAIT</i></p>	<p>OPEN ENDED PROMPTS..... on</p> <p><i>Spaces you need and inhabit</i></p> <p><i>Reshaping of your physical, psychological and intellectual being</i></p> <p><i>Relationship of past, present, & future</i></p> <p><i>Interpersonal and communal relations</i></p>
<p><i>If you were writing an article about expertise in teaching for a non-teaching audience, how would you explain the value of teaching expertise to them? WAIT</i></p> <p><i>Are there any other in relation to development of expertise and learning that you'd like to comment on? WAIT</i></p>	<p>OPEN ENDED PROMPTS..... on</p> <p><i>separates <-> unites</i></p> <p><i>decontextualises practice <-> thoughtful action/ praxis</i></p> <p><i>abstracts <-> concretizes experiences</i></p> <p><i>objectifies <-> subjectifies</i></p>
<p><i>After speaking to teachers on their development of expertise and their own learning, I'm interested in four areas that are influential in personal professional developmental experiences and learning:</i></p> <p><i>Reflecting on your teaching experience, I was interested in understanding your thoughts or what your own learning means to you for each of these four areas? WAIT</i></p>	<p><i>Checking their thoughts from my 1st analysis notes and in relation to themselves on the four phenomenological themes.</i></p> <p>OPEN ENDED PROMPTS..... on</p> <p><i>Spaces you need and inhabit</i></p> <p><i>Reshaping of your physical, psychological and intellectual being</i></p> <p><i>Relationship of past, present, & future</i></p> <p><i>Interpersonal and communal relations</i></p>
<p><i>The spaces that you need and inhabit?</i></p>	<p><i>Spatial</i></p>
<p><i>The person you are; the reshaping of physical, psychological and intellectual being?</i></p>	<p><i>Corporeal</i></p>

<i>Participants reflect on connections and meanings from the questions listed below.</i>	<i>Interviewer taking notes and/or guiding interview questions as indicated below.</i>
<i>The influence of interpersonal and communal relations?</i>	<i>Relational</i>
<i>The relationship of past, present and future across experiences?</i>	<i>Temporal</i>
<i>Thinking of where you are now, could you describe future learning experiences or challenges you would like to undertake?</i> <i>Thinking ahead, how would you describe your plans for your teaching future? WAIT</i>	<i>OPEN ENDED PROMPTS..... on</i> <i>Spaces you need and inhabit</i> <i>Reshaping of your physical, psychological and intellectual being</i> <i>Relationship of past, present, & future</i> <i>Interpersonal and communal relations</i>

Appendix F

Computer software

I used a freely available audio editor (Audacity) to work on the MP3 recorded files of each interview. This allowed for the creation of a second edited file as separate from the original. I edited this second file to remove recognisable names or sections not to be transcribed, reduced background noise and so improved the sound quality prior to transcription.

I used speech recognition software (Dragon Speak) that I trained to recognise my voice through dictation. I then read through the interview out loud as the software directly transcribed my voice into a word-processed document or analysis software. This process reduced overall time from original transcription, editing and review.

I used analysis software (NVivo) freely provided by my university for the storage and management of the interview transcript files, the related note taking and subsequent manipulation of my interpretations. I created individual cases for research participants with relevant attribute descriptors; linked the audio files and create, edited and stored their transcripts; created and linked interpretive memos throughout my analysis process; created codes for identified analysis framework structures called nodes; applies multiple coding for the same piece of text as needed; and generated queries and reports across all levels of information for participant case, coded node or interview text.