A living theory of educational accountability: How can I create opportunities for student teachers and myself to learn?

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Contents Page

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Abstract

This thesis is an account of research that sets out to address the concerns which developed as a result of the transition I made from being a primary school teacher to being a teacher educator. It draws on my narrative to provide a context for the difficulties I experienced, which led me to ask 'How do I improve what I am doing?' (Whitehead 1989).These concerns were: I had stopped using the values, that are part of my understanding about what makes education of value, as criteria and standards of judgement to help me determine how to understand and improve what I do; I had become a compliant and non-engaged practitioner who considered herself to be effective because I was meeting the criteria and standards set by others regardless of whether they aligned with my values; I had allowed myself to become disconnected from myself as a learner; I had developed a learned helplessness about what was going on in the field of education therefore becoming part of a normative discourse that implies that teachers are unable to determine, articulate and validate their own standards of practice and that education is a commodity and an end product rather than a means in itself.

I draw on my own experiences to show what can happen when a teacher becomes complacent, disengaged from the processes of change and removed from the locus of power through an over reliance on the standards set by others. This understanding, which has developed through reflection on my practice, is both the catalyst for the research and underpins why it is significant. As I show how the development of a form of accountability which I call educational, can contribute to my learning and the students' learning, I provide an antidote to the managerial, top-down models of accountability that teachers are subjected to in schools and universities.

Throughout the thesis I document my emerging understanding of the need to re-connect with myself as a learner and to be able to account for what I do using my own values based standards of judgement. I explain how I do this through the use of a self study approach within an action research framework, which has enabled me to focus on my practice and my learning. As I have begun to take responsibility for my actions I re-

conceptualise my ontological and epistemological values thereby transforming them into standards of judgement. I articulate the value I put on a form of emancipatory and democratic education that is grounded in relational, critically reflective and dialogical practices that can create spaces which enable myself and the teaching students I work alongside to value our own personal knowledge (Polanyi 1958) and understanding as we give an account of what we are doing. I make an original claim to knowledge that I have generated my living theory of educational accountability through research that contributes to new forms of practice and theory in the field of education. In doing so I claim to have influenced my learning, the learning of others and the learning of the social formations in which I work (McNiff and Whitehead 2006).

Introduction

The writing of this thesis represents an interlude along my journey as a teacher who is trying to understand and transform my values and practices into the standards by which I hold myself to account so as to be able to engage with student teachers in a way that supports and influences both their learning and my own in an educational way. It is not intended to provide all of the answers to the many questions that emerge from the teaching and learning moments that make up my practice as a lecturer in education in a higher education institution. It is my best thinking at this time and it represents another step along the way towards an enhanced understanding of my actions. What this research has enabled me to do is generate my own living theory of practice (Whitehead 1989) and in doing so to understand the significance of this for the transformation of what I do and who I am. The research has enabled me to understand my role as a teacher educator and it has contributed to the experience of moving my practice from a model of teaching to a model of learning. This thesis is about educational accountability and how it contributes to learning. It shows how I have transformed the way I hold myself to account for what I do; from using the standards of others as a basis to improve what I am doing, to using my own values based standards. This in turn has transformed my pedagogy.

This research and the thesis it has generated has also given me a voice within the Academy which has potential significance for the teaching profession. This thesis is the report of an action enquiry which makes links between the past, the present and the future (Hitchcock and Hughes 1995) through my life history. It is significant as evidence of what the possibilities are when a teacher educator takes responsibility for what they know and how they come to know it and has that knowledge and understanding validated by others. This has the potential to influence the current debates about ways that teachers and teacher educators are held to account for what they do. Although I draw throughout on the writings of others from the field of education and professional education to inform my understandings, the theory generated by this research emerges from my practices and as such I understand it to be a living form of theory (Whitehead 1993), which is always provisional, dynamic and open to change. What this research does not set out to do is provide a model by which others can be held to account for what they do. It is a

description and explanation of my practice produced in this way so as to open up the possibility of influencing others to consider how they may exercise their own influence.

My rationale for undertaking this research is linked to both my professional and my personal life which I see as both separate and joined. It is about what is done in my classroom and with the students, and it is also about who I am as a person. My role as a teacher has always been about the future, about helping to prepare children and students for their futures and investing in them as human beings. It is about the development of personal agency, independence of mind and spirit through education and empowerment and commitment to the future. This is underpinned by a belief in the value of education and 'learning that matters, spreads and lasts a lifetime' (Hargreaves and Fink 2006, p.27). The reason for doing this research is to hold myself to account for what I do using values as 'living standards of judgement' (Whitehead and McNiff 2006, p.85) and to discover what impact doing so can have on my practice.

It is my contention that teachers are becoming accustomed to being held to account by governments and that they are losing sight of the value of their own ways of knowing. They are becoming passive spectators whilst those in power determine the standards of judgement by which their work is evaluated. As a primary classteacher I had become passive and removed from the locus of power, and many of my colleagues were the same.

The reason for doing this research is to show what can happen when a teacher takes responsibility for their actions, in the hope that others will be influenced to do the same and our collective voices will act as an antidote to the idea that teachers are unable to determine what an effective, informed and dynamic pedagogy looks like. An essential part of this process is the making public of these accounts which is one reason why I have chosen to engage in doctoral research. Many teachers are doing small-scale research projects in schools but often their findings go no further than local dissemination. It is my hope that this thesis, and the research from which it emerges, will influence teachers to look for wider recognition and influence in order to close the gaps between teachers and those making decisions that impact on classrooms.

Research aims and questions

This research has the following aims:

- to explain how I hold myself to account for my actions as a teacher educator and in so doing learn to be responsible for what I do
- to reflect on and improve my practice so as to create spaces which can open up opportunities for the teaching students I work alongside to value their own knowledge and understanding as they give their own accounts of what they are doing
- to influence the normative discourses which surround the way that teachers are held to account for their practices

As my thesis will describe and explain my practice underwent a series of contextualised changes that led to a re-appraisal of all that I understood about what I was doing as a teacher. After the transition from the primary classroom to the teacher education context, questions emerged which needed to be addressed to enable me to take pedagogic action (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990). As I became more and more unhappy with what I was doing in 2004 and 2005 I began to ask the questions that the research is looking to answer. They were:

- What are the values that underpin what I do? Why am I unhappy about what I am doing and about what is expected of me in my new role?
- How can my practices support the students' learning? How do I understand learning?
- How can I hold students to account for their practices in a way that contributes to their learning? (I now see the fundamental epistemological positioning embedded in this question but at the time of designing this research it was the form of words that were embedded in my thinking).
- How can I improve what I am doing as a teacher educator?

These questions and many others were leading me to interrogate the fundamentals of my practice and were questions that before entering teacher education, I thought I knew the answers to. It has been the aim of this research to begin the process of engaging with

these questions and in so doing stimulate the need for further questions. It is the aim of the research to demonstrate the transformational potential of engaging with what the students and I do in such a way as to explain how we hold ourselves to account for our actions.

This research also has wider aims. The way that teachers are perceived by the wider society in which they practise has changed, and teachers have lost opportunities to determine the standards by which their practices are judged and evaluated. It is the aim of this research to set my own standards of judgement by which my practice can be judged and to show how this can lead to my own learning, and the learning of the students with whom I work. It also sets out to meet the institutional standards of the University of Newcastle for the writing of a thesis.

The research design

Lincoln and Guba (1985) say that a research study needs to be designed so as to share information, understand issues and improve practices and to put the pursuit of ideas at the centre of the research (Conrad and Sarlin 2006). The research design also depends on what is studied and what the researcher wants to find out. In the case of this study I want to find out what can happen when I hold myself to account for my actions using values as standards of judgement to determine if there has been any improvement.

Creswell (2009) suggests three elements to a research design and these will be used to consider my design; philosophical assumptions, strategies of enquiry and specific research methods. All of these elements are linked. This research is qualitative in nature as it is about the meaning that an individual (me) ascribes to a dilemma in my practice and in the wider social context. A qualitative approach enables me to bring my personal values into the study and allows me to collaborate with participants and interpret the data with the help of critical friends and a validation group. The methodology used to conduct this research is self-study action research which enables me to be both the researcher and the researched.

The participants in this research are the students I work alongside, in particular postgraduate full time teaching students and Year 4 undergraduate teaching students. It is

their learning I am seeking to influence as well as my own, as I look to transform what I do as a teacher. In this research the data is collected in the field and different sources of data have been used as follows:

- My personal journal
- Field notes
- Powerpoint presentations and lesson notes
- Student feedback, before and after sessions
- Audio recordings of link tutor meetings
- Feedback from critical friends and validation groups

The data have been reviewed in order to look for evidence of my own learning and the students' learning as it may emerge from the transformed practices. It will be checked for accuracy and validation strategies are built into the research design. They are as follows:

- Peer debriefing (Creswell 2008, p.191-192)
- Identifying social and personal validation criteria

I acknowledge that the data may well show a difference between my original intention and the outcome of my actions but this is part of the richness of the possibilities for learning and any outcomes, whether confirming or disconfirming, will be used to move into the next cycle of enquiry. As Russell suggests (2002 cited Creswell 2007, p.3-4),

> 'Often it is challenging enough to look critically at one's own teaching practices. Whilst the obvious purpose of self-study is improvement, it is even more challenging to make changes and seek evidence that the changes did indeed represent improvement'.

The worth of this research and the integrity of the account partly lie in the rigour of the procedures that will allow me to show improvement.

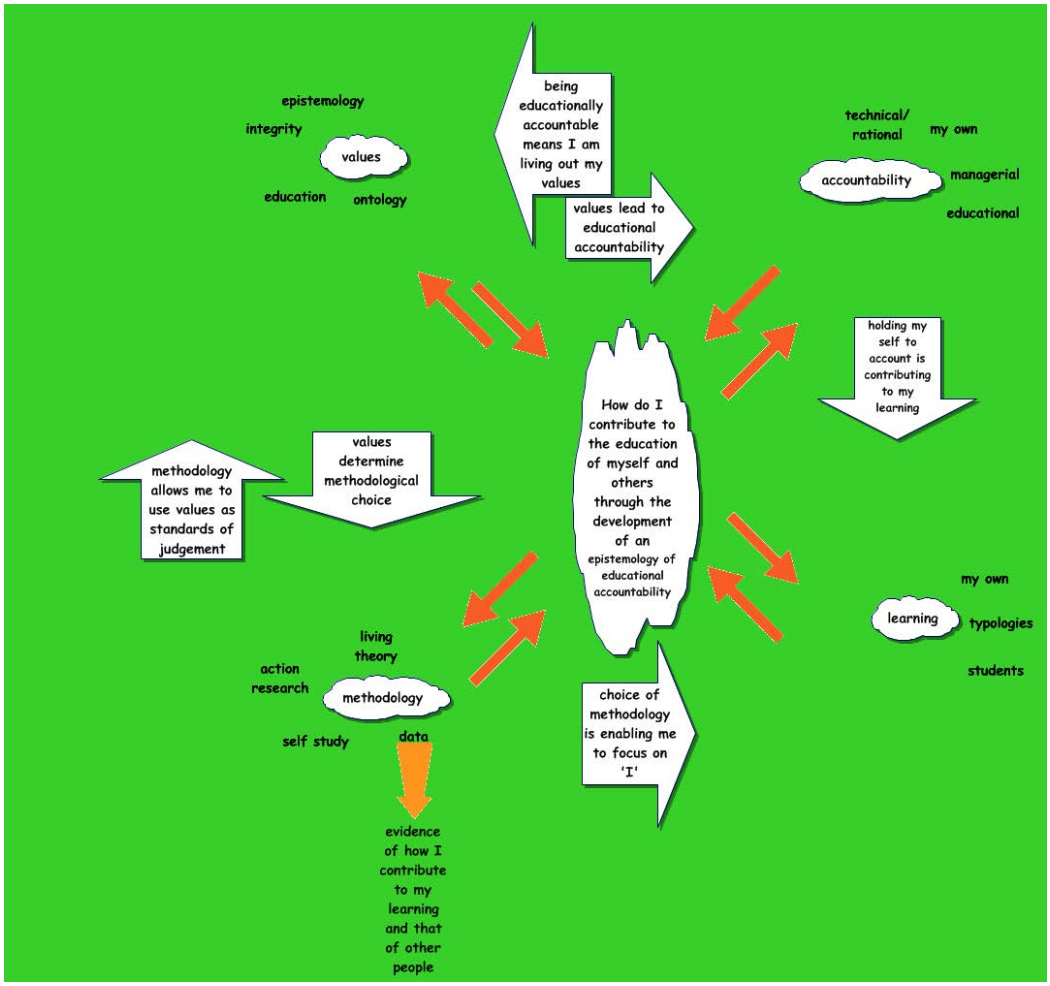
This research design acknowledges and seeks to take account of any inherent bias which is defined by Hammersley and Gomm (1997) as systematic and culpable error. Weber (1978) refers to it as a point of view, and this is inevitable in any research account. Whether it is considered to be good or bad in research terms is determined by the individual account. This research has been designed to be explicit about my own points of view and this can lead to the credibility of the account. The richness of my experience

is an important part of this research and I have used it as part of the inquiry process. Throughout this research process, I show how I challenge my own assumptions and try to avoid them becoming entrenched in my thinking.

The conceptual framework of the thesis

This concept map generated in 2009 gives a pictorial representation of the key concepts that form the basis of this thesis and it shows the relationship between them all. The title in the middle has been revised nevertheless the key concepts remain accountability, education, learning and values as they relate to teaching. They have been re-conceptualised and contextualised throughout this thesis to show how the links between theory and practice are important.

Diagram 1.



How this thesis is organised

The thesis has been set out in three parts, which reflects the journey that I have been on. With hindsight the last fifteen years of my life can be seen in terms of 'then' and 'now'. The present 'now' is different to the past 'then', but it is not separate because they are both part of an ongoing transformational process. I am different in so many ways as a result of this research that I feel as if my professional life can be seen in terms of before and after my move into higher education, which created tensions in the practices from which this research has emerged. Before the move I did not realise that I was 'sleepwalking' through my professional life as a teacher, completely unaware of the discourses that underpin the world of teaching and education and after the transition realisation came that the only way I was going to understand the changes and difficulties I was experiencing in my new role as a teacher educator, was to engage with my own learning.

The following is an outline of the chapters in the thesis which are adapted from the basic framework outlined in the work of McNiff and Whitehead (2009, p.56).

- Introduction to the research report
- The research story
- What was my concern?
- Why was I concerned?
- How can I show what the situation was like initially?
- What did I do?
- How did I gather data to show ongoing developments?
- What did I find out?
- How could I show that the conclusions I have come to are reasonably fair and accurate?
- How can I articulate the significance of my action research?
- How did I modify my ideas and practices in the light of my evaluation?
- Conclusion

Part 1 of the thesis is about the 'then' of my life. As I ask the questions, 'What is my concern?' in Chapter 2 and, 'Why am I concerned?' in Chapter 3, the starting point of my

narrative is to provide the context and the background for the analysis and theorising of the answers to those key questions. In Part 2 Chapter 4 I describe and explain the methodological choices which have been made about how to conduct this research. It is from my introduction to and connecting with the idea of teacher-as-researcher (Stenhouse 1975) that I have been able to move from 'then' to 'now', 'before' to 'after'. It is these methodological choices that have enabled me to understand and explain my actions, and Chapter 4 has a crucial role as a bridge into a different place. Part 2 is a transitional point in that it links Part 1 and Part 3 in this thesis.

Part 3 is about this different place which I refer to as 'now'. It is about what I see now that my professional and personal eyes are open. Engaging with this research has enabled me to learn so much both personally and professionally. These chapters describe and explain my re-conceptualised practice which has been achieved through articulating how I hold myself to account for what I do. They show what I have contributed to my own learning, what I have contributed to the learning of the students with whom I work and so possibly to the social formations which form the context of my practice. To conclude Part 3 the significance of the research is explained and it is suggested what a Part 4, 'next', might look like.

Each chapter refers to my journey which begins in 1990, the year that I returned to teaching after time off with my children, up to the present day. This thesis is written to demonstrate how the theories I have generated have emerged from my practices as they were and as they are now. My practice has been opened up for scrutiny by critical friends and students in a way that has been both difficult and empowering. This research represents an act of accountability on my part and the first step to taking responsibility for what I know and how I am coming to know, my epistemology of practice.

Introduction

This introduction sets out the rationale for undertaking this research and says what I hope to accomplish by doing it. The questions that I began with and which started the enquiry are set out and the aims of the research are stated. The chapter explicates the research

design that emerged from the aims and questions and it sets out how the thesis is organised.

Part 1 How did I do things then? – eyes tight shut

Chapter 1. Prologue – the starting point for my research journey

This describes the starting point of the research in order to explain the context from which the research emerges. It describes my personal context as it relates to this research.

Chapter 2. What is my concern?

This chapter draws on a range of personal experiences, and the literatures, to describe the socio-historical context which is the background to the research. The chapter sets out what concerns me about this context, my practice and the current accountability models used in education. Accountability is defined and described, and the underpinning discourses which underpin current models of accountability in education are explicated.

Chapter 3. Why am I concerned? The re-conceptualisation of my values

In this chapter I will give examples from my practice to show the situation as it was at the start of this research. These will be used to explain why and how I re-conceptualised the value of education as a democratic and emancipatory process which has the potential to generate knowledge of a particular sort. As part of that educative process I value relationships which emerge from dialogical and critical reflective practices. How these values transform into my ontological and epistemological values (McNiff and Whitehead 2005) is explained. Finally I say how my values inform my understanding of educational accountability and why it matters to be concerned that my values are negated in my practice.

Part 2 Transition – a bridge over troubled waters

Chapter 4. How I began to make changes – methodological decisions

This chapter is about the methodological choices I have made in order to allow me to conduct my research so that I can explore the questions embedded in it in such a way as to be commensurate with my values. I say why my choice of methodology is self-study action research and how the validity of my claim to have generated my own living theory of educational accountability is tested. I will show how the standards of judgement by which I want my work to be judged have emerged. The chapter will say how I have gathered and analysed data and it will explore the ethical issues embedded in my research.

Part 3 Learning to do it differently - eyes wide open

Chapter 5. Taking action to improve the situation

This chapter describes the changes made to some of the problematic practices I was engaged in. It draws on my narrative to describe these changes. It will describe the transformations I have made to the practices described as unsatisfactory in Chapter 3 and in doing so put them forward as evidence of my own learning.

Chapter 6. What happens when I hold myself educationally to account for what I do? Key findings

This chapter focuses on evidencing the learning that has emerged from the changes made to my practice. This learning is my own and the students'. I draw on a range of data to show examples of our learning and show how I test the validity of my claim to be generating my own living theory of educational accountability.

Chapter 7. 'Next' - The significance of the research

This Chapter explains how these new understandings are significant in the fields of education and teaching. I will explain how I have contributed to new forms of theory and practice in the field of education and how this contribution can lead to new ways of thinking and acting.

Chapter 8. What next?

This Chapter considers how I hope to continue to improve my actions and to influence the social formations in which I work by constantly being aware of the dangers of becoming complacent and unquestioning about what I do as a teacher and as a teacher educator.

Part 1. 'Then' - 1990 to 2005 – 'there is none so blind as shall not see'

Chapter 1. Prologue – the starting point for my research journey

This chapter describes the historical context which forms the background to this research and it engages with the impact that my transition from school into higher education has had on the direction this research has taken. It explains why my research is focused on my own practice and the chapter describes what that practice is.

The starting point – September 2003

> *'So I have got the job! I feel as if this is going to be just what I am looking for to introduce a bit of challenge and excitement into my working day. Of course it is going to feel different and I will have new colleagues but that is also going to be just what I need. I may even be able to re-start my MA. It is my opportunity to put something back into the job I have loved for so many years and I will be able to put to good use all of the expertise I have built up over the years.'* (Renowden, 1st September 2003: unpublished journal)

In September 2003 I accepted a job as a senior lecturer in Education at a higher education institution in West London. I was thrilled to be able to have the opportunity to do something different having spent so long teaching in primary classrooms. I felt in many ways as if I was continuing on the same path. I was a primary teacher and now would be teaching students about primary teaching. The appointment was made because I was perceived to be an expert in the practical aspects of teaching and also had an expertise in Special Educational Needs which was needed by the primary team in the School of Education. I felt like an expert and therefore did not doubt for one minute that I would be able to do the job. As the extract from my diary at the time shows, I was very secure in my role as a teacher and really believed that I was coming into the job as an expert who knew a lot and was ready to pass it on to the next generation.

I look back on that teacher now with a mixture of incredulity, embarrassment and, if I am truthful, envy. Incredulity because I was so completely part of 'the system'; embarrassment because I was naively sure of myself and what I was doing; and envy because I was actually secure about what I knew and about who I was. As this thesis will show I moved very quickly from this position to a much less comfortable one and it is this transition that forms part of the background to the research. The thesis is about a journey of discovery and re-discovery as I have tried to understand and come to terms with my changing personal and professional roles over the last decade. Each of the different roles have been, and still are, fundamental to my understanding of my place in the world. It is a story of transition and it is an essential part of coming to understand what I am capable of at a time when I was losing all sense of security about what I knew and who I was, personally and professionally.

In the 1980s and 90s, if asked who I was, my answer would be a wife, a mother and a teacher. At that time I was defined first and foremost by my children and the demands of being a mother. I was happy to move from home to school and back again defined by those roles and had no thought about my potential, no sense of wanting to be anything other than a good wife and mother and a good teacher once I had gone back to work part time in 1990. My life was affirmed by those roles. I was what I did and I was 'good' at it. My family life was happy and enhanced by the re-connection with the enjoyment of being back in school. If things had continued in that way, frozen in time, I would not be doing this research. I was content to accept my blessings and my place in society was clearly defined. I was part of a family and a group of working colleagues which gave me a strong sense of identity. So strong, I did not need to think about it.

Of course nothing stands still and by 2000 things had begun to change. My sons began to go to university and the house began to empty. From 1998 until the last one left in 2005 my role as a mother changed. Of course it was appropriate that it did and my rational self pointed out that my husband and I had wanted our sons to be strong minded, independent adults. However, I was facing the classic 'empty nest' syndrome. For so long I had defined myself as a mother and had such a strong sense of being needed as such that our

sons moving away from home left me bereft. I felt as if a large hole had opened up in front of me which I was now responsible for filling.

This is an extract from my journal written at the start of my MA research in 2004.

> '*I am looking for increased understanding about what it means to be me (my self), and then what the implications of this self-awareness are for my practic*e. *As I begin this research I am enthused by it in a way that surprises even me! Why has it become so important to me? I think it is because it has come at a time in my life when my personal circumstances are changing and I am naturally questioning where I am going and what it means to be me.*
> *As a wife, mother and teacher I have been defined and positioned by my relationship to others. This has occupied my time and brought me untold joy. However, as my sons have moved away and their relationship with me has changed I am left with more time. This change has left me with time to myself. My change of jobs has also allowed me more time for myself. This change of emphasis in my life has become like a silence that needs to be filled. Hodes (1972) talks about a silence between himself and Buber when they met, which was pregnant with excitement and expectation. This is how my silence feels. I feel as if I am at the proverbial crossroads and I sense a need to re-define and get to know what my potential is.* (Renowden, 23rd September 2004, unpublished journal)

In 2004, as my role as a hands-on mother was becoming more and more redundant, I moved from primary school into higher education. This was of course my first step towards filling the hole left before me and I thought the change would be beneficial. I referred to it at the time as a small change, still inside my comfort zone of teaching however this could not have been more wrong as I will describe in more detail in Chapter 3. In fact I was jumping into an even bigger hole which completely robbed me of any sense of identity as a competent teacher. From 2004 to 2006 I struggled to define myself at all. I still would have told you I was a wife, mother and a teacher, but in truth I did not think I was fulfilling any of those roles with any certainty or clarity.

I was very fortunate, as has so often been the case in my life that certain things came together for me at the right time. In 2005 I became part of a group of colleagues who took up the opportunity to study with Professor Jean McNiff and from the start of our studies together I felt a real sense of excitement and enjoyment on several levels. Before these

seminars I had had very little experience of research beyond my MA study which started in 2004, and the opportunity to look at my practice with a view to deepening my understanding seemed like a gift. At a time when I was unsure of everything, from how I was going to fill my time to how I was going to be any good in the world of higher education, the chance to focus on myself was perfect. I became part of the study group and set off on this journey.

The concluding chapters of this thesis will evidence my own learning, which is one of the aims of this research. What is harder to convey is the significance of the change this research has brought about in how I see myself. Looking back on my life since qualification in 1976, it seems to fall into two distinct phases, and a third phase which is just beginning to unfold. 'Then' was a time when I was a wife, mother and teacher and it was a time of security and clarity about who I was and what I was doing. 'Now' the second phase felt so different, a time of uncertainty, insecurity and challenge as a wife, mother and teacher. 'Next' which I feel myself entering now is exciting, more secure and optimistic and while there is still uncertainty and challenges, I have come to understand and welcome them. My roles are still that of wife, mother and teacher. Despite the fundamental changes that have taken place, the roles I value most in my life are still the same. What has been transformed is the way I see myself in relation to them which is a direct result of this research journey.

The way I have defined myself has been transformed, partly because it had to and because of this research. The roles I am performing now are the same as they were in 2004 when I moved from being a senior manager in a primary school to being a teacher educator in a higher education university college. What has changed, however, is the emphasis I put on those roles and my understanding of them in relation to my life. I have undergone a profound change in my relationship with myself through the process of doing this research which has supported me through the historical changes I have been through.

This research is about my practice as a teacher and as a teacher educator. It is looking to see what happens when I take responsibility for my actions as I ask two basic questions which have become significant. They are, 'How do I improve what I do?' and 'How do I understand that process?' I also want to ask how that improvement and understanding can contribute to the learning of the students I work with and how it can influence the social formations in which I work. This has become important to me personally and professionally. The need to take responsibility for what I am doing, and determine what it is that makes my life worthwhile, has become an imperative alongside redefinition of who I am both personally and professionally.

Professionally this research is very simply about being a better teacher educator. Looking back on my teaching career has been like looking at black and white television and then, gradually, high definition colour television. The black and white programmes are watchable and the shapes are clear. They are more than good enough according to the expectations of the day. However, the same programmes in high definition colour are transformed. The shapes and story lines are the same but everything is so much more vibrant and life-like. It is as though through doing this research, I have put the colour into my professional life and I can see everything so much more clearly. I see how fit for purpose the black and white programmes were but everything is so much better in colour and going back there is not an option. In fact I do not know how I was so satisfied with the black and white!

1.1 Changing circumstances that led me into teacher education

I qualified from St Mary's College, Strawberry Hill in 1976 and until my move into teacher education I taught in several different primary schools in West London. This included teaching children from the age of 5 to 11 as their classteacher, several different management roles over the years including literacy co-ordinator and then special educational needs co-ordinator (SENco). I was part of the senior management team in the last school I taught in, as acting deputy headteacher. My career in school spanned years of significant changes in schools and education, some of which are described in Chapter 2.

In 2003, a student joined me in my classroom on her school experience. As part of my ongoing dialogue with her college tutor I mentioned that she did not seem to be very well prepared for some of the support needed for children with special educational needs and so I was asked to do some sessions in a local teacher training college to help address the issue. As my role in school included time spent as SENco I agreed. I loved the challenge and the excitement of doing something different and when a post came up within the School of Education in 2003, I applied.

My current position is as a senior lecturer in the School of Education within a higher education institution. It is a small institution with just over 4000 students and it currently has university college status which should become full university status soon. My role is made up of a range of different tasks all of which are related to primary education. I am part of the Professional Studies team, working alongside postgraduate and undergraduate students to support their understanding of the generic aspects of primary teaching such as planning, assessment and behaviour management. I also teach on the MA modules supporting students as they work towards getting 60 credits at M level. Beside the teaching roles, I also do a range of other things such as co-ordination of the online MA modules which involves managing the running of the modules. I go in to schools to watch students teach and to moderate the decisions made by the schools about the students' practice. I am a member of a number of committees which includes being part of the research community within the institution. First and foremost it is my role to help students to become effective teachers.

As a higher education tutor and a member of the Academy, I do not see a difference between being a practitioner and an intellectual and indeed I see them as entirely compatible. Roberts and Woods (2007, p.114) say,

> ‘The intellectual life is fraught with practices; they are its medium. The distinction dating from Aristotle and enduring even to the present day, between the intellectual and the practical (theoretical versus practical reason, contemplative versus practical wisdom) is ill drawn, because the intellectual life is fully as much a matter of practices as any other part of life'.

My perception of my place within the institution has undergone a radical change since 2004 and it is relevant to how I would describe my practice. At the time of joining the School of Education I described myself as a teacher whose role it was to support the learning of the pupils and then the students. In 2003, as the requirements of my role as a lecturer became clearer I was forced to question how I perceived myself and to widen my understanding of what teaching meant. Teaching is a complex practice (Grossman, Hammerness and McDonald 2009) which includes a range of other practices such as lecturing, assessing and mentoring, that are all complex in themselves. Teaching has been a vocation for me. I have never wanted to do anything else and throughout my time in primary classrooms I rarely had a day when I did not want to go into work. Hansen and Laverty (2010, p.226) suggest that teaching has a humanising role which is formative. They say,

> 'Teachers humanize by cultivating student's humanity: their capacity to think, feel, communicate, explore, analyze, manipulate objects, and the like. They also humanize by contributing to their students' humanity. They bring to their lives not only what they know but also their ways of holding and making use of that knowledge. In short to teach is to give, but it is also to criticize and challenge'.

This is a very good description of what I wanted, and still want my teaching to be. The concept of practice is, according to Wenger (1998) a result of the collective learning that emerges as we engage in our enterprises and social relationships. He goes on to say,

> 'These practices are thus the property of a kind of community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise. It makes sense, therefore, to call these kinds of communities communities of practice' (Wenger 1998, p.45).

Wenger's ideas are useful when explaining what my teaching practice involves as I see myself very much as part of a community, and practice as a social concept. I am partly reliant on colleagues and students to give structure and meaning to my actions. As Wenger says,

> 'Such a concept of practice includes both the explicit and the tacit. It includes what is said and what is left unsaid; what is represented and what is assumed. It includes the language, tools, documents, images, symbol, well-defined roles, specified criteria, codified procedures, regulations, and contracts that various practices make explicit for a variety of purposes. But it also includes all the implicit relations, tacit conventions, subtle cues, untold rules of thumb, recognisable intuitions, specific perceptions, well-tuned sensitivities, embodied

> understandings, underlying assumptions, and shared world views. Most of these may never be articulated, yet they are unmistakeable signs of membership in communities of practice and are crucial to the success of their enterprises' (ibid, p.47).

I will explain my practice in the light of this understanding. The 'what is said' of my practice is the world of institutionalised teaching and learning. The whole of my working life has been as a teacher within the UK school and HE system. MacIntyre (1984, p.25) sees practice in the following way.

> 'as any coherent and complex form of socially established co-operative human activity through which the goods internal to that activity are realised in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to and partly definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and means are systematically extended'.

He does not consider teaching to be a separate practice as he suggests that teaching is involved in all practices and it is made up of many practices. He suggests teaching includes a range of other practices such as lecturing, assessing and mentoring, that are all complex in themselves, having the virtues of truthfulness, honesty, justice, courage and humility inherent in them. Teaching he suggests, is also about writing, reading and researching and that it is the teacher's job to initiate their students into communities of practice. I share this understanding that teaching is made up of different practices.

The practices that are represented in my teaching are structured and very obvious to those who find themselves part of what Bourdieu (1990) would call 'the habitus.' The objective field of education with its own rules and systems consists of many different forms of the habitus which Bourdieu defines as systems of dispositions, perceptions, thoughts and actions and this makes them subjective. Within the habitus there are deep founded unconscious beliefs and values that inform actions and thoughts in the field known as doxa. If teaching practice is considered as a habitus within the field of education it would have its own social, cultural and symbolic capital. Those involved would understand it and relate to each other through engagement with it. As Bourdieu suggests, as a social

agent within the habitus I am supporting the constitution of the field, in this case education, through my perceptions and dispositions.

So the explicit aspects of my practice are complicated and consist of structures and social relationships. The tacit parts of my practice are just as complex. I see this as the interface between the rigidity of the structures and systems, particularly those which are in place to hold teachers and students to account for what they are doing, and the more forgiving, pragmatic, commonsense reality that is the action part of my practice. My practice is about the bringing together of the theoretical models of accountability and the reality of the classroom in such a way as to be effective in what I do, and theory can emerge from practice and vice-versa. What is tacit about my practice is the social negotiating and perpetual adjustments that I make. This is particularly apparent in my role as co-ordinator of the team that works on the MA online programme. I go into the meetings with ideas about what needs to be established or changed and these are tabled for discussion. This discussion with experienced and valued colleagues often leads to compromise and re-adjustment as we enable the abstract theoretical ideas to inform our practices.

In this chapter I have described how I became a teacher educator and the way I saw myself at the time of this move out of primary practice. The chapter sets out what my current practice involves. These practices in school and in higher education form the context for this research. The next chapter will set out the concerns I have about the wider formal education context which are grounded in the ways that teachers are held to account for what they are doing in the classroom.

Chapter 2. What is my concern?

This chapter will set out my concerns about the power dynamics that determine the normative assumptions and discourses that underpin the field of education in which my practice is located and to which this research contributes. Through the lens of my narrative and a range of literatures it will describe the ways that teachers in different contexts are held to account for what they are doing and it will say what concerns me. Finally, and given that my study is about how I demonstrate accountability for what I am doing, the Chapter will describe the various accountability models and the discourses that underpin them. It will conceptualise educational accountability.

I am concerned that the voice of the teacher in the classroom is becoming increasingly marginalised and the role of the teacher, in higher education and school, is becoming less and less significant when decisions are made about what constitutes good educational practice. This means that teachers are not looked to as generators of meaningful theories of practice. Teachers are seen as the implementers of the policies and practices that emanate from those in power.

I am concerned because the prevailing models of accountability and the discourses that underpin them have the potential to contribute to the way that teachers are perceived in relation to the judgements that are made about what is considered to be effective teaching practice. The situation is caused, in part, by an increased focus on an externally standards-driven model of accountability, grounded in a concept of accountability that has become politicised (Epstein 1993) and a view of education that is seen as a commodity (Longhurst 1996).This is diminishing the opportunities for myself and my students to learn to explicate and theorise what we do through the formation of our own models of what I want to call educational accountability, with the potential to be recognised as being of worth by those who hold teachers to account. This is leading to a teaching profession that is increasingly seen as unable to determine its own epistemological standards of practice (Whitehead 2004) and to account for what it does in

such a way as to lead to improvement through increased understanding. The current accountability models are part of the landscape of schools and teacher education institutions and they are both a manifestation and a cause of the deeper issue that concerns me.

The technical rational models of accountability, epitomised by the standards used by such bodies as the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) are, I would suggest, supporting a generally held view that teachers are not able to determine their own standards of practice. Teachers do not routinely research and report on what they do (Hargreaves 1996) and so they are unable to contribute to the prevailing discourses in any other than a tokenistic way. Indeed, I suggest that these models of accountability are leading to teacher passivity and compliance which is perpetuating the situation and distancing them even further from the locus of power. Goodson (2008, p.124) says that this complicity leads to teachers being

> 'effectively disenfranchised in the 'discourses of schooling'. To continue to exist, their day-to-day power must basically remain unspoken and unrecorded. This then is the price of complicity.'

This is of concern because I claim that by taking responsibility for determining, articulating and critically, evidencing what they know to be effective about teaching and learning practices, (in other words through developing their own pedagogical epistemologies), teachers have the opportunity to influence positively their own learning, the learning of the pupils and students they work with and the social formations in which they work (McNiff and Whitehead 2009).

2.1 A definition of accountability

'Accountability' is a word that has been part of the education discourse for some time although it is not simple to define. For the benefit of this thesis any definition will be grounded in the field of education. Cambell and Rozsnyai (2002) suggest that in the higher education context it is the assurance that an institution gives to its stakeholders that it is providing a good quality education. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) in their glossary, say that accountability is the ‘process through which

institutions and individuals are expected to demonstrate the fulfilment of their obligations, including proper use of public funds.' Embedded in both of these explanations is the understanding that those who are required to be accountable are required to give a public account of what they are doing.

This accounting can be an exercise in describing what is being done, which is not the same as being accountable. I can give an account of my teaching practice in the sense that I can describe what I am doing however there is no sense that I am accountable unless that account leads to value judgements being made and the possibility of change being a result. To be accountable for my teaching practice there is implicit in this an understanding that with that act of accountability comes a relationship, somebody or some bodies to whom I am giving my account. It is in this relationship that the possibility of power and authority lie. To be accountable in education is often to report to those with authority and to have value judgements made about what one is doing. Elliott (1976, p.217), suggests that accountability is when,

> 'a person is accountable to others when he (sic) is obliged to respond to their ascriptions of blame by providing an answering account of his actions. The concept of accountability entails the right to evaluate the evaluation and therefore the right to self evaluation.'

Inbuilt into Elliott's definition is the idea that those being held to account have the possibility of challenging the judgements of those holding to account.

According to Merriam-Webster (2003 cited Burke 2005, p.20), accountability is 'an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions.' Often that obligation is formalised and is required to be fulfilled through particular structures and procedures. A good example of this in teacher education is the expectation that students prepare a portfolio of evidence so as to be accountable for what they have done in practice. This is submitted to tutors who are required to ensure that all the Standards have been met and then the portfolio is signed off and the student can graduate. The power dynamic embedded in this is opaque and the accountability is public (Schedler 1999 cited Burke 2005, p.2).

2.1.1 Different models of accountability and the assumptions that underpin them

There are different models of accountability and there are different assumptions underpinning them. Heim (1995) talks about procedural and consequential accountability, the last of which is high in education. The consequences of the different outcomes of accountability mechanisms in schools and universities are known to all involved and can be quite profound. Within these same mechanisms or as Sachs (2008, p.191) calls them 'regimes of accountability', practitioners are obligated to be accountable. There are a number of models and understandings of accountability such as: the democratic model (Somekh and Schwandt 2007); the moral, professional and contractual models (Becher and Eraut 1979); public model (Elliott 1981); professional model (Kogan 1986).What is common to them all is the idea that embedded in the relationships between those giving the account and those receiving it and making judgements is an answerability for performance (Romzek 2000 cited Huisman and Currie 2004, p.22) on some level. It is the nature of that relationship and the power dynamics that underpin it that determines the understandings that inform the accountability regime.

Within education different models can be seen and these have often changed over time. For example, it can be said that in higher education there has been a move from traditional accountability which consists of peer review and a freedom to pursue knowledge to a technical managerial model of accountability, which is used to determine student numbers and finance thus forcing academics to engage with the underpinning discourses (Hoecht 2006). Certainly the way that teachers have been held to account since the 1980s has been determined by the prevailing discourses of the time largely emanating from successive governments.

Hargreaves and Shirley (2009, p.3) describe what they call 'the three preceding Ways of educational change' before they put forward what they call the 'Fourth Way'. These 'Ways' have formed the discourses that influenced the way that teachers were held to account. The First Way was marked by teachers relying on intuition and ideology rather than evidence and schools and practice were often at the whim of what Hargreaves and Shirley (ibid, p.5) call 'fads'. The Second Way in the 1980s was in part a reaction to this.

There was a centralisation and standardisation of educational goals. The result was increased accountability emerging from such things as narrow definitions of learning, enforced curriculum fidelity, increased competition between schools and sanctions when failure to meet targets for improved results were not met. This standardisation and uniformity was seen by some as positive because it could lead to greater accountability. Hargreaves and Shirley (ibid, p.9) say 'the bureaucratic screw tightened with increased ferocity'.

The impact of the Third Way on accountability is 'evident in top-down measures that emphasize performance targets for schools and school districts' (ibid, p.15) Hargreaves and Shirley go on to say that

> 'A streamlined system of inspection by the government's inspection agency, Ofsted, relies heavily on prior access to published achievement data because it keeps schools focused on making measureable improvement. Moreover National Literacy and Numeracy hours of timed, paced, and initially scripted instruction ensure primary schools concentrate on these core areas. As a consequence, England's system of bureaucratic and political pressure has been "hard as nails," in the words of one of its chief architects, and always ready for the "naming and shaming" of its struggling schools.'

This accountability regime is one of control and these standards developed by education bureaucracies have been designed 'as a technology to control the teaching profession' (Sachs cited Sugrue 2008, p.196). What is missing in the power dominated accountability model is trust and as Meier (2003) argues a focus on meeting targets means

> 'We don't trust teachers' judgement so we constrain their choices....We don't trust the public school system as a whole so we allow those furthest removed from the schoolhouse to dictate policy that fundamentally changes the daily interactions that take place within schools.....Social distrust plays itself out in education in the form of draconian attempts to 'restore accountability' through standardised schooling and increasing bureaucratisation.'

Invariably accountability is linked in some degree to power dynamics. Kogan (1986, p.30) says ‘Accountability requires authority for its discharge.' He says accountability and authority are responsibility and power converted into ‘institutional entities’ (ibid). Foucault (1980) says that power is in relationships and it moves backwards and forwards between the invisible ties that connect people who are in relation to each other.

Foucault's (1977) analysis of the power dynamics that underpin accountability models is useful. He says the sovereign power that resides in individuals or their agents is visible and understood. What he calls disciplinary power however, is not so easy to see in some institutions. It is continuous and embedded in practices and Foucault suggests that it determines the norms by which we as individuals are seen in relation to power. He suggests three aspects of disciplinary power: detail, surveillance and normalisation (ibid). Foucault suggests that discipline means we are increasingly interested in the minutiae and details of what we do in practices. He says,

> 'The meticulousness of the regulations, the fussiness of the inspections, the supervisions of the smallest fragment of life and of the body will soon provide, in the context of the school, the barracks, the hospital or the workshop, a laicised content, an economic or technical rationale for this mystical calculus of the infinitesimal and the infinite' (1977, p.140).

He goes on to say that this can lead to some important areas being neglected. What is interesting is that Foucault wrote this over thirty years ago and it is just as relevant as time has gone on. The different aspects of this power, as laid out in Foucault's ideas, are useful lenses through which to reflect on accountability as it is in my practice later in this chapter.

Brookfield (1995, p.9) talks about the 'conspiracy of the normal' which are hegemonic assumptions which people consider are in their own interests but which in fact are the result of the power exercised by others. These power dynamics are not always obvious and it is according to Brookfield, 'When we become aware of the pervasiveness of power, we start to notice the oppressive dimensions to practices that we had thought were neutral or even benevolent.' (ibid, p.9) This is certainly my experience when I confronted the power dynamics inherent in the models of accountability I will discuss.

In education there are a number of agencies who have the authority to hold practitioners to account. It has long been understood that inspections of schools and teacher education institutions are driven by underpinning political agendas and indeed the foci for the most recent inspection the School of Education went through in 2011 were in line with priorities as set out by the Education Secretary in 2010 (May 2010

www.bbc.co.uk/news/10113940). This inspection had as its focus behaviour management, special educational needs and phonics. None of these foci were determined by the institution but were perceived to be areas in schools which need addressing for improvement: discipline; improving literacy and improved equality in the education system. It was expected by the inspection team that we would focus on providing evidence to show how we were addressing these areas throughout the School of Education. Anderson (2005) points out that this compliance is an important component of accountability in education as is the adherence to the norms of a profession and the results of the students in terms of their learning. She goes on to say that 'a workable, defensible accountability system that is based primarily on results, whilst at the same time being attentive to professional norms and regulatory compliance' needs the following:

- educators' responsibilities clearly defined
- a foundation of aligned components such as objectives, assessments, instructional resources and rewards and sanctions
- technical aspects of a high standard
- to be a vehicle for change (Anderson 2005, p.10)

This model of accountability is one that underpins the Ofsted frameworks and contributes to the notion of accountability being an entirely predictable process designed to lead to homogenisation of those involved. All of the above can be decided between those being held to account and those holding to account, but in practice that is not always the case. A form of accountability which is based on results can be underpinned by a lack of trust.

Sachs (2008 cited in Sugrue 2008, p.195) suggests

> 'lack of trust in teachers and the focus on standardised testing and benchmarks is counterproductive as it is more likely to lead to a 'trained incapacity' rather than to critical thinking or academic excellence.'

As Rowland (2006, p.22) says, regimes of audit and accountability are emerging which are 'emphasising compliance and predictability at the expense of critique and imagination'. This is an important point to be made when defining the concept of accountability. The ontological and epistemological position from which it emerges as an

action determines the methodology and purpose of it in practice and as Morley (2003) points out privileges certain types of knowledge and favours particular outcomes and managerial processes. Accountability which is emanating from a positivist, objective, detached position, where those holding practitioners to account see their power and authority legitimated by being the knower, creates the possibility that those being held to account will not have been trusted to be involved with Anderson's points above. As Sachs (2008 cited Sugrue 2008, p194) suggests 'In the context where the enactment of power is taken for granted, audit and accountability become powerful technologies of control'.

The view of accountability as responsibility is from a different ontological and epistemological position. It is possible for those being held to account for their practices to be part of the process that establishes the criteria for decision making and to be involved as a knower in the accountability. Accounts can be given but outcomes and decisions made by those holding to account will be focused more on the processes rather than possible outcomes and sanctions. It is within this positioning that the self-regulation methodology resides. Hargreaves (1997, p.115) describes what this might look like.

> 'The teaching profession must become, and be allowed to be, self-regulating. This self-regulating must not be symbolic or tediously bureaucratic. It must be rigorous and robust getting to the heart of what good quality teaching and learning is all about. A self-regulating profession must set, maintain and constantly look for ways to raise its own standards of practice, rather than having other people's standards imposed upon its members'.

He calls for a General Teaching Council which has of course, been and gone however the need for this as a way to view teacher accountability remains relevant to the concerns I express.

Hargreaves' call is premised on the idea that those involved in actions are able to account for what they do against professional standards determined by themselves and this will ensure appropriate actions with an inbuilt ethical dimension. A current example of this is the much discussed post-phone hacking self-regulation of the UK press. Up to now (2012), the press have been responsible for their code of ethics and they have been

accountable against their own professional standards of practice. This position has been fiercely guarded to protect the freedom of the press and it relies on the integrity of those involved. It respects the understanding that those who know about ethical journalism and what is the right way to behave in given circumstances, are those involved in the actions. The power lies with the actors who can establish their own internal checks and balances to ensure accountability for actions to peers or colleagues. As we have seen this works as long as those involved continue to behave in a way that meets the criteria and those given the responsibility to listen to the accounts of their peers do so in such a way as to ensure that standards are met.

What is interesting about this situation is that there is an understanding that the ability to self-regulate what is being done still ultimately has to be judged in terms of whether it is working and is leading to what is determined to be the appropriate outcome. The ability to hold oneself to account as a professional is allowed by the society in which the practices take part. Another less significant example of this is wheel clamping. Wheel clampers are to date unregulated by government and wheel clampers themselves have set up their own code of practice which sets out ethical and reasonable behaviour as they go about their job. Much has been made of late about certain clampers who have not been abiding by this code and they have been operating lawfully but in such a way as to be ruthlessly making money from unsuspecting motorists. The way this has been reported by the media has led to calls for a formal regulation of wheel clamping so as to protect the public. It is suggested that the internal accountability structure is to be replaced with an external model, a shift from one ontological and epistemological position to another. The knowledge of how to ethically wheel clamp no longer resides with the wheel clampers themselves. This can suggest that certain actions or behaviours are too important to be left to internal self-regulation against standards set from within, or that those involved in the actions are unable to hold themselves to account sufficiently well so as to ensure that outcomes are appropriate or socially acceptable. I suggest that this is becoming a normative assumption about teachers.

There are many relationships in accountability models within schools and universities, for example from teachers to parents, students to lecturers, lecturers to their senior managers, senior managers to governments and increasingly lecturers to students. The nature of the accountability is grounded in the type of relationship between the parties which often follows a long standing pattern. What has changed in education policy over several years are the normative assumptions that underpin some of the hierarchical power relations that are part of some of these relationships. These changes in education have been influential and fundamental. The relationship between teachers and parents is one example of this and it is embedded in the discourses around teacher professionalism. It is relevant to an understanding of the way that the assumptions underpinning certain accountability relationships are influenced by different discourses in education.

When I started teaching in 1976 the relationship between the parents of the children in my class and myself was grounded in an unspoken understanding of the role we each played in the life of their child. For the most part I always had a sense that I was respected for the part I was playing and I respected their rights and responsibilities as the child's parent or guardian. This is a relationship that is now much more formalised in schools with the introduction of a range of different expectations and requirements. Parents' rights are enshrined in legislation and home school contracts set out what parents can expect from their child's school. The idea of parent power is now well established in the language of accountability with an expectation that parents can and should hold teachers to account for what they are doing. The measures of whether teachers are successfully supporting learning have become the results of controversial summative tests which have been used to compile league tables. Academic standards have been set by governments.

This has led to a fundamental change in the way that teachers are perceived. Underpinning this is the assumption that, like the wheel clamper, teachers need to have external independently determined standards by which they can be held to account by those with some involvement in school. Implicit in this is the assumption that because the parents knows their child better than anyone, a well accepted understanding, that this

means they can determine what is educationally of worth in relation to their child. In fact, taken to its extreme they can now set up their own schools because they know what is necessary for their child's education. This has meant that the ongoing challenge to the idea of teacher professionalism is implicitly supported by the mechanisms set up to hold teachers to account. It is assumed they are unable to set their own standards.

Accountability looks in different directions according to Burke and in higher education accountability is for outcomes such as system efficiency, educational equality, organisational productivity and external responsiveness (Burke 2005). There are, according to Burke the following types of accountability:

- Accountability that looks upward is the traditional model with a subordinate and a superior. It is procedural, bureaucratic, legal and vertical accountability.
- The downward looking accountability is where the manager is responsible to the subordinates when making participatory decisions. This is collegial accountability.
- Inward accountability is to the professional and ethical standards, which is known as professional accountability.
- Lastly outward accountability looks towards clients and the public, which is market and political accountability.

Harvey (2002) suggests five functions of accountability which I consider emerge out of the current way that universities are perceived:

1. as an external evaluation on behalf of stakeholders, for example local authorities on behalf of tax payers
2. to ensure the principles and practices of higher education are not eroded. An example of this is the standards universities must meet to receive degree awarding powers.
3. to be accountable for the standards of the teaching and learning for students and this is now involving student judgement but value for money in relation to the increased fees they will be paying.

4. to ensure there is information to provide in a public forum such as the suggested introduction of statistics that show which universities get the most students into employment as a vehicle of compliance, for example the widening access agenda.

2.1.2 Educational accountability

To summarise, accountability is a complex concept which takes on its true meaning more fully when it is contextualised. It has become embedded in the current discourses around school improvement and teaching. Within those fields it is very much the top-down model with those doing the holding of others to account being invested with credibility and power by successive governments. My claim to knowledge is that I have generated my own living theory or explanation of educational accountability. This is grounded in a type of accountability that relies on the practitioner, in this case, holding themselves to account for what they know about what is effective practice and how they have come to know it. This accountability is not a soft process that lacks rigour and relevance. It requires the setting of criteria and standards of judgement grounded in challenge and informed assumptions. It is about what is learnt as one engages in the process of holding oneself to account and it is about holding this new knowledge as provisional and available for critique. It is not grounded in discourses of control and power but in dialogue and critical reflection which are important actions that contribute to emancipatory and democratic forms of education as I will explore later. Sachs (2008 cited Sugrue 2008, p.193-194) puts it well when she says

> 'Accountability itself isn't the enemy – teachers need to be accountable to their students, their colleagues and their school communities – but rather that this accountability to narrow sets of 'performance' standards and the whims of the government of the day is antithetical to any kind of transformative vision of the profession or of education'.

Educational accountability as I conceptualise it emerges from my understanding of education and it is part of educational processes embedded in a transformative vision of education.

My understanding of education is that it is a process that involves the personal engagement of the individual. Pring (2004) says that education is an evaluative word and he suggests criteria by which one can judge this. Education needs to bring about learning of significance or what Hargreaves and Fink (2006, p.32) refer to as deep and broad learning; for all, for meaning, for understanding and for life. Education should stimulate further thought and lead to thinking, questioning and enquiring and lead to an understanding of concepts. I want to 'equip the individual with the knowledge, understanding and skills apt for a personally satisfying, socially responsible and economically productive life' (Power 1997, p.7). I would see education as being of value in itself, not just a process that only produces something. It is for its own sake, an end in itself.

A word I have always associated with education is growth, a concept that is defined by Brookfield and Preskill (1999, p.3) as being 'the development of an ever increasing capacity for learning and an appreciation of and sensitivity to learning undertaken by others'. I agree with Walker (1999, p.112), when he says education is about self-determination, 'authentic self-expression, management of one's own learning, and the creation of further enhanced self-determination.' He says that the fundamental outcome of educative learning is self-determination and this is a characteristic of educated people. Ryle (1949) said that education is an achievement word and this idea was developed by Peters (1966), who also thought the process covered a range of tasks, the aim of which is to develop potential, give cognitive perspective and develop character and interests. The implication is that education is about transformation and it should be worthwhile 'Education it has been argued, involves the intentional transmission of what is worthwhile' (Peters 1966, p35).

Teaching and education are involved in creating the conditions for growth, and Chomsky (2003) says that it is a source of well-being which he suggests can be made up of a number of elements: knowledge and understanding; enjoyment of beauty; accomplishing things that make life worthwhile; deep personal relationships; moral goodness; sensual pleasures and being autonomous and self directed. It is these qualities that I would

consider to be embedded in a teaching practice that is educational for all involved, by which I mean myself and the students. For a practice to be educational, I suggest that it needs to create the conditions that allow those involved to flourish and become more aware of their own relationship to the social formations in which they live.

This idea of education developing certain habits of mind (Dewey 1933) is a powerful one. Pring (2004, p.34) suggests that,

> 'Central to one's personal development through education must be a grasp of those key ideas through which is made possible an understanding of what it is to be human.'

He goes on to say that this 'moral seriousness' (ibid, p38) is the fundamental role of the teacher and that involves realising what is human in oneself and others. As a primary classteacher I had become focused on the external goods of my practice and had lost this sense of what I now understand makes a practice worthwhile. MacIntyre (1984, p.187), suggests that practices have internal and external 'goods.' The practice of teaching has such things as knowledge acquisition, love of learning and self-discipline as intrinsic or internal goods. The external or extrinsic goods are promotion, salary, status, recognition as an expert and good assignment marks (Roberts and Woods 2007). The values that are embedded in my educational practice mean that I should encourage students to recognise and seek the internal goods of their practice. Essential to being able to do this with integrity is to do it myself and this involves taking opportunities to be responsible for what I know.

As a teacher it is important that my practice has the authenticity of an educator. My practice and so my work links to who I am. Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler and Tipton (1985) suggest that work is inseparable from the person and the self becomes engaged in activities that have an intrinsic value. For something to be considered to be educational I think that it needs to cultivate certain dispositions and virtues (McCabe 2005) and that it needs to have an authenticity about its processes. For my practice to be educational it needs to show human agency as action and this is how it can move towards what is

worthwhile. For accountability to be educational it should allow those involved in it to develop this sense of agency and develop actions that are worthwhile.

Educational accountability as I conceptualise it has the potential to contribute to the development of those involved in it as what Ricoeur (1995) calls capable human beings. Hoveid and Hoveid (2009) suggest that educational practice is the process through which we learn to become capable human beings. Using Ricoeur's thesis they suggest that there are four basic abilities that capable human beings display and it is my contention that they can be part of an understanding of educational accountability. These are the ability to speak, to act, to tell and to be able to engage in imputation. The ability to speak puts the 'I' at the centre of the act of accountability and it involves communication with others as relationships develop. It is about acknowledging individuals as persons. Educational accountability is about enabling individuals to make something happen and exercise their capacity for agency. The ability to tell is enabled because educational acts of accountability create the possibility of individuals being able to have a voice to articulate what they know and to seek critique as they tell others.

This way of holding oneself to account and when expected, as in my case, holding others to account, puts learning at the heart of the process. It looks to the development of capable human beings which in the case of my practice means capable of determining standards of practice that lead to sustainable improvements in classrooms and schools. This is not what I am learning to do as I am held to account in a technical rational way. I am learning to 'play the game' and tick the boxes so that I can get back to good teaching which Hargreaves (1997, p.108) says 'is not just a matter of being efficient, developing competence, mastering technique and possessing the right kind of knowledge. Good teaching also involved emotional work.' Educational accountability is all about striving for improvement because as Hargreaves says (ibid, p.116) 'in the complex rapidly changing post-modern age, if you do not get better as a teacher over time, you do not merely stay the same: you get worse.' What makes this theory of educational accountability a living one is that the explanations I have given have emerged out of my practice and it is to this that I turn now to continue to contextualise what concerns me.

2.2 My practice - 1990 to 2004

My concerns are concentrated in two particular parts of my practice; the holding of the students to account for what they are learning and the way I am held to account for my practices. What concerns me is that I am held to account for my practices, and I am expected to hold students to account for theirs, in a way that does not make explicit the ethical and values-driven nature of the act of accountability. It is not based on considerations that 'are above and beyond those relevant to evaluations of their causal significance' (Elliott 1976, p.217). Whitehead (1989) talks about being a living contradiction in practice and this is what I had become and this has led me to question and enquire into what I do and become concerned. My narrative exemplifies this situation.

In 1990, I decided to begin teaching again after nine years at home with my children and was aware that I would be working until my retirement which was more than twenty years away. I wanted to get on and so did not anticipate being just a classteacher (this is how I put it at the time) for the rest of what I began to see as my career. During the 1990s I wanted to progress and challenge myself through promotion and I took on additional responsibilities and began the National Professional Qualification for Headship. This could enable me to be a deputy head and then a headteacher in primary schools.
At the time I measured my success by purely external measures. I thought myself successful because I was working towards promotion. 'The system' told me I was doing well. The league tables of schools put together by the Government using the end of Year 6 Summative Attainment Tasks (SATs) were put forward as and indeed were considered to be, an effective way to determine how well schools were teaching children. They could be used as a measure of teacher effectiveness. I was asked to teach the Year 6 classes because I would do a 'good job' which of course meant preparing the children for the tests. I saw it in the same way, as a chance for me to show what I could do. Alongside this I wanted to do a good job in the classroom. It mattered to me that the children in my class were happy and that they were learning to the best of their ability so I spent a lot of time planning lessons and making them motivational and relevant. I had certain things that I

took pride in such as my relationships with the children and the parents, the way I managed my classroom and the standards the children reached.

An analogy with the film the Truman Show (1998) is the best way to describe the time I spent teaching in the 1990s, as I look back now. In the film the main character is living a happy, well contented life but anomalies keep occurring. He begins to think that something is going on outside the world in which he lives. In fact it turns out that he is part of a reality show and his whole life has in fact been directed and watched by others. Of course this is fiction and I would not want my life to be seen in that way. Where the similarities lie is in the way that the main character never questions his life beyond the superficial. In fact if things had not started to go wrong he would never have questioned his life at all. With hindsight it becomes obvious to me that I was going around with my professional eyes shut, and it needed something to go wrong, for me to realise there was another reality elsewhere. I am concerned because I took so much at face value and had handed over all responsibility for my own learning and for my own understandings to others.

When I returned to teaching in 1990 after being at home with my three sons, schools felt like very different places to the ones I had left in 1980.The National Curriculum (1985) was established, the inspection regime had been set up and stricter more prescriptive bureaucratic regulations were being introduced. What had changed was that the whole school, including the headteacher, had become accountable to government agencies. All of the quality assurance role that had been invested in the senior management team in the 1970s was now removed and had been given to independent bodies. This was a change in the way teachers were being perceived.

Once teachers begin to lose control over the standards by which their practice is judged then their autonomy and professionalism begins to be eroded and the perception of many is that this is now the case. The current public perception of teachers is mixed but it is heavily influenced by the way the successive governments project the rationale for change and reform. Chapman and Gunter (2009) reflect on these reforms and suggest that

they have excluded teachers and been removed from where they work. This was a fundamental move and it was embedded in the idea that schools and teachers were unable to determine whether or not they were being effective in raising standards. The introduction of a common curriculum meant that there were common standards that could be measured and compared.

As my career progressed through the 1990s I was subject to the increasingly prescribed models of accountability that were developing. Indeed I embraced them because they were part of my role on the senior management team. Taking responsibility for watching other colleagues teach and helping them to set targets as part of their performance management process became part of my role. I looked over the plans of other colleagues to see if they were planning for children with special educational needs in my capacity as Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. A sense of satisfaction came with the status this gave me as a senior colleague. As I held others to account for their practices against the standards of others, I was also being held to account. I began to get a sense of myself as being a 'success' and the measure of that success was how well I was able to implement such things as the Literacy and Numeracy Hours and the newly laid down curriculum guidelines. I was becoming more and more compliant as new initiatives were introduced and I was being rewarded for it.

New initiatives came one after another in the 1990s such as the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2002), all of which my colleagues and I worked to put in place. The day-to-day routines and actions of my practice were time consuming and enjoyable and despite not agreeing with everything I was asked to do I accepted it as part of the compromises necessary to get on and be successful. Colleagues and I bemoaned the steady stream of changes and targets but this did not go beyond the superficial and it certainly did not lead to us taking actions to challenge the introductions. We worked hard to absorb change and I never once questioned the basic assumptions underpinning these changes. Despite meeting many colleagues from different schools at this time we did not discuss anything beyond the every day practices we were engaged in.

What is interesting to me now, as I reflect on this time in school, is that despite being a senior manager I was such a passive player in the power dynamics embedded in the way that things happened in school. Berlin (1969) says that we have to understand the dominant issues in our own world to understand our own activities and attitudes and this becomes interesting as I reflect on my passivity. My attitude at the time was one of compliance and I did not understand the issues or see myself in relation to a bigger picture. I was so busy with the day-to-day work in my classroom and the school that I could not see myself in relation to wider dialogue. I considered myself a success because others told me so and the standards set by others as measures of this success were becoming internalised as my own.

What I realise now was that I did not have any say or influence on the type of policies and practices being implemented, and my understanding about what was good practice was not being articulated in a sphere that would have any influence. I described my attitude in the classroom in my MA dissertation.

> *'I would have said that I was a reflective teacher. I reviewed what I was doing in the classroom and I asked key questions of myself such as, 'Did the children learn anything in this lesson?' and 'If they did, why?' and 'If they did not, why not?' In many ways I now see this as what Freire would call 'false freedom' which let me think I had more control over what was going on around me than I actually did have. The idea was that if teachers reflected on their practice, then all would be well. What I was not encouraged to do was to engage in anything other than a superficial way'* (Renowden, 2005 unpublished MA dissertation)

The kind of reflection I was engaged in was technical rational, and the criteria I was using to judge whether I was doing my job well were set by those in power. The strong rational community that I was part of had led me as an individual to become representative of its norms and categories thereby losing educational engagement (Bonnett 2009). I was an example of the normative assumption that teachers did not need or want to be responsible for determining their own discourses.

This realisation began in 2004 when I took up a full time post as a senior lecturer in education in a school of education within the University College. This appointment was made because of the experience of practice that I brought with me, enabling me to teach

on the modules that would enable students to develop their practices. What I quickly began to realise was that I had become complacent and unquestioning about my practice. I began to see that I had accepted the judgements made by others about my actions and this unquestioning acceptance had not prepared me for the challenge and change that came with my new job. The passivity that had been unproblematic in the school classroom had not prepared me for the fundamental change in practice that came with my move into higher education. I arrived in my new context with the perception of myself as a competent practitioner who knew exactly what she was doing and was confident about doing any teaching well. The following year proved to be a difficult one for me.

I have described my own practice as I unquestioningly accepted the standards of others putting it forward as evidence of the way an experienced and reflective practitioner could be a willing and intellectually passive participant in fundamental power shifts within the education system. The discourses of power embedded in the current mechanisms of holding teachers to account have the potential to make it look as if there is some control in the hands of teachers and to influence how they perceive what they are doing. I had become so far removed from the locus of power that I did not even see what it looked like. The historical context that provides the background for my narrative explains the way that teachers have been held to account has emanated from shifting sands of the wider political landscape.

2.3 The wider research context

2.3.1 The changing education landscape

This research is set into the context of education as it is institutionalised in university based teacher education and in schools because it is from here that my concerns emerged as I moved into higher education. There are similarities between the teacher education institutions and schools because the accountability models used are often the same philosophically and bureaucratically and because what goes on in teacher education impacts on schools and vice versa. I also consider the higher education context because my institution and others are situated within the university.

Traditionally, the university was the place where knowledge was seen to reside and it was autonomous and separate from society. Academic freedom was a central tenet of the university and it remained largely independent of government control. Delanty (2001) talks about the historic pact between the state and knowledge that was formed in the 17th century and suggests that this began unravelling during the period of university reform in the 1960s and 1970s. The university was no longer founded on the premise that there was one particular type of knowledge and this change in understanding of what Gibbons, Limoges, Nowotny, Schwartzman, Scott and Trow (1994) called modes of knowledge led to the state no longer being the sole financiers of knowledge generation because of the increased involvement of corporations and business. This meant that different models of a university became possible and the identity and role of the university was called into question. Changes in teacher education contributed to this perception because the governance of the faculties of education moved away from the universities at the same time as they were themselves evolving.

Delanty (2001, p.4) suggests three more reasons for the changes to society's perceptions of the role of the university.

1. Society has become more and more reliant on knowledge, in economic production, political regulation and in life. He suggests 'This warrants the claim we are living in a knowledge society'.

Those who are deemed to be 'experts' in their field of knowing are given a high premium by society and their advice is sought by many, often at a high price. Evidence for this lies in the growing number of people involved in consultancy work, offering advice and expert knowledge. It becomes increasingly less possible to know everything necessary to function well in a world that is becoming more and more complex on so many different levels. Knowledge is now being generated in a range of contexts such as industry and publicly funded think tanks, not just the university, and those that know are not always to be found in academia. Knowledge is becoming specialised and in certain fields such as medicine it is possible to focus on one area such as cardiology. The reason that I was recruited to become a lecturer in teacher education was precisely because of the perceived expertise that I have in primary teaching and special educational needs. The

knowledge that I had was recognised as being of worth in the setting and my salary reflected this understanding.

2. The rise of mass education, social protest and social movements has enabled the spread of knowledge through society more (2001, p.4)

The growth of the internet and easy communication networks has allowed ideas and knowledge to be spread quickly and efficiently and it has led to the globalisation of knowledge and the rise of the network society (Castells 1996). Knowledge has become publicly available, as the rise of web-based sites like Wikipedia demonstrate. People have a ready forum for what they know and Delanty (ibid) points to the growth in lay knowledge alongside professional knowledge. This is challenging the traditional role of the university as the solely recognised site of knowledge generation. It is not only the academic whose voice has volume in the world of knowledge generation.

3. The growing contestability of knowledge claims.

Science and technology are being held increasingly to account for what they know and at the same time as the role of the expert grows, the confidence with which their claims to know are challenged grows also. More and more academics are required to put their knowledge claims into the public domain to be critiqued and the perception of the academic as someone who commands a natural respect is dwindling as the kind of knowledge they produce is seen by some to be lacking in relevance. The closing of courses in philosophy, physics and others that seem removed from day-to-day life attest to this.

What universities now offer has changed. As universities become impelled to respond to the marketplace and vocational knowledge becomes more in demand from employers and thus from students, universities are making changes to their curricula so as to attract the student numbers they require. The current Coalition Government is explicitly establishing a link between the need for universities to enable students to find employment and the way this can be seen as a measure of the effectiveness of what they do. All of this adds up to what Delanty (2001) calls a major epistemic and cognitive shift with major implications for the role and function of a university.

The current role of the university is a complex one and it is still in a state of change and uncertainty. The social changes outlined by Delanty have led to the accepted suggestion that the ideas on which the universities were founded, the universality of knowledge, the quest for truth and the unity of culture coming together in the university, are now largely irrelevant. The post-modern idea that the university has lost its moral purpose and therefore it has come to its end has gained some credibility (Lyotard 1984; Crook Pakulski and Waters 1992).

Teacher education within the university has also been subject to fundamental change since the 1980s at a time when the university as an institution was changing and these changes are in part symptomatic of the challenge to the way universities are viewed. The governance of teacher education in particular has changed as described by Gideonse (1993). He puts forward three modes of governance which can be reflected on in the light of the growing state intervention in teacher education since the 1980s. The three modes are:

- The political mode where the state dominates decision making
- The institutional mode where the university in which the teacher education takes place is the most involved
- The professional mode where the teaching professionals are most influential in decision making

This is a useful model to set the following changes against.

From the time that teacher education moved from schools into the university, until the 1980s, governments had been content to allow the governance of teacher education programmes to lie with the universities in which the schools of education resided. However, the government-led move towards school improvement in the 1980s led to an inevitable scrutiny of teacher education. Over a period of time successive governments began to tighten control of teacher education through a series of interventions which have impacted on how teachers are perceived and how those in teacher education are held to account. They form the background of my concern.

In 1984 the Government of the time set up the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE). This body determined that lecturers in teacher education should have up-to-date school experience and it said how long students should spend in schools. These commonsense ideas were significant because as Gideonse (1993) suggests, for the first time this decision set up the idea that 'actions at the centre can somehow yield results at the periphery' (ibid, p.5). This was the beginning of the shift from university governance as described in Gideonse's model towards political governance and it began the processes which would lead to the current difficulties experienced by schools of education as they seek to comply with the university and the state's requirements. For the first time government set up their right to say what teacher education should look like. The setting up of CATE also introduced the input of bureaucrats and the idea that regulation could lead to improvement (ibid). Government set out the idea that bodies other than institutions and professionals had the knowledge and understanding of what constituted good practice. The right to self-determination within the field of teacher education was beginning to be eroded.

In 1989 Circular 24/89 'Initial teacher training: Approval of Courses', put out by the government's Department of Education and Science, extended the power of CATE through local committees on which representatives from higher education were to be kept in the minority. This was the next of a series of moves designed to minimise the influence of universities on teacher education. The number of days students were to spend in school whilst they were engaged with the programmes was stipulated and schools were to have a bigger say in the way courses in teacher education were set up, planned and assessed and how prospective students were selected. Of course not all of the changes could be considered to have a detrimental effect on teacher education. Some changes have had a positive impact on the quality of teacher education. One such example is the strong emphasis put on the quality of partnerships between schools and teacher education. However, the changes allowed for the possibility of external evaluation of what went on in teacher education and it contributed to the notion that the decisions that were being made within the university needed to be supplemented from elsewhere. This was the

beginning of a process that contributed to the perception that teachers needed to be given criteria and standards of judgement from outside the profession.

Furlong, Barton, Miles, Whiting and Whitty (2000) suggest that government had three policy objectives at this time.

1. A sufficient supply of well trained teachers going into the profession
2. A framework that would allow for schools of education to be accountable for the content and quality of what they did
3. The reform of teacher professionalism away from the idea of academic experts based in the university towards highly competent practitioners based in practice

Points 2 and 3 have significance for the concerns I am expressing in this chapter. Teacher educators and by default the universities in which they were based began to lose control over what was considered to be good practice and so an emphasis on externally determined standards of judgement evolved. Furlong et al (2000, p.25) say,

> 'they aimed to re-establish a national system of accountability in initial teacher education and progressively introduced a more practically focused professionalism by opening up training courses to the reality of the 'market' of schools.'

The idea that the knowledge of what constituted effective teacher education should lie with those who had been and were still engaged in the process, was changing to the idea that those in the know lie outside the processes in government. What is more, through the changes they were bringing about, improvements would follow. This could also be influenced by the needs of the marketplace and so this increased the number of stakeholders who could have a say in what went on in teacher education. The idea that teachers were implementers of the theory of others, so influential today, became more embedded at this time. To further emphasise this notion, the monopoly of teacher education was broken further as other routes into teaching were opened through routes like the Articled Teacher Scheme.

It is also at this time that there was an emphasis on 'training' rather than 'education' which is another important shift in how work in schools of education was and still is

perceived. The idea that students could be trained devalued the processes teacher educators were involved in and further consolidated the idea that theory and practice could be separated and that teachers should be responsible for the practice into which students could be initiated as if into a craft. Schools were invited to have more of a say in what went on in teacher training institutions which could seem as if this was restoring teacher voice. Schools however were experiencing considerable Government-led pressure with the drive to raise standards through more prescription so it was possible that they would want students to be able to fit into that model of practice. Further Circulars from Government in 1992 and 1993 required more school involvement in what was now understood to be teacher training and further competencies were set out which students had to demonstrate and be assessed against to become qualified. Furlong et al (2000, p.71) say of the 1993 Circular,

> 'The loss of autonomy for higher education was now publicly stated; according to Circular 14/93, courses had to be designed to serve 'the Government's policy objective for school (DfE, 1993a)'.

Perhaps the biggest government intervention with relevance for my concern happened in 1994 with the setting up of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) which was accountable to the Secretary of State for Education, a political appointee. This opened teacher education up to further public scrutiny (Levin 2001). In 1996 the then Secretary of State said about the TTA,

> 'We have set up the TTA to push forward our reforms and for the first time we have a body with responsibility across the full range of teacher training. Ofsted can report on the quality of courses and the TTA can close the bad ones….We need to move further and faster to ensure all new teachers are trained to use more effective techniques. For the first time we will define the essential content of training courses. This is just a start.' (Shephard 1996 cited Turner 1997, p.66)

This discourse, emanating from those who had established a need for regulation and who had assumed responsibility for putting it in place, firmly contributed to the normative assumptions that the governance of teacher education should lie within Gideonse's (1993) political mode. The idea that the teaching profession and the education faculties within the university could determine for themselves what needed to be done, was not good enough. As successive governments became more and more prescriptive about the

school curriculum this was mirrored in teacher education. The Teacher Training Agency (TTA) was the manifestation of a radical change about which Furlong et al (2000, p.149) says the following:

> 'In the case of just 15 years, the system had moved from one of diversity and autonomy to one of homogeneity and central control. What the government and particularly the TTA had wanted was a common system with common standards and procedures, no matter who was providing the training or where; this was how the TTA defined quality.'

Once the common standards and procedures had been identified they became a body of knowledge in a positivist way that could be passed on to students who could begin the process of accumulating the skills needed to become teachers. Using Freire's (1970) banking idea where knowledge is deposited into learners by those in the know it became understood that teaching was all about mastering a set of skills and that the responsibility for determining these lay outside the places teachers were educated. It became possible to measure the success of institutions in transferring this body of knowledge and thus, as in schools the inspection systems known as Ofsted became more and more significant as the mechanisms through which judgements could be made. As this happened the idea of teacher as professional was questioned and the status of teaching began to decline.

At the same time as setting up the TTA, the 1994 Education Act also gave over the handling of funding to the TTA. Funding was firmly linked to compliance which increased the influence that Government had over teacher education. At the same time as the TTA was being set up, the Government's inspection body Ofsted set out a framework for the inspection of teacher training providers which was revised in 1996 and 1998. The current frameworks had their inception at the 1994 Education Act. It was at this point that Ofsted was developed and the legal frameworks for its operation were put in place. Its raison d'etre was to drive up standards through the inspection of every school in England and it was thought that the element of competition that would be introduced as schools competed for pupils would lead to improvements in school performance (Learmouth 2000). Their brief was also to inspect recruitment of trainees, training and assessment and

outcomes. This increased the need for teacher educators to demonstrate compliance and government control tightened because funding became linked to success.

Systems of accountability were seen as ways of improving standards in schools (Muijis and Chapman 2009), and the predominant accountability framework in school and teacher education became and still is Ofsted. Many of the ideas underpinning the processes came from the United States models developed in the 1960s and 1970s. Those ideas were critiqued by Elliott (1976, p.49-71) who said that the problems were as follows:

- the teacher was only delivering a range of outcomes
- there was the assumption that what the teacher was delivering in the classroom could be measured by achievement scores
- that causal evaluations should lead to teacher blame and praise
- teachers had no part in self evaluation or moral agency in the classroom

The introduction of the inspection framework was immediately challenged from inside and outside the education system. Many questions were raised about the value of the framework and the authority on which inspectors based their judgements. As McLaughlin (2001) says,

> 'School inspection in England, as elsewhere, has long been the subject of sustained professional and public debate in which a wide range of matters of aim, value, conceptualisation and strategy have been the focus of controversy and disagreement.'

Despite this, the inspection regime in schools and teacher education remains the mechanism for holding teachers and teacher educators to account for what they are doing. It has undergone changes to its processes and framework and the avowed ethos has changed but what remains the same is the underlying ontology and epistemology. The latest inspection of the institution I work in currently took place in 2011. It came with six weeks formal warning and a lengthy description of what the School of Education had and was engaged in was completed by senior managers and some staff. This was designed to

enable the faculty to set out the good practice and positive aspects of the practices. Data were gathered about a whole range of student outcomes and much time was spent on this.

This data gathering is part of the self-surveillance that teachers are engaged in (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009) which Sachs (2008 cited Sugrue 2008, p.195) suggests 'is as much about being seen to perform, as actually engaging in the performance'. In Foucault's (1977) analysis of accountability and disciplinary power as described earlier in the chapter, surveillance is an aspect of disciplinary power that supports the attention to detail which can lead to a focus that may not contribute to the declared aims of the process.

This is something that I have experienced throughout my working life. For example, the surveillance is carried out through the gathering of data which is used to compile such things as the league tables which were introduced in 1992. Schools are compared with other schools, universities with other universities, through the data they submit to various bodies. The gathering and analysis of this data is time consuming and has spawned a bureaucracy, which is costly and expensive. Teachers and managers in schools and universities spend their time generating data, which is used to create a hierarchy, which is underpinned by a science that gives it believability and supposed rigour. Whilst they are doing this teachers are not necessarily focused on improving the teaching and learning that is going on in the classroom. Clifford (2001, p.48) says, 'Perpetual surveillance is at the heart of disciplinary power…Modern disciplinary society is a society of the gaze', and this does not necessarily lead to the declared reason for doing it, so it is potentially a waste of time.

What is obvious is that the power of inspectors is manifest through the impact their decisions could have on the future of the teacher education in the institution or the future of individual schools. The purpose of the Ofsted accountability frameworks is to make judgements about how effective schools and teacher education institutions are being against criteria set by those with the power to do so. Set against the backdrop of the Government's stated intention to review the role of teacher education within colleges and

universities it was clear before and during the 2011 inspection of the School of Education I work in that if we were not considered to be of the very best then our long-term future is insecure.

Throughout my time in teaching I have been accountable to different 'authorities' but the ultimate and most powerful is Ofsted which Fielding (2001) criticises. The Ofsted inspections I have undergone remain processes of being held to account in its most basic sense, embedded in a particular discourse of accountability. It is an accountability that is, '….socially and politically at home in predominately contractual arrangements that lay down clear requirements for the accomplishments of certain tasks and outcomes.' Fielding goes on to say this accountability is largely a negative instrument of social and political control which does not encourage any type of serious and moral engagement. The evidence on which decisions are made and the files and documents I have had to produce for inspection to enable those decisions are implying as Inglis (2000, p.417) suggests 'A right is satisfied when evidence is produced not so much that duty has been done, but that the documents on hand codifies its doing'. This is the same now as it was when I was in a teacher in school.

2.4 What concerns me about these contextual changes?

The outwardly observable processes of inspections which are how schools and teacher education institutions are held accountable, may have been reviewed, changed and presented with a friendlier face but the underlying power dynamics and modelling remains just as much an exercise in top down, positivist accountability as defined earlier in the chapter as ever. My knowledge and understanding has to be demonstrated practically in a one off observation and big decisions about quality have been made by inspectors based on the evidence gathered over five days or less. It has been a bureaucratic system within a legal framework and it is a very vertical process.

What concerns me is that the top-down accountability mechanisms are not supporting the learning of those involved in teaching and learning in all contexts. The accountability systems as epitomised by Ofsted are a manifestation of a power dynamic that has taken

upon itself the authority to determine the criteria and standards of judgement that will decide what is effective and what is not, what is worth having and what is not and what works and what does not, in classrooms at all levels. This has reduced the teacher to the role of the mediator of policies and practices and the number of policies that have come out from government over the last decade or more has been high. Ball (2003, p.3) gives an example.

> 'To give some sense of the sheer volume of education policy, the 'Monthly listing of official publications related to the Department for Education and Employment', as it was then called, for July 2000, contained 106 items, including 39 Statutory Instruments. For teachers and FE lecturers in particular, policy is currently experienced as a constant flood of new requirements, changes, exhortations, responsibilities and expectations. These sometimes bear down heavily'

This has the potential to keep teachers occupied implementing, mediating and engaged in high stakes testing (Skrla and Scheurich 2004).

Even more concerning than this is that teachers are not involving themselves in putting forward what they know in such a way as to challenge the normative discourses which are according to Foucault (1977) the result of disciplinary power. The power invested in such bodies as Ofsted is so well accepted that it has assumed a self-perpetuating aura about it and so teachers' voices become more marginalised. What I felt at the time of every inspection was that what I knew to be important about my job as the Special Educational Needs co-ordinator, or the literacy co-ordinator or indeed as the classteacher or lecturer, were not being considered. What McNamara (1991) calls vernacular pedagogy, such as my knowledge and the professional knowledge of colleagues about what is effective, were not being taken into account when judgements were made about what the inspectors saw. The framework for inspection was lacking in opportunity for meaningful dialogue and it did not explicate the underpinning philosophy of education on which it was built.

For example, the inspection I participated in 2011 was given a focus and the engagements with the inspectors consisted of them asking questions which were determined by what they saw or did not see in the pre-inspection paperwork. The answers to those questions

needed to show that we, as experienced practitioners, had understood and worked towards the implementation of the standards for Qualified Teacher Status and that we were doing it in a way that would be considered to be in line with the current thinking in given areas. When I attended the meeting to ‘discuss’ our support for students' understandings of how to manage behaviour in primary classrooms it was important for the success of the inspection that we were able to demonstrate that we understood that it should permeate every subject we taught and to this end we had spent time preparing tables to demonstrate this. What changed the dynamic of the meeting was the unspoken understanding that the judgements made about the responses to the inspectors' questions were very significant in terms of influencing the outcome of the inspection which needed to be excellent to secure our long term survival as a teacher training provider. This of course invested a lot of power in the inspector who mediated those responses and was responsible for cross checking them with students and the paperwork. Final decisions were just that, so we had to impress. Once this ethos is understood it means that we are playing up to the power dynamic because the consequences of not doing so are fundamental.

The reality of this discourse is one of power, inequality, weakness, position and the highly critiqued idea that the purpose of education can be determined by such things as market forces or government ideology. Governments often have the declared intention to mould education to be fit for purpose and they are supported in this by business and the workplace. This last position can place institutions at the whim of the market place and it becomes the role of the provider to give satisfaction on those terms. The concern about this is that the discourse of accountability drives the practices that those being held to account are engaged in. The curriculum becomes open to the input of those with a perceived stake in the outcomes and those who are part of the processes can begin to lose their voice and influence in what goes on. As Goodson (1997 cited Biddle, Good and Goodson 1997) suggests, in the world of teacher development teachers' voices are missing and this professional development is central to educational change (Hargreaves and Evans 1997). The Ofsted inspection regime, in schools and higher education, even in

its latest incarnation, is a good example of how this can happen and it emerges directly from the historical context I have described earlier in this chapter.

Foucault (1977, p.184) posits that what he calls 'normalisation', which he says is another aspect of disciplinary power, operates in the following five ways:

1. comparison where all things are put together
2. differentiation which leads to a development of the average for things to be compared with
3. hierarchisation where things are ordered and compared
4. homogenisation which comes with a normative standard and a pressure to conform
5. exclusion from the norm which is risked if the normative standards are not adhered to

He suggests that disciplinary power is based on normalisation and he calls it the penalty of the norm. Things are grouped, then normative criteria, established to categorise these groups, are used to define the differences of the individual. He says,

> ‘In a sense the power of normalisation imposes homogeneity but it individualises by making it possible to measure gaps, to determine levels, to fix specialities and to render the differences useful by filing them one to another. It is easy to understand how the power of the norm functions within a system of formal equality, since within a homogeneity that is the rule, the norm introduces as a useful imperative and as a result of measures all the shading of individual difference’ (Foucault 1977, p.184).

This model is very helpful when trying to understand the way that power underpins the accountability models used in education institutions and how this can lead to teacher compliance and a sort of learned helplessness (Peterson, Maier, Martin and Seligman 1995) in the path of authority. The way that the quality of teaching is evaluated in schools and universities is through comparison (1) and normative standards have been established (2). A hierarchy is established (3) with a best and worst, and the pressure to conform is accepted. Compliance with policy is required and if the normative standards are not met (4) and policies are not being followed then failure could be seen to be as a result of this.

Exclusion from the norm can come in the shape of special measures in schools or non-compliance in teacher education, both of which have serious financial and practical consequences for schools and universities.

The pressure exerted by points 4 and 5 are not to be underestimated. Another example is the way that the normative criteria for judging quality in research have become a part of the HE picture and this is linked to funding which is very important in times of stiff competition between institutions. As I write universities are spending a lot of money appointing professors and readers who can raise their publishing profile thus securing funding and other benefits. The need to comply and conform to the standards ensures that the research agenda of universities and schools of education is determined by what attracts funding. Certain types of research become placed higher up the hierarchy than others and in terms of education, that means that practitioner led research can be seen as less worthwhile which contributes to the quieting of the voice of teachers within the Academy. The discourses around teachers as researchers (Stenhouse 1975 1979 1981; Rudduck and Hopkins 1985; Elliott 1991 1993) remains unresolved and even in my own institution some colleagues fail to see the link between research and practice.

Foucault (1977) suggests that institutions are the sites of disciplinary practices, which can lead to passivity on the part of the actors. Those being held to account become what is expected of them and are forced to change their priorities according to what is deemed to be the latest priority. As teacher training institutions are inspected by Ofsted against foci determined by them, then they are forced to put effort and resources in to those areas even if they consider other priorities to be of significance. Students become what the universities want in order to get on to the courses. Teachers want to progress along a career path or have a voice in the institution so they adopt the necessary norms of behaviour. As Foucault (1977, p.164) says, ‘The chief function of disciplinary power is to train’. Indeed people become compliant as those in power define them. Clifford (2001, p.47) concurs and says, ‘Disciplinary practices are designed to produce a body that can function like a cog in a wheel of a vast machine.’ As we become resigned to the inevitability of inspection processes and jump through the hoops one more time, I would

suggest that we become accepting of this model and indeed begin to be part of the normalisation of the implication of the models designed to hold others to account in much the same way as we are held to account. This concerns me because we may become, out of necessity, more and more compliant.

Over the last twenty years in schools and higher education teacher education institutions there has been an increase in an outward model of accountability. The general public have been given the impression through prevailing discourses, that teachers can not be trusted to account for what they do and with the increased propensity towards industrial models of accountability in schools there has been an acceptance of and emphasis on technical models of accountability as being the best way of judging outcomes. As the children's attainment has fluctuated over the years the idea that if what quality in education looks like is left for teachers to determine then the resulting attainment will not be good enough. It has become one of the normative assumptions that underpin the rationale successive governments give to justify increased interventions and initiatives in teaching. Teachers either do not know how to raise attainment or they do know, but cannot do it. This has led to an acceptance by the public at large that the governments of the day need to decide what quality and good practice looks like. The role of the classroom practitioner in all of this is to pilot and implement the endless materials produced to drive up standards. This contributes to the normalisation of the idea that teachers are technicists rather than professionals.

I am a living contradiction (Whitehead 1989) as I rail against being held to account in a particular way and what I find so concerning is that I had internalised the discourses of this position to such an extent that until very recently, deep into my research, I was still asking the question how could I hold students to account against *my* values? The following piece of draft writing, done at the end of 2010, serves to illustrate this.

> '*My original claim is that I am developing an epistemology of accountability (Renowden, 2009). It is my belief that if I hold myself and others to account for what we are doing in a particular way, commensurate with my values I will contribute to improvements in what we do as we deepen our mutual understandings. Ontologically I see myself in relation to those I work alongside and it is these relationships that will be explored to explain why I understand this*

> *loving accountability to be of such importance. This research is of value because increasingly I am being held to account for what I am doing and it is part of my role to hold students to account for their practices in schools and the University College. My premise is that this increasingly managerial, technical type of accountability as represented by such things as the Qualified Teaching Standards (Teacher Development Agency, 2007) and the assignment criteria, does not support my learning or the learning of students, unless it is done in such a way as to support their education rather than their training.* (Renowden 2010, unpublished draft writing)

Right up until the above draft of this thesis I was making the assumption that it is my role to hold the students to account for what they do. Reading this work back made me realise that in fact I was using the discourse of one in power over the students and indulging in the same discourses that are prevalent in the inspection regimes. This view of accountability was coming from the same ontological and epistemological position as the models I was concerned about. The learnt behaviour that is the result of this externally imposed accountability model is so powerful and difficult to challenge that teachers and those involved in education may not even be aware, as indeed I was not, how deeply engrained the normative assumptions have become in their own understandings. Those caught up in it cease to influence how things are done. This realisation emphasised what concerned me. I had become such an unquestioning part of the normative discourses it had taken so much thinking, study and dialogue for me to realise this.

This chapter has set out what my concerns are and set them into some of the ever changing contexts of schools and teacher education. It has described the way teachers and students are held to account against externally determined standards of practice for what they are doing and I have said what concerns me about this. I have defined what I mean by educational accountability. It is this prevailing discourse that underpins all of my concerns because it permeates everything that teachers do from the curriculum, to engagement with the children and students, to interaction with parents or stakeholders. In the next chapter I describe some practices as they were at the start of this research to say why I am concerned about what concerns me. I conceptualise the values that have become a part of the transformed practices I describe in Chapter 5.

Chapter 3. Why am I concerned? The re-conceptualisation of my values

In this chapter I say why I am concerned about the situation I have described in Chapter 2. I give examples from my practice which illustrate a tension between what I was doing and what I thought I should be doing. I explain how this has helped me to understand the value I put on emancipatory, democratic forms of education and ways of knowing; learning through dialogue and critical reflection and relational ways of being in practice. I say how these values are embedded in my emerging understanding of what it means to hold myself to account in an educational way. The chapter will finish by saying why it matters if these values are negated in my practice because this explains why I am concerned.

This Chapter gives examples from my practice as it was in 2004 and 2005 when I began to realise the need to take responsibility for what I was doing and make changes to improve the situation. It uses those examples to form a context for the emergence and subsequent re-conceptualisation of the values that I use as the criteria and standards of judgement by which I hold myself to account for my actions (Whitehead and McNiff 2006). I now understand that it is the negation of these values that is problematic when I unquestioningly accept the discourses of power that underpin the accountability structures described in Chapter 2.

I am concerned because I had stopped using the values that are part of my understanding about what makes education of value, as criteria and standards of judgement to help me determine how to understand and improve what I do. I had become a compliant and non-engaged practitioner who considered herself to be effective because I was meeting the criteria and standards set by others regardless of whether they aligned with my values. I had become so comfortable in my school context, that my values remained unchallenged. Those values were so unquestioned that I did not think about them in any meaningful way from one year to the next until I changed the context in which I practised.

This change in context meant that I was forced to examine what it meant to be effective as a teacher because of my encounter with different challenges that made me unhappy with what I was doing. The values that had been unexplored for so long came sharply into focus as I struggled to re-connect with my actions and the reasoning behind them. I realised that the only way to understand what I was doing as a teacher educator and why, was to begin to take responsibility for what I was doing in a way that would enable me to make the changes necessary to improve the situation. What constituted good practice in this new teacher-education context seemed much less clear so I needed to begin to set those standards myself grounded in what I believed in, my values.

This chapter acknowledges the following, as expressed by Whitehead (1989) who said he experienced a concern when some of his educational values were denied in his practice. It is the tension between what I consider to be the effect of the prevailing discourses about accountability in education on teachers as described in Chapter 2, and the values that underpin my educational practices that are described and explained in this chapter, that has led me to my research focus.

I am concerned about the impact and influence the current accountability discourses are having for two reasons. First I suggest that these discourses are leading to normative assumptions that are not supporting my learning or the learning of the students I work alongside. As a primary teacher I was not learning how to challenge and understand what I was doing, thereby opening up the possibility of doing things differently and better. I was accepting of the idea that it was up to others to say what made my teaching effective. The power invested in those who held me to account was so strong that I had developed a sort of learned helplessness in the face of it and I had become a passive spectator of the situation. This in turn meant that those I worked alongside in the teacher-learner relationship had less meaningful opportunities to learn because my practice was not as effective as it could have been because I was compromising what I understood to be effective. I internalised the normative understanding that I could and should look to others for affirmation that I was doing a 'good' job.

Second I am concerned now because I was *not* concerned then. Until my move into higher education I did not engage with any of the wider issues in education. I was completely focused on the practical processes of teaching and did not question in any meaningful way what was underpinning the changes described in Chapter 2. I was doing all the right things like improving my teaching skills by doing courses and workshops. I was a lifelong learner, or so I was told, and this was the extent of my learning. I did not for one minute question my own learning. I learnt how to improve as a teacher of physical education and the new ICT, and that contributed to the perception of me as a successful teacher. I acquired certificates and skills with one eye on being better in the classroom and the other on my career. I am concerned, because I did not see or choose to see anything else and I did not take any responsibility for what I knew.

On a more personal level, I am also concerned because through engagement in my own professional development, I have come to realise that I am perpetuating a system that has the potential to suppress teacher understanding and voice through focusing on the externally determined discourses of practice and not the internally driven discourses of those who are engaged in values driven educational practice. This realisation has come as I have struggled to adapt from being a teacher in a primary setting to becoming a teacher-educator in a higher education institution and as I have begun to hold myself to account for my actions in a different way. My narrative is of a teacher in a primary classroom setting, who was accepting of the standards set by others to judge the effectiveness of what I did, and who became a teacher educator within the Academy who has the confidence and felt need to set my own validated standards of effective practice. It is this narrative that has caused me to want to enquire into what I do so as to transform it. This transition has led me to question all that I do professionally in a way that I have never done before and it has led to me needing to account for what I do so as to exercise responsibility for the influence that my teaching has on students' learning. As I have gone through a period of professional and personal transition I have increasingly felt the need to understand, explain and indeed account for what I am doing in order to come to understand my practice and be able to influence the current situation for the better. This is

a very personal journey, uniquely mine, and it is set against the backdrop of changes in schools and higher education.

The normative assumptions discussed in Chapter 2 are linked to the perceived purpose of education and the university, and the impact this has on teaching practice and policies. As the way new teachers are educated within the university has changed and is still changing, guided by a particular view of knowledge, education and the role of teacher-education within the university, it is more and more important that students, my colleagues and I are able to develop our own understandings of the values embedded in our practices so that we can understand and explain what we do with a sense of ownership and voice. This will act as an antidote to the increasingly managerial, bureaucratic models of accountability that are leading students to see knowledge as comprising discreet entities to be handed over by tutors. It will also make it possible for students to question their role in the educative process and be aware of how they can unwittingly become part of an education system that has the power to be a repressive and subjugating experience.

I am concerned because embedded in my practice are certain values which are part of the practices of education and teaching that I am engaged in. I do not consider that these values are being fully lived out as I am subjected to and implement the standards-driven models of accountability in my practice. The negation of these values lies in several different areas which come together to form the foundations of my practice:

- my ontological understandings
- my epistemological understandings
- how I understand education and learning
- my role in those processes

This Chapter will focus on these so as to say why I am concerned and why I am driven to research my practice in order to understand it. Throughout the Chapter I will provide evidence of the situation as it was from 1990 until 2006. The examples taken, from when I was in a primary phase setting, are through the lens of hindsight and in the light of this

research. The more recent examples taken from just after my move into teacher-education from school, show that I was finding it difficult to adjust to different ways of teaching. At that time everything felt different and I did not have a clear understanding of the foundations or values on which I needed to build my new practices.

3.1 How do I understand values?

The idea that teaching is value-laden is at the heart of this Chapter. I consider values to be embedded in my teaching and my practice. It is the negation of these values in my practices that gives me reason for concern. I am supported in my understanding of this by Whitehead's (1989, p.41-52) idea of being a 'living contradiction'. Whitehead suggests that, 'we cannot distinguish a process as educational without making a value judgement' and he goes on to say, 'I experience problems when my educational values are negated in my practice'. It is this understanding that informs this chapter and as I describe and explain how my educational values are negated in my practices I say why I am concerned about the issues in Chapter 2.

It is through the experience of realising that certain values were being denied in my practice that I have come to understand more clearly what they are and their significance, and I have begun to re-conceptualise them. This is very much part of the 'then' of my practice and each of the examples from my practice demonstrates the impact that the technical rational accountability mechanisms have had on what I have done, directly or indirectly.

As I progress through this chapter, the values that are part of my practice will be explained by referring to parts of my narrative because they cannot be separated from either my context or my history. It is through dialogue with my past and critical reflection on my actions and assumptions that I have come to my current re-conceptualisations of the values I hold today. In some cases, for example dialogue, they have not changed over time. My understanding of the value of dialogical practices has been deepened as the research has progressed. In the case of others, such as reflection, they have been re-conceptualised by looking at what I did with a changed disposition.

I have chosen to give examples from my practice to contextualise my values because I agree with Whitehead (1989, p.45), when he says,

> 'I do not believe that values are the type of qualities whose meanings can be communicated solely through a propositional form. I think values are embodied in our practice and their meaning can be communicated in the course of their emergence in practice'.

My values are communicated through my practice and then I communicate them through the propositional form. As I ask how my values have been negated in my practice I understand that I am being inclusive by embracing the possibility of differing ways of viewing reality. I am beginning with my practice.

3.2 How has the value of emancipatory, democratic education been negated in my practice?

When I started as a new lecturer in higher education in 2004 I was given the Year 1 sessions to teach. This consisted of two identical sessions a week, with ninety students in each. The first priority of the course was to introduce students to what they needed to know and what was expected of them on their first school experience. I deliberately use this propositional form of words because it is exactly what was expected of me. I was told that schools would expect the students to have been introduced to some of the basic generic skills they would need during their first weeks in the classroom such as planning, classroom management and assessment. That was exactly what I had been doing in my role as a primary classteacher so I felt confident that I knew what the content of the sessions needed to look like. What is more I went into the sessions thinking I could liven them up with examples from my practice which would help them to know what to do on their first school experience.

My first sessions with these students were an introductory session and a session on planning (Appendix A and B). Both of these sessions were in the first two weeks of the students being in college. They had all been in schools for at least two weeks before coming into college so they had a little experience of teaching and learning. Some of them were more mature students who had been teaching assistants. I present the

appendices as power-point slides; however at the time of delivery they were presented to the students as overhead acetates. I changed all my overheads into slides and the appendices are an exact copy of what were on the original acetates in 2005. Appendix A, the introductory session, is interesting for a number of reasons relevant to the idea that I was not living my values in my practice. What strikes me is that the first contact I have with these students has been used to talk about how they will be held to account for what they are doing over the year. I have introduced them to the School of Education website and then I have gone into the criteria for the assignment, which incidentally would not be completed until nine months later. The rest of the session has been spent looking at the wider accountability expectations, the Qualified Teacher Status Standards. This session, which was delivered in September 2005, illustrates clearly why I was experiencing such difficulty with the teaching of the large groups, which I reflected on in my MA dissertation (Renowden 2006 unpublished MA dissertation).

On looking back at these slides I realise that I was coming from a position of power and on reflection this was partly because I was so insecure about my place within the Academy. I was hiding behind the only things I felt secure about at the time, which was my subject knowledge. What I was doing is letting the students know that I will be determining how successful they have been in assimilating our sessions and to be considered successful they need to meet the pre-determined standards set by me and the TDA. I was coming from a position of the knower. The students were happy with the session because they were able to go away from it knowing what was expected of them, which in the short term is a comfortable place to be.

Appendix B, the planning session, was delivered in the same way. I made the assumption that the students knew very little about how to plan a lesson and so I needed to pass that knowledge over to them. Again this was coming from a certain position of power. At no time in this session were the students offered opportunities to discuss their ideas or understandings. These slides are obvious examples of poor teaching but they were fulfilling the expectations others had for my sessions. I was aware that my time with the students was to be judged by how well they would be able to plan and engage with

planning in school and by how well they would be able to write about the role of the teacher. By helping the students to tick their first boxes, I was ticking mine. The message being given was that first and foremost they would be held to account for what they were doing and for what they had learnt and this was so important that it was the first thing they needed to understand. Then I was saying that I know all about how to plan lessons and am here to tell you. All you need to do is listen and all will be well.

Despite the fact that I felt I had achieved something through the session in terms of the way that I viewed the judgement of success at the time (that is the technical rational measures discussed in Chapter 2) I did not experience any feeling of joy or satisfaction from what I was doing. In terms of living out my beliefs about education, I quickly realised I was not doing so by conducting the sessions in this way. The research I did for my MA dissertation from 2004 until 2006 asked the question 'How do I improve what I do?' engaging with the idea of education or training. I was beginning to see myself as a 'living contradiction' because I was not contributing to the students' learning as I wanted to. I wrote,

> '*Throughout my teaching career I have considered myself to be an educator rather than a trainer. As an educator it has been important to me that I develop and encourage learners who see the process as active rather than passive. I hold the view that my own values influence the way I teach and interact with the learners in my classes.*
> *This being the case, I have developed an interest in my own practice in the higher education context in which I work. I have identified a 'nexus of issues' (Andrews,2003:15) which have led me to the research question. I have been concerned that I am training the students rather than educating them and that I am not facilitating the kind of learning I value'* (Renowden 2006, p.5, unpublished MA dissertation).

When I wrote this in 2006 I was beginning to enter the transitional phase discussed in detail in Chapter 4. I was experiencing myself as a 'living contradiction' because I believed one thing and I was doing another. I was beginning to understand that education was important and through further study understand that that form of education is one underpinned by emancipatory, democratic discourses.

3.2.1 I value education that is emancipatory and democratic

One view of education is that inherent in it is the freedom of the individual to choose what the focus of their education should be, and that this is not directed by external driving forces. Education should be emancipatory as it gives a sense of empowerment to the individual and the kind of knowledge that achieves this should be available to all, not just the able or culturally fortunate (Pring 2004). Russell (1956) considers education to be the formation, by means of instruction, of certain habits of thought. He says that the role of education is to give form to one's intrinsic nature and that it needs to provide a rich context for the development of the learner. The end result of education should not be pre-determined. He goes on to suggest that education is to prepare students to make 'a reasonable judgement on controversial questions in regard to which they are likely to have to act' (ibid, p.131).

This is not always how education is perceived today as the current policies and practices considered in Chapter 2 demonstrate. Universities are compelled by funding mechanisms to provide more and more vocational courses which can have measured outcomes against targets for student employment. Some non-vocational courses and subjects have been cut because of the drop in student numbers and because it is becoming more and more part of government discourse that university education should fit students for the world of work. This focus on the end product, on skills for an identified work place, has the potential to erode the idea that education can be an intrinsically valuable thing in itself.

There has been a drift towards seeing education as a system rather than a practice (Carr 2005), which needs to be organised, managed and controlled. State intervention in schooling is well documented and the growth of ‘education’ for the workplace, underpinned by the dominant discourse of logical positivism, is evident in schools. Increasingly the current Government (Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition) are turning to business models and collaborative projects to improve what is perceived to be failing teachers.

This type of intervention has become more intense as the economy has gone into crisis. Apple (2000, p.114) highlights this.

> ‘..educators have witnessed a massive attempt, one that has been more than a little successful, at exporting the crisis in the economy and in authority relations from the practices and policies of dominant groups onto the schools.’

As less and less money is available from domestic budgets and central funding such as grants for the study of material 'for its own sake', as evidenced by the way some University courses are becoming unviable because of a lack of perceived employability, vocational degrees are growing in Universities and employers want graduates who can have the skills that fit them for work.

This idea that it is the responsibility of higher education institutions to prepare students for the work place is enhanced by the collation of statistics such as the number of students who are able to get employment on leaving an institution. Carr suggests that possibly education is becoming an ‘instrumental activity directed towards the achievement of externally imposed outcomes and goals’ (2005, p.45). As universities are held to account for the way they prepare students for the workplace it becomes a luxury to include courses that do not seem to do this.

As I work on this thesis (2012) Britain is going through a recession and jobless figures are rising. It becomes more probable, as domestic budgets are squeezed, that prospective students will want higher education courses to lead to employment. I interview prospective students for the postgraduate certificate in education and undergraduate teaching courses and when they are asked why they have chosen to apply to the institution most say that it has a good record for student employability. As employability becomes an established measure of success for teacher education then this raises the voice of the employers, which in the case of teachers is the Government of the day.

An example of this is the emphasis put on the Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) Survey which asks those in their first year of teaching how well prepared they feel to teach in certain key areas which are determined by the Government. If they do not feel prepared

then there are funding issues for the institution they were educated in as their student allocation figure will drop. In response the institution considers it necessary to spend more teaching time on these foci at the possible expense of foci that are less obviously attached to practice such as the philosophy of education. This is a model that removes the need for students to feel responsible for engaging with key areas (at the moment phonics and behaviour management). The student may not have attended the taught sessions on those topics yet if they indicate a lack of preparedness for teaching then it is considered to be the institution that needs to account for the situation.

It is against this background that the aims and purposes of education are being discussed and how I conceptualise education is an important part of this research. If it is to be considered to be emancipatory, that is lead to the freedom of the participant then it is impossible to ignore the lack of freedom that comes with not being able to engage with society in ways that are recognised as being worthwhile. This is a view of education that underpins my understanding of what is educational. It is my claim through doing this research that I have learnt to engage in a form of education that is emancipatory. That is it frees learners from forces that limit their options (Inglis 1997) and enables them take informed action. Mezirow (1991, p.11) says that the learning that emerges from emancipatory education is a feature of adult learning as adulthood is the time when people can become aware of perpetuating their own histories and this is an idea that underpins this thesis.

My freedom is enhanced when I am able to access the normative discourses that are part of the society in which I live and work. I think that my practice is emancipatory and educational when it acknowledges the freedom that comes when education is both the means and end in itself: the freedom of choice; the development of thinking and questioning skills; the possibility of challenge. I would also consider it to be emancipatory when it contributes to the learner's ability to access the world of work and to contribute to society in a way that they think is meaningful and fulfilling.

As I work towards an epistemology of accountability (Renowden 2009) that is educational, this is very important because preparing students for the world of work in the form of teaching is an important part of what I do. I am educating students in a way that will enable them to get a job. Part of my role is what Peters (1966) would call training, which he suggests is competence in a skill or in something focused. If I was not 'training' students in how to create a person specification for their first job or showing them how to safely restrain a violent child I would not be giving them the right preparation for school which would curtail their freedom. Many argue that education must be worthwhile and of value but that if we define it just in this way then this is to narrow it and that narrowing precludes the asking of fundamental questions about one of the key purposes of education which is to prepare those involved in it for living.

Education is the vehicle through which my values are carried. It is in my involvement in educational interactions that my values are lived out. I value education as a democratic process. Apple and Beane (1999, p.7) suggest certain things that a democratic education would include:

- An open flow of ideas so all are fully informed
- Faith in the individual and collective capacity of people to create possibilities for resolving problems
- The use of critical reflection and analysis to evaluate ideas, problems and policies
- Concern for the welfare of others and the common good
- Concern for the dignity and rights of individuals and minorities
- Understanding of democracy, not so much as an ideal but as an idealised set of values we must live by and use as a guide
- Organisation of social institutions to provide and extend the democratic way of life.

This list could be embedded in the way I conceptualise and practice educational accountability and some of these things are missing from the technical rational forms of accountability I have experienced.

3.3 How has the value of relational practice been negated in my practice?

My ontological understandings have changed since I moved in to teacher education. Reflecting on my time as a primary teacher has enabled me to see that I positioned myself as separate from those I worked alongside. I felt a sense of power over the children I worked with, which was exemplified by the way that I viewed my role as a teacher. A dislocation from the deeper understandings of what teaching should be about meant that I became more and more caught up in processes and structures. As a Year 6 teacher, for example, I became part of the drive for higher standards and taught to the tests, narrowing the curriculum accordingly. I realise now that I began to adopt and internalise the idea that how well the children did in the Statutory Assessment Tests (SATs) could be a measure of how effective my teaching was. This separated me from the form of relational teaching that was important to me.

I saw myself as the deliverer of a curriculum which I implicitly understood to be a body of knowledge to be handed over to the children as neat parcels to be digested. Indeed the National Curriculum facilitated this perspective as in the early days it came as discreet subject folders to be delivered by me to the children. Even now the teaching curriculum in school and in teacher education is still perceived to be a package to be broken up and presented. This top-down model prevails despite some attempts to formulate the curriculum based on the priorities determined by those in the classroom. Schools such as Summerhill, the school set up by A.S. Neill in 1924, are seen to be radical and somewhat different and although the National Curriculum is not compulsory, certainly in state schools it has become prevalent. Many of the initiatives from central government are also presented as prescriptive packages and the Literacy and Numeracy hours were good examples of this.

In my classroom I became the deliverer of this curriculum to the children. I now realise that this created an 'I-It' relationship (Buber 1958). Through reflection on my practice at the time, it was not always in terms of relationships but in terms of how well I matched the accountability models used to consider effectiveness and quality in the classroom. What had become of some importance to me was the external manifestation of my

actions. I was increasingly driven by external measures of competency and I was beginning to accept the changes despite reservations. The following extract from my diary at the time gives a good example of how I was beginning to feel the tension between what was expected of me and what contributed to judgements made about my effectiveness, and what I wanted to do. At the time of this reflection I was teaching Years 1 and 2 vertically grouped classes and the SATs were formal and time consuming. There was an expectation of me from the parents and senior staff that I would prepare the Year 2 children for their tests whilst allowing the Year 1 children to follow their curriculum. At the time there were no additional adults to support my class.

> '*Just as I suspected it has become increasingly difficult to prepare the Year 2 children for the rather formal way the SATs are delivered and allow the Year 1 children the time to play and follow the type of activities they should be following. Because the Year 2 children need to have an exam type setting I need to give the Year 1 children something quiet and focused to do for longer than I think is appropriate. I need to see if I can get some adult support in to work with the Year 1s outside if possible. I feel they ar*e *being penalised because they happen to be in this mixed class. I am also unconvinced that this is the best thing for the Year 2 children as they are still too young to be 'tested' in this way. It seems to be a lot of disturbance for small rewards. What is more, I have not had time to talk to the children individually for far too long '* (Renowden 1996, unpublished journal).

I see now that my role had become in part one of compromise and compliance nevertheless all the ontological values I held at the time *were* part of what I was doing. I cared very much about the safety, well being and self-esteem of the children. I wanted to do my job with integrity and honesty. I valued relationships and dialogue. However, despite this I did not use those values as the measures of my success. I did not consider myself to be effective in a way that was grounded in an ontological position that saw myself in relationship with the children and colleagues I worked with. I saw myself as effective by the positivist measures of success embedded in the accountability models described in Chapter 2. This is why I am concerned. Through the lens of compliance I saw what I was doing as being about outcomes rather than processes and the values that were embedded in my practice were not being used in any significant way as measures of success.

The value of relational practice came sharply into focus for me when I began teaching in higher education in 2004. The groups I taught were up to 90 students at a time in a large lecture hall. The struggle I had to understand this model and to make sense of my role was the focus of my MA which I completed in 2006 and in which I asked the question 'How do I improve what I am doing?' (Whitehead 1989) The ability to develop relational practice became difficult because I could not engage with individual students or form relationships through doing a simple thing like knowing them all by name and so I realised how important it was to me and what a fundamental part of my values around teaching and learning it is. I was beginning to realise that what mattered to me about teaching was the connectedness that came with relationships. When I thought about what was missing, I realised I needed to be engaged, to be listened to and to have eye contact and the connection with the learners that came with feedback. I felt a real sense of loss in the lecture halls and therefore began to consider what was missing: relational teaching.

My reflection on myself has been an essential part of my coming to understand myself in this problematic situation, in relation to others. My ontological understandings have emerged as I have come to understand my own sense of identity and how this impacts on how I see myself in relation to others. Buch (1999, p.52) says,

> 'as lives unfold new situations and contexts are interpreted, understood and subjectively incorporated as experiences. Eventually the production and transformation of identity can be seen as a result of this lived process.'

I needed to understand what I should do to improve what was going on in my life in a new situation and context as a higher education teacher in the Academy. Using Bourdieu's ideas (1990), I now see that I had gone from being a secure and confident participant in the habitus of primary teaching to being unsure of myself and insecure about what I was doing, stripped of any kind of capital in the habitus that is teacher education. Wenger (1998, p.149) says that identity is 'a nexus of multi membership' and 'we define who we are by the ways we experience ourselves through participation as well as by the way we and others reify ourselves.' As Wenger says, it is possible to be kept at the margins of the communities that make up our practice and Trowler and Knight (2000) suggest that in the academic world there can be different communities that academics are

involved with on different levels. In my own context these can be, for example, the teaching community, the wider college community and the research community. At the time of my transition into teacher education, I felt myself to be on the edge of these communities as Wenger (ibid) says is possible. I did not feel part of any community and so I began to question my self. Taylor (1989, p.35) says 'One is a self only among other selves' which was the case for me. I did not feel part of a community in the classroom and so my sense of identity as a teacher became less clear.

My value of relational teaching that embodies the values of love and care is negated by the way that I am expected to hold myself and students to account. This is a core value embedded in what I do and as I have deepened my understanding about what it means for the actions I take, it has brought into sharp focus those actions and the ontological perspective from which they come. The following example from my practice will illustrate why the current accountability expectations have the potential to lead to actions that negate the value I put on relational practice.

The role that I am engaged in requires me to hold students to account for their practices in school and college. I deliberately use this form of words because it describes what I am expected to do. As a link tutor and a moderator I visit student teachers in schools, watch them teach and make judgements about this. The criteria I use to hold the students to account for what they do are pre-determined, in some cases by others, and in other cases, by myself and colleagues (assignments). Students accept these criteria, as they are presented to them with authority by those they perceive to be 'experts' and as those who know how to teach. I will explore this later on in this chapter when I set out my epistemological understanding but ontologically this perspective contributes to an 'othering' of me. My relationship with the student is immediately grounded in a hierarchical power model and everything about the way the teacher education structures of accountability are set up contributes to this ontological positioning. Colleagues and I determine the assignment criteria and the Teacher Development Agency (TDA) determine the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status (2007 2012) which we mediate. Students see us as the key to meeting these and it is often a positioning accepted by us.

When students fail to meet the criteria, it is my role to support them in understanding why they have failed and to help them to pass and succeed. The following example from my practice will serve to illustrate how a particular bureaucratic exercise in accountability, known as work load planning (WLP) is structured in such a way as to impact negatively on the relationships I value, thereby devaluing them. Simply put, the WLP system in some higher education institutions, including my own, allocates certain hours for certain tasks. The moderation of a student's failed school experience is allowed two hours. I have done this on many occasions and it is a very difficult experience for all involved, particularly the student and the class teacher. Failing a school experience can have wide ranging consequences for students. They may not graduate with their peers and they have to pay a considerable amount of money to re-sit, both of which make it a stressful experience.

In practice this means that when necessary I ignore the two hour work load planning allocation and organise my time so that I have as much as is necessary to support the school, students and others through the process in a way that I want to be life affirming and a contribution to their future success. These are actions that I will later describe as educational. More will be said of this in Chapter 6 when I describe and explain what I have learnt and how I have learnt to hold myself accountable for relational practice but for now the mismatch between my ontological values of loving and caring relationships and the ontological position of the current accountability mechanisms, as exemplified by the moderation of failed school experiences, says why I am concerned.

These are examples of the practical consequences. There are of course emotional implications as students endure a very public failure. They have been held accountable for what they are doing in the classroom against the pre-determined standards for their practice and failed. Subsequent remedial work with them focuses on the boxes that were not ticked first time round. As a moderator of this experience it is my role to make sure the right decisions have been made so of course the school and the class teacher in particular feel scrutinised. Have they done what is required of them as mentors and could they have done more to support the student? They therefore often feel some level of

responsibility and thereby are holding themselves to account for what they have done. They can also feel they need to be accountable to me and in this situation, teachers often feel compelled to explain all the measures they have taken to help the failed student. This places me in a position of authority to accept that accounting and make a judgement about it.

On the moderation visit the paperwork must be completed, a lesson watched and feedback given to the student, and conversations need to be held with a range of people in the school. In all of these interactions I consider that there is a need to be in relation to these people. I believe, because I value relational practice, that it is not appropriate to exercise the power that the position of moderator brings with it. The development of trust and the deconstruction of the embedded power relations takes some time and I consider it to be of fundamental importance to who I am, the essence of my practice. Later on I will revisit this example to offer up evidence of the learning embedded in educational accountability but for now it will stand as an example of the expectations others have around what I should be doing. This moderation visit often takes more than the two hours allowed for this process by the WLP formula.

I consider this work-load planning format, which is grounded in the need for me to account to those in ‘authority’ for my time, to be an example of a system that makes it more likely that the relationships built up in the moderation process are more ‘I-it’ than ‘I-you’ (Buber 1958). The development of any relationship, including professional ones, takes time and even when the processes necessitate those relationships to be transitory and short lived as in a one-off moderation visit, the gravity of the context, a failed school experience, demands that the ontological values underpinning the engagement are clearly perceived by all involved. The need for this to be done within an arbitrary time frame, determined by those 'in power', lacks acknowledgement of this and is underpinned by a different ontological perspective which others the students, and favours quantity over quality. How many moderations can be fitted into a work load rather than how much time is needed to build relationships which are supportive and effective for all parties?

3.3.1 I value a relational practice - my ontological understandings

Bullough and Pinnegar (2004, p.319) say, 'The consideration of ontology, of ones being in and toward the world, should be a central feature of any discussion of the value of self-study research'. This explanation of my ontological position is an essential part of this thesis as it grounds my epistemological understandings from which my transformed understandings emerge and it says how these understandings contribute to what I understand by accountability that is educational. My ontological values will transform into my epistemological values which in turn contribute to how I perceive education and an educational practice and so to how I understand educational accountability.

Ontology is about how the person sees themselves in relation with others and it is not about what things have in common. For example, buses of different types all have some things in common. They are conveyors of people. They all have more than the usual 5 or 6 passengers. They do not however have a relationship with each other. My ontological position is how I see myself in relation to the world around me and to those in it and I try not to position myself as being aside from or separate to others. My actions should therefore be directed towards removing that separation in my mind and in practice. Buber (1958) explores man's (sic) relationship with the world around him. His idea of I-You involves a sense of being part of a whole. The "I" is not experienced or sensed as singular or separate; it is the "I" of being. He argued that society was increasingly becoming one of I-it relationships where people could become distanced from each other, the world around them and from God. This is still a common theme in modern society and in education in particular where there seems to be a de-personalisation through policy. Admittedly we hear talk of giving a voice to parents, children and teachers but this is often false generosity given by those who hold the power (Freire 1970). I understand I need to feel myself to be situated in mutual relationship with the students I work with as we work together to understand what we are doing and to learn together. Having experienced what it felt like when that was not happening I realise that the need to be in relation to the students I teach is a core ontological value that I hold.

Here I wish to draw on my emerging understandings of Ubuntu which is an African way of seeing a person (Tutu 1999 cited Battle 2009). This can be defined in the following way. 'Ubuntu is the interdependence of persons for the exercise, development, and fulfilment of their potential to be both individuals and community' (ibid, p.3). The community within which I work consists of colleagues, students and teachers. I have come to recognise our interdependence as I develop my ontological and epistemological understandings. It is through others and alongside others that I think I will be able to reach my potential, that is be able to accomplish what I am capable of. I think it is also my role to be part of a community that supports others to reach their potential and within the concept of Ubuntu lies my understanding that a practice or action becomes educational when it offers opportunities for the individual to develop as part of a community. It is from these experiences that I have come to recognise my own ontological understandings and come to see my practice as a teacher to be firmly grounded in relationships and their quality.

The values that I consider to be an integral part of relational practice, and that are an important part of my ontological understanding, are caring and love. I acknowledge love as a value which is embedded in relationships. Those relationships can be very different and it is the differences that determine the quality of the love. The deeper the love the more intensely the emotions are felt. Tillich (1954) says that love is about a reuniting and the nature of life becomes manifest in love. The power of love lies in its overcoming of separation. Love, he says, pre-supposes this separation of a loving subject and a loved object. I understand this in the light of my experience. Whilst feeling love as an emotion there is a sense of wanting to be one with the object of the love, physically and emotionally. Separation from the object of the love can be painful and literature is full of accounts of this pain. 'Life is being in actuality and love is the moving power of life' (Tillich 1954, p.25).

I understand love to be embedded in the teaching relationships I want to develop. I think that the way to see some of what and who I am and what I value is through my life as I live it. I live my life in relation to all that is around me. My actions and words say something about me and how I am in the world, and love is a core value in both. Using

Tillich's idea of reuniting in love in the context of my practice, I feel it is about bridging the gap between myself and the students, myself and colleagues and indeed myself and my values. In a loving relationship one respects and preserves the individual by respecting, listening to and engaging with what they say. It is about acknowledging the other as a person and behaving towards them justly. As Tillich says (ibid, p.84-85), 'listening love is the first step to justice in person to person encounters' and 'in order to know what is just in a person-to-person encounter, love listens'. That justice manifests itself as listening, forgiving and giving.

In my practice, love can be seen through the relationships from which it emerges. For my practices to be considered loving they should be relational, caring and just, values which manifest themselves as certain actions. Lindholm (2000 cited Buley-Meissner, McCaslin, Thompson and Bachrach Tan 2000, p.57) states that love ‘compels us as teachers to care deeply about the well being of our students’. The reality of love as caring can be seen in so many of the human interactions in which we engage. As such, love as it manifests itself in professional relationships needs to be part of how I judge what I am doing. In her novel 'On Beauty', Smith (2005, p.302) says ‘Time is how we spend our love’. This for me describes one of the ways that love as caring can be seen in my practice and my life.

In the example I will give of the tension between the role of moderator of failed school experiences and the workload planning accountability mechanisms, the essence of the contradictions in my practice can be seen. It is not often possible to give the necessary time that fostering caring, loving relationships need when students are struggling in school if the clock is running. It takes time to care for the well-being of those I am in relation with, whether that is planning, preparation for teaching or face-to-face meetings. If I am to be seen to be living out my expressed ontological value of loving, caring relationships in my practice a manifestation of that value could be how much time I am giving to enable those relationships to be fit for purpose. I acknowledge that not all relationships can be or should be the same but they all need to be supportive of everybody, within the given context. If I do that, it is my contention I am beginning to live out these values.

In conclusion, my transforming understanding of my ontological position is that it is in loving, caring relation to those around me. How I am has become of more significance to me than what I do although I can see the relationship between the two. I no longer focus exclusively on the end product or a measurable result, but I am trying to focus more on the process, which is as valuable and worthwhile as the product. I consider myself to be part of a community of enquiry (Wenger 1998) that consists of colleagues and students and that we are working together to develop our understanding of the practice of teaching, learning and education through a caring, loving relationship. It is 'being' in the world rather than 'having' (Tillich 1954) and as such I see the need to deconstruct and remove whenever possible the power relations that can be embedded in a more positivist ontology which is so prevalent in education policies and practices as epitomised by the accountability structures I have described in Chapter 2.

3.4 How has the value of emancipatory and democratic ways of knowing been negated in my practice?

As I have developed my ontological understandings and come to understand the values that are part of that ontology, I have transformed my epistemological understanding. The transition from school into the Academy has also made me aware of my epistemological understandings, which I had not engaged with at all whilst in school. The changes in my professional life, which I refer to throughout this thesis, have meant that I have connected with my own sense of myself as a teacher and a learner in a way that I have never experienced before as an adult. As I struggled to re-define my teaching role in higher education (Renowden 2006), I developed a sense of myself as a learner who was trying to transform what had become problematic. I became aware of what it meant to start afresh from a position of insecurity and this meant that I felt a heightened understanding of what it meant to be a learner because I lacked knowledge and understanding. For so long I had considered myself to be a teacher, with a firm hold on the knowledge implicit in that role. This is the attitude that I took into teacher education with me.

A good example of this is one of the link tutor visits that I made to a Year 3 student very soon after joining the School of Education. The role of the link tutor is described earlier in the chapter. The student was in a class that had a wide range of abilities and which the classteacher himself described as challenging. The student was conscientious and had already had two successful practices. She had been observed by the classteacher who felt she had made a very good start. According to his comments to me she was acting on his advice and beginning to bring her own ideas to the practice. This is in line with the expectations for students at this stage in their course, just a few weeks from meeting all of the QTS Standards. Year 3 students are a few weeks away from having their first job and their first class so they have learnt a lot from their experiences. However, I was very aware as I went into that meeting that I was the 'expert' and that attitude came across in my feedback to the student. I was carrying into the meeting the understanding that it was my new role to support the student to meet the Standards and the best way to do that was to say what I would have done.

As I have read back over the observational notes I made at this meeting, (typed up from the original in Appendix C), I realise that the way it is written is didactic and harsh throughout. The notes were made as I watched the lesson but they do not read as if I have come into the observation understanding that its purpose is to support the student as they come to understand their practice in a way that values and foregrounds what they know already. The actual reality of this encounter is that it is a long way from doing this. I read the notes back to the student and what saved it from being a potentially diminishing experience for her was the occasional opportunities I gave her to answer the questions I posed and the positive comments I made towards the end. At no time does this process enable the student to explore their own knowledge and understanding and I did not think about giving them a chance to do so.

The following is another example of the way I used to view my role as the one who knew about teaching. It shows how I saw knowledge in a propositional way. Appendix D is a lecture I delivered to a group of students with the title 'Pupil participation'. Its focus was on how and why all children, including children with special educational needs, should

be included in decisions made about them. The irony is no longer lost on me, that a session about how and why participation is such a good life affirming experience, was completely devoid of opportunities for students to generate their own meanings or explore their own understandings through participation and in the light of what they knew already. Once again I successfully shut down the voices of the 'others' in this encounter and presented the material as a package, which was delivered in a didactic way. This was not an emancipatory experience for them given that it does not seek to empower the individual or the group.

Slide 4 is particularly ironic. It says

> *'Children need to understand the importance of information*
> *They should be able to express their feelings*
> *They need to be able to participate in discussions*
> *They need to indicate their choices'*

This slide points to a way of acting that is both emancipatory and democratic and indeed educational. However, this way of acting is not modelled by me in my role as the teacher in the session itself. At no time are the students allowed to do any of the above. I have presented myself as the one who knows all about the focus of pupil participation and if the students listen, they will know as well. I am not offering the students any opportunity to participate or to account for what they know about this topic.

As I reflect on my practice in school between 1990 and 2004 I realise that I had become a compliant and unquestioning participant in my own subjugation. I had not engaged with my own learning in any way beyond the superficial for years and I had lost all sense of myself as a learner. Of course, I did not realise this at the time. An example of this learned behaviour is the role of Literacy Co-ordinator that I took on in 1999 following the introduction of a new English curriculum into primary schools in 1998. It marked a significant role for me and I was 'trained' in how to work with staff and familiarised with the materials. The curriculum was introduced following a well documented decline in standards in the subject and was both didactic and prescribed in its composition. It was a significant move away from the requirements of the National Curriculum and it set out a

clearly defined methodology and a rigid way of delivering the materials. Opportunities for teacher-led and directed lessons receded and certainly it was not accepted as being a worthwhile initiative. Meetings between literacy co-ordinator colleagues indicated that this ambivalent attitude on the part of teachers was not unusual.

On a personal level I had grave reservations about the new curriculum as a way of supporting children to read, write and enjoy literacy. Had I exercised any level of agency or values driven action I do not think I would have been able to successfully support the adoption of the materials in my context. I chose the path of least resistance in that I wanted to be successful as the literacy co-ordinator. I surrendered my personal and professional doubts and fell into line.

In doing so I chose not to verbalise what I knew worked effectively to raise standards of reading and writing in my class as I adopted the propositional curriculum. I did not try to foreground what I knew or how I came to know it, which showed a lack of the responsibility I now value as part of my role as a teacher and learner. This lack of epistemic responsibility meant that the ontological values of relational practice were negated in my practice as I marched to the epistemological drum of those in power. I was contributing to the discourses that said teachers could not and should not be knowledge generators and that they needed to be set criteria to enable them to judge what they were doing.

In school, my practice was only concerned about external measures of success and I had no connection with what MacIntyre (1984) calls the internal goods of my practices. When a difficulty arose with the external measures of whether my practice was being successful and effective, I had no sense of any internal measures of success. As my claim to 'know how to' could no longer be substantiated in my practice (Code 1987), I realised that it was insufficient to know how to do something. Knowing well became important to me and I also needed to feel that I was a believable knower (ibid) because, as I understand now, good knowing can contribute to my personal flourishing.

3.4.1 I value emancipatory, democratic ways of knowing - my epistemological understandings

As I come to understand my practice as grounded in loving, caring relational ways of being, I am transforming the way I perceive knowledge and the ways it is possible to come to know. Instead of holding the power as one who knows, I now feel the need for others to help me create my own understandings. This new understanding of how knowledge is created has emerged from my changing ontology as I understand the importance of others in knowledge creation. The ontological values I have expressed of loving, caring relational practices have transformed into my evolving epistemological understandings.

In order to understand why I am concerned about the issues I have outlined in Chapter 2, it is necessary to explain the values that are embedded in how I regard knowledge and to state my epistemological position. The underlying normative epistemology which is impacting on the way teachers, teacher education and policies are perceived is emanating from a particular way that knowledge is viewed by those in power and it is leading to policies and practices that I consider to be problematic. As I have come to understand the process of learning in myself, I have developed an understanding of knowledge and my relationship to it. The relationship between my own knowing and the knowing of the learners I work with is now much clearer to me.

Crotty (2003, p.3) states that an epistemology is 'a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know'. My original claim to knowledge is that I have generated my own living theory of educational accountability. This claim rests upon the way that I view knowledge and its creation and how this underpins why I am concerned. Views of social reality, positivist or anti-positivist, can lead to differences in the ways that knowledge and its creation is understood. Positivists view knowledge as a continuous state of accumulation and growth which happens through scientific means (Sosa 1991). Positivist ways of knowing are useful and important but such views have been criticised for the certainties attached to the knowledge produced through scientific methodologies and the way that it has been perceived by some as being the only type of knowledge

worth knowing. The knowledge emanating from science has historically been seen as objective, valid and certain, which is what its advocates would say makes it the only worthwhile type of knowledge. The world view as seen through the lens of science has been considered by many, particularly in the world of research, as being the only one worth considering as worthy of generating knowledge of any value although this idea is challenged by Habermas (1976), who says that scientific knowledge is one amongst other types of knowledge and as such cannot define the standard by which all other knowledge can be judged.

The superiority of a traditional view of knowledge has prevailed for so long that it underpins much of the way institutions and ideas are set up and explained. The view of university as the place where knowledge was discovered has already been discussed and it has led to a situation where those working within the higher education institutions guarded that knowledge and its creation against challenge. Theory has been seen as a clearly defined entity which could be accessed by academics whose role it was to generate more in readiness for it to be mediated by those in practice. This led to an elitism and a sense that there was a right way to know and what was known had to emanate from a particular positivist perspective. This intellectual elitism is still a part of the discourses in many universities and will be considered later in Chapter 4 in relation to the methodological choices that have been made in this research.

The knowledge underpinning the theory of how to teach effectively has become reified and much is made about closing the perceived gap between teaching theory and teaching practice. Out of this theory has emerged the Standards by which teacher effectiveness is judged. They have subsequently become part of the normative discourse and thereby to the current accountability mechanisms. There is a perceived right way to do teaching and this can be handed over to students. This discourse is grounded in a binary view of teacher effectiveness which contributes to the ongoing debates about the value of the knowledge that is part of teaching actions. For many in government, teaching is seen as a technical activity where both teachers and teacher educators are transmitters of knowledge and the techniques involved in teaching. Teacher education is about training.

This view would seem to be that of successive governments as epitomised by the 1998 Green paper, *Teachers: Meeting the Challenge of Change*. It sets out the requirements for how teachers can do this, amongst which are the following,

- To accept accountability
- To take personal and collective responsibility for improving their skills and subject knowledge
- To seek to base decisions on evidence of what works in schools in the UK and internationally

These criteria are good examples of the didactic directives that are typical of top down governmental authority. On reading them, it is possible to assume that teachers do not accept accountability and that they do not take personal and collective responsibility for what they do. They are a good example of what concerns me about current government discourses. More subtly they demonstrate an implied lack of expectation that teachers will be expected to participate in knowledge generation. Nowhere do they suggest that teachers should be developing that subject knowledge or contributing to the evidence base of what works in schools. Teachers are the implementers of the knowledge generated elsewhere and they are responsible for turning theoretical knowledge into practices that work and are judged to be effective by others. Worse still they need to have that role spelt out.

The idea that how to teach is a body of knowledge that can be empirically justified and measured is now underpinning the way that teacher effectiveness is judged and school and teacher effectiveness has become the driving force of much current policy. Indeed, a lot of focus has been put on evaluating teachers' performance.

> ‘A large industry has grown up around the observation and evaluation of teachers. It approaches teaching as an empirically observable set of actions that teachers undertake in order to educate students. Scholars examine these actions to identify associations (and, ideally, causal connections) between particular instructional acts and student learning' (Hansen and Laverty 2010 cited Bailey, Barrow, Carr and McCarthy 2010, p.224).

This is of course based on a positivist view of accountability and it is allied to the idea of what Lyotard (1986) calls ‘performativity’. Lyotard suggests that the increased use of computers for easy and readily accessible data storage and collection, enables those in authority to focus on efficiency and determine what in their view works well. This can lead to an easy identification of those not performing well enough against pre-set targets. In the twenty-seven years since Lyotard wrote this, the situation has of course developed further and massive amounts of information can be stored, retrieved and compared with relative ease, exacerbating the situation as described. Lyotard takes his idea further and says that if schools or universities for example are to be judged against each other then there needs to uniformity between the elements and that power is legitimated by the optimisation of the systems. This can be seen in the school and university league tables and one of the reasons for the introduction of the National Curriculum was to enable schools to be judged using the same criteria because they would be teaching the same curriculum, and would therefore be commensurable with each other as Lyotard puts it. Once a common set of standards can be adopted they can be measured and judgements made against them. This is all grounded in a more traditional view of knowledge, which sets up the idea that there is a right way and a wrong way of teaching or doing anything else, and this is premised on the scientific view of knowledge which is held by 'experts' in the field. The knowledge is in the representations of the world as it is and that is then owned by groups of people who take it on themselves to make judgements based on it.

Why I am concerned about this view of knowledge is that it leads to the power relations that underpin my concerns expressed in Chapter 2. I am held to account for what I do and I am expected to implement the systems put in place by those who 'own' the right way to do things in teaching. This unspoken understanding is so powerful that it can lead to the situation I have already described, where I complied with the policies and practices initiated by governments despite doubting that they were supporting the children's learning. I did not even think about my own learning.

The certainty attached to scientific knowledge has been challenged and questioned by many including Rorty (1991), who says that no objective truths can be known by the human mind, and in the work of Popper (1959), who believed that scientists constructed scientific knowledge by hypothesising and then trying to disprove or prove their theory, which challenges the idea of inductive reasoning. Popper (ibid, p.278) said,

> 'The old scientific ideal of episteme - of absolutely certain, demonstrable knowledge - has proved to be an idol…It may indeed be corroborated, but every corroboration is relative to other statements, which, again, are tentative'.

This statement questions the idea that scientific, empirical knowledge is unchallengeable and certain. In fact, it opens the way for the idea that knowledge is much more uncertain and is mediated by human beings and all the subjective possibilities this holds. Gradually through the work of Kuhn (1977), and Feyerabend (1987) the positivist paradigm has been increasingly called into question as it has failed to answer certain questions emanating from the world of human relationships. It began to lose its veil of superiority (Crotty 2003).

I too question the idea that knowledge must be objectified, reified and unproblematic and consider this view to be anti-educational. I see this as the type of knowledge that underpins the current discourses discussed in Chapter 2. Why this is of concern is because it negates the value I give to democratic, emancipatory ways of knowing which I consider are so much a part of what makes the teaching and learning relationship educational. The epistemological assumptions underpinning this thesis are premised on a different view of knowledge and my claim is grounded in and makes a contribution to this particular type of knowledge. I claim to be learning through the development of an epistemology, a theory of knowledge and how it is acquired. What I understand this learning to look like and how I have come to learn through the development of an epistemology of educational accountability will be explained in Chapter 6. This is bound up with and underpinned by my epistemological understanding. As with my ontological understandings these epistemological ones are developing through the writing of this thesis which is commensurate with the idea that knowledge is not fixed.

The link between my relational ontology and knowledge is based on certain assumptions. Positivism assumes that knowledge can only be ascribed to that which is founded in reality and can be understood through the senses. The knowledge that I wish to generate and that is embedded in the teaching and learning I am part of and my epistemology of educational accountability, is of a different sort. I understand it to contribute to what Schon (1995) calls 'the new epistemology.' This is an epistemology of practice. He describes the knowledge embedded in it in the following way.

> 'When we go about the spontaneous, intuitive performance of the actions of everyday life, we show ourselves to be knowledgeable in a special way. Often we cannot say what we know. When we try to describe it, we find ourselves at a loss, or we produce descriptions that are obviously inappropriate. Our knowing is ordinarily tacit, implicit in our patterns of action and in our feel for the stuff with which we are dealing. It seems right to say that our knowledge is in our action. And similarly the workaday life of the professional practitioners reveals, in its recognitions, judgements, and skills, a pattern of tacit knowing-in-action' (ibid, p.29).

The knowledge that I am generating in this thesis is partly emerging from my actions, in this case my acts of accountability, and it is grounded in what Polanyi (1958) calls, 'personal knowledge.' These tacit forms of knowing are grounded in the actions which according to Polanyi are influenced by our personal feelings and commitments. This tacit knowledge is not necessarily compatible with the expectations of propositional knowledge. It is internalised and experiential knowledge emerging from and part of practical contexts. It does not, as in the Cartesian-Newtonian paradigm, separate the knower from the known. Nor is it grounded in the ideas of Descartes and the reductionists who understand things by reducing them to their constituent parts and reconstructing them according to certain laws. The knowledge generated in this thesis involves the participation of the knower in the act of knowing and it is contributing to new forms of theories and the new epistemologies as suggested by Schon. Knowledge according to Code (1987, p.167),

> 'is a human creation that can only be as good as the efforts that go into creating it. Epistemology needs to give as much attention to the attitudes and endeavours of would be knowers as to knowledge per se.'

That is what my developing epistemology of educational accountability sets out to do.

The policies and practices of accountability described in Chapter 2 are grounded in theoretical knowledge which can emanate from those in power. It can be delivered as a fait accompli from those whose right to know remains largely unchallenged. Using the example I gave in Chapter 2 from my own narrative, what I knew about teaching was unarticulated and subsumed within the knowledge that came presented as packages of policies and practices. I felt no sense of responsibility for what I knew and certainly did not think it was or should be as influential as the positivist knowledge that guided what I did. I had no hand in creating that knowledge and the attitude I had to it was clear. I was accepting and compliant.

The type of knowledge embedded in this thesis is of a particular kind as described by Clandinin and Connelly (1995, p.7),

> 'teacher's knowledge is that body of convictions and meanings, conscious and unconscious, that have arisen from experience (intimate, social and traditional) and that are expressed in a person's practices. When we see practice we see personal practical knowledge at work.'

It is the type of dynamic knowledge generated by teachers in their practices and actions that underpins this thesis and it is from my teaching that what I know emerges. I see that type of knowledge is of value and worth because it underpins the actions that teachers take in the classroom. The propositional knowledge that informs the discourses that suggest there is a 'way to teach' tend to be fixed and grounded in a positivist view of the world. The knowledge that emerges from this thesis is more dynamic because it is always open to revision or challenge. As circumstances and contexts change, as they do all the time in teaching situations, then what I know and come to know about teaching may change. It is knowledge that is directly linked to practice in a synergistic way and what I know often emanates from my practice.

I have, by taking on a role in higher education, become part of the Academy and as Said (1994, p.8-9) says, 'The role of engaged intellectuals is not to consolidate authority but to understand, interpret and question it'. As a teacher in the University I am required to be

research active and therefore I am now expected to be part of the ongoing discourses around creating knowledge. Giroux (1988 p.xxiv) suggests that teachers should go beyond this 'In the final analysis, teachers need to develop a discourse and set of assumptions that allow them to function more specifically as transformative intellectuals'. The type of knowledge I want to generate is still part of the ongoing discussions about what is of value, and only lately has evidence of the well documented paradigm wars (Gage 1989) between qualitative and quantitative research in educational research, become less striking within my own institution. What has become important for me is the need to articulate what I know in a way that will be recognised as of value in a wider context, not as an academic alone but as a teacher engaged in the practices of teaching. This thesis is my way of being epistemically responsible (Code 1987) and epistemically accountable to myself and those I work alongside.

What I value in the creation of knowledge is the democratic nature of the process which manifests itself as dialogical practice. I value dialogical practice because it emanates from the ontological values of relational, loving practice that I have expressed and it is part of the way that I see knowledge being created between myself and the students I work alongside. I believe that as a teacher and educationalist, I should, as Code (1987) states, be responsible for what I know; be epistemically responsible and in doing so act with personal agency. I am concerned that in so much of what I was doing I was not engaged.

3.5 How has the value of dialogical practice been negated?

I have always understood the importance of dialogue as part of teaching and learning. I took every opportunity that I could to enable children in my classes to engage in dialogue. As a teacher of Year 5 and 6, I dedicated every Friday afternoon to what I called then a debating session. This involved the children selecting an issue from the newspaper and discussing their views on it. Over the sessions we discussed things that happened like the Hillsborough disaster and the release of Nelson Mandela. The sessions were lively and enjoyed by all. I recognised the value of dialogue as I saw it then. To some extent, by doing this, I was living out my value in my practice.

I understood dialogue to be conversation and talk around subjects that were outside the day-to-day classroom foci. I saw it as an opportunity to explore views and learn to listen to opposing viewpoints. I also thought that the subjects discussed should be relevant to the children in this case and of interest to them. The sessions fitted Bohm's (1996) idea of what dialogue is: they challenged the children's assumptions, nobody tried to make their views accepted and there was definitely no sense that anyone had won.

However, I was experiencing myself as a 'living contradiction' (Whitehead 1989) in that I was not seeking out the same for myself. I was content to adopt the prevailing discourses that said teachers were so busy doing paperwork and other tasks that they just did not have time to meet up. What I considered to be dialogue was actually more like conversations taking place during staff meetings and inset days. Bohm (ibid), says that discussion is like ping pong, where agreeing and disagreeing is going back and forth. This is as far as our conversations went and often they did not get that far. Frequently, the agendas were filled with information sessions and housekeeping matters. If new policies and procedures were on the agendas it was nearly always presented as a chance to look over paperwork or work with colleagues to decide how best to implement them. By the time the new initiatives arrived in school they were a fait accompli.

Freire (1987) says that dialogue is when people meet to make and remake their reality. This is exactly what I wanted for the children in my class although I would never have expressed it in that way at the time. I did not seek it out for myself. I was very busy but in truth not so busy that I could not look for the same opportunities that I wanted the children in my class to have. I hid behind the excuses and became more and more unquestioning and compliant.

Another example of my practice not being dialogical in any meaningful way was the link tutor meetings with students of which Appendix E is a transcribed example. In this whole engagement my voice is the loudest and I do not give the student the opportunity to learn through a dialogue that enables them to develop fully their own emerging understanding.

As I have said earlier I always felt that I knew a lot about teaching and learning and that this was part of the problem. Often I was engaged in a monologue and the opportunities I gave the students in the sessions did not allow for genuine dialogue. I did not offer students either the time or the space to engage in a dialogue of exploration.

3.5.1 I value dialogical practice

Burbules (1993, p.19) suggests that dialogue is 'at heart a kind of social relation that engages its participants' and that it contains the following dispositions.

- Concern shown as an interest in and commitment to the other
- Trust as taking what the other says in good faith
- Respect which is grounded in the notion that all are equal and that despite any differences the dialogue or conversation can go on
- Appreciation shown as valuing the other
- Affection which is feeling with and for the other
- Hope that the dialogue holds possibilities and that education will carry us forward.

It is these qualities that I wanted to see in the conversations that emerged from the spaces I hoped to create and they moved beyond the propositional subject knowledge of teaching: how to plan a lesson; lists of behaviour management strategies and how to assess children's learning. I hoped to create what Habermas (1985) would call 'an ideal speech situation' where all could engage in the dialogue and understanding would be fostered. The essence of the dialogue would be the learning (Bohm 1996).

Another part of an educational practice, and the essence of learning, is dialogue which helps learners to find their own way into a situation (Hopkins 2011). If one takes teaching as a series of situations then it is my role as a teacher educator to encourage questions around them and not to present teaching as a technical rational activity. It is my role to enact a pedagogy of teacher education, without trying to control the lack of certainty (Russell and Loughran 2007). One way of doing this is through dialogue. I draw on the work of Buber, Bakhtin, Freire, Palmer and others to say how I see dialogue as essential if a practice or action is seen to be educational.

Buber says of dialogue,

> 'There is genuine dialogue - no matter whether spoken or silent - where each of the participants really has in mind the other or others in their present and particular being and turns to them with the intention of establishing a living mutual relation between himself (sic) and them. There is technical dialogue, which is prompted solely by the need of objective understanding. And there is monologue disguised as dialogue, in which two or more men, meeting in space, speak each with himself in strangely tortuous and circuitous ways and yet imagine they have escaped the torment of being thrown back on their own resources ' (Buber 1947, p. 19).

I think that so much of my teaching has involved monologues, and the link tutor meetings I have had with students in school have been what Buber calls 'technical dialogue'. I have engaged in conversations about their lessons and given them advice as feedback which has meant that my voice has been the most frequently heard. This is a long way from the opportunity that Freire in conversation with Shor (1987, p.98) describes.

> 'Dialogue is a moment where humans meet to reflect on their reality as they make and remake it. Something else; To the extent that we are communicative beings who communicate to each other as we become more able to transform our reality, we are able to know that we know, which is something more than just knowing.'

This is central to Freire's understanding of the importance of dialogue in a knowledge creation process and I suggest it is also a key part of what makes a teaching and learning engagement educational. Freire (ibid, p.99) goes on to say 'knowing is a social event with nevertheless a social dimension' and that dialogue 'seals the relationship between the cognitive subjects, the subjects who know, and who try to know'.

An important part of what makes a practice educational is that it brings about learning and knowing. Dialogue is an important part in the process of learning and coming to know. Freire's explanation of knowledge and dialogue helps me to understand what I value and it needs to be embedded in the loving relational practice I want to be central to my educational practices. Freire (ibid) says,

> 'the object to be known mediates the two cognitive subjects. In other words, the object to be known is put on the table between the two subjects of knowing. They meet around it and through it for mutual inquiry.'

This has become an important epistemological understanding for me because it values the idea that the process of collaborative knowledge creation is a more equitable process than is assumed by students and other learners who position the teacher as the 'expert.' According to Freire, it does not matter that the teacher has chosen the object of knowing as this does not mean that she has exhausted all there is to know about it. My own practice is full of examples of working alongside students, and in dialogue with them I am re-learning about pedagogy. I start off knowing the object better than them but I am coming to know once more in the light of their understandings.

This idea of the chosen subject being at the heart of dialogue is also central to Palmer's (1998, p.99) idea of a *'community of truth*'. He says that it is about knowing, teaching and learning. This idea is central to my own understanding of what makes my practice dialogical, and therefore educational.

> 'The community of truth is an image of knowing that embraces the great web of being on which all things depend and the fact that our knowing of these things is helped, not hindered, by our being enmeshed in that web. It is an image that lifts up not only our visible connection to human forms of being - with their opportunities for intimacy, civility and accountability - but our invisible connections to non-human forms as well. It is a model of community capacious enough to carry the educational mission of knowing, teaching and learning.'

Within this dialogical community, the subject is the centre of attention and Palmer gives it an ontological significance. The community comes to understand the subject through communication. Palmer and Freire's ideas have been important to me as I have examined the recorded dialogue with students which I have gathered as data. I will explore this understanding in the next chapters where I evidence my learning in relation to my practice.

If dialogue is to contribute to educational practice then I understand that the subject or 'great thing' as Palmer (ibid, p.99) calls it should be at the centre and all should have access to it. This understanding is supported by my ontological understanding that I am in

relation with the students and the way we come to understand and know is relational. The difficulty I have with the large lectures I deliver is that if care is not taken then I, as the teacher, can become the centre of the community. Students are reluctant to engage in such a big forum and the way the room is set out, in fixed rows, means that it is almost impossible to get into smaller groups. It sets the session up with me at the front and if I want to be heard I have to stand by the microphone behind the lectern which are the official trappings of the expert. This makes me the focus and the students are passive participants.

I agree with Palmer (ibid) that good teaching depends on connectedness and this comes through relational dialogue. The postgraduate MA seminar sessions that I teach with colleagues are an example of this in my practice. I have reflected on the impact they have had on my own understandings in my learning log.

> *'If I am honest when I started these sessions I was not sure how I could position myself as a learner in the same way as the students are learners. They are coming into the sessions with a very limited understanding of pedagogy and they have had very little time in school. My understanding of pedagogy is based on many years experience and study. At the start of the sessions in order to re-position myself away from their perception of me as an expert I tell them how I see knowledge and how I understand us to be coming to know together etc etc. Having done two modules with the group, I have realised that for me it is all about re-visiting long understood concepts and pedagogical understandings and re-learning them in the light of my new context. Through dialogue I am coming to know about my values, and I am really able to say that I am creating knowledge of practice in collaboration with and through them.'* (Renowden 2009, unpublished journal).

Once again Freire helps me to understand this. He says,

> 'What is dialogue in this way of knowing? Precisely this connection, this epistemological relation. The object to be known in one place links the two cognitive subjects, leading them to reflect together on the object. Dialogue is the sealing together of the teacher and the students in the joint act of knowing and re-knowing the subject of study. Then instead of transferring the knowledge statically, as a fixed possession of the teacher, dialogue demands a dynamic approximation towards the object' (1987, p.100).

This is what Freire calls education and as such this 'dialogical education' is an epistemological position. It is democratic in as much as it works to erode the perception

of teacher as expert and the power invested in that. The student has as much of a part to play in the creation of knowledge as the teacher. In fact, without the dialogue between the students and the teacher, the knowledge would not be created. As a teacher, I may well know more than the students about pedagogy but they are able to know and I need to re-know what I know. This is not the epistemological understanding that underpinned the dialogue I had with the student teachers in school (Appendix E). Here I am coming from the position of 'the one who knows how to teach' and it is a relationship the student is happy with because she is getting lots of support to come to know how to teach.

Bakhtin (1973 1981) posits the idea that dialogue has an ontological meaning and is the basis of relationships and is a way of life. The relationship between oneself and others is dialogical. If I am to say that ontologically I see myself in relation to students and colleagues then according to Bakhtin co-generative dialogue is the goal and not just the process by which we reach something. Dialogue is the experience of being in relation to others and he says that, 'To be means to communicate dialogically' (ibid 1972, p.213). I have used Bakhtin's (1981, p.280) idea that there is no such thing as monologism to think about how to transform my meetings with students and the seminars I have with them. He says,

> 'The word is at the same time determined by that which has not yet been said but which is needed and in fact anticipated by the answering word. Such is the situation in any living dialogue.'

In the meetings and seminars I have tried to move towards a situation where all words react to other words. This has involved a fundamental change in the way I approach the sessions as I will show in Chapter 5.

According to Bakhtin (ibid), inner dialogue is another form that is important as part of a moral life. I understand this research as an example of my new-found commitment to inner dialogue which I understand to be a part of the process of holding myself educationally to account for my actions. I have approached the propositional theories of others in a spirit of dialogue with the texts, not looking for answers, and this thesis is not an attempt on my part to provide all the answers for others. It is my attempt to interpret

and generate new meanings as I become part of the dialogue in an uncertain world where there are no definitive answers. This counters the idea that there is a 'best practice' model that can be attained and it moves away from the idea that I am to train students in a way that gives them the idea that there is a fixed way to teach.

Dialogue is an important part of a practice that is educational and Splitter (2009, p.149), says that the classroom is an excellent place to engage in dialogue which he describes in the following way. He says we need to,

> ' help young people as they strive to make sense of their experience and work out how they can be 'the best they can be.' The hint of a struggle here is deliberate: we each have to define and make sense of our own lives, both by way of connecting with the external feature of our experience- interaction with others, encountering new ideas that are presented to us in the classroom, elsewhere etc - and also by reflecting on how each new experience changes us in more or less fundamental ways. Another key dynamic or tool in this process of interconnection is dialogue. It is time that we represent ourselves in and to the world by more than just what we say-specifically by how we appear and what we do- but it is also time that the intimate relationship between thought- considered as internalised dialogue-and dialogue- considered as a form of externalised thought- is what makes it possible for us to change and be changed by, the way we learn, think and act.'

Splitter considers dialogue to be a key priority in any classroom because it helps the learner see themselves as one among many others, an idea he attributed to Taylor (1991).

3.6 How has the value of critically reflective practice been negated?

Appendix F is an example of a session I took with students about reflective practice. In this there is an opportunity for students to reflect but it is mostly directed at reflection on themselves and the impact they are having on the class and the children. It is an important thing for teachers to do and if one of my lessons went less well than I hoped, I would always start from a position of examining what I had done. What I have not encouraged students to consider is the possibility of a wider, deeper reflective process which has the possibilities of being more educational; I have not encouraged critical reflection. Once again, it was my own limited understandings about the underpinning discourses of power and accountability that meant I was at best supporting them and at worst perpetuating the

idea that teachers were reflective in a meaningful way when in fact it was limited in scope.

I did not engage in dialogue which enabled critical reflection and so much of the reflective practice I looked for in students was uncritical. I reflected on the important but narrow issues raised by our practice. I did not reflect on the wider hegemonic discourses and normative assumptions that underpinned the politics and policies of education. When I started in teacher education I did not expect student reflections to do so either. I was happy for them to have the same sort of inner gaze that I had. These reflections would help us to improve what we were doing and they would enable us to show that we understood the part we play in school improvement, meeting the criteria set out by such accountability structures as the Standards and the Ofsted criteria.

Brookfield (1995, p.265), suggests that critical reflection does the following:

- It gives a sense of agency
- It combats exploitation - we become aware of how the concept of accountability can control what we do
- It enthuses and excites
- It prevents us being 'blown about by the winds of cultural and pedagogic preference'.
- It helps us to know we can change the world

The concept of reflection is one that has become part of the school improvement discourses and it has become viewed as a process that brings with it the possibility of informed and better actions. The reflection I was engaged in when in school did none of those things and the superficial reflective practice I expected from students in 2005 did not demand those dispositions from them as Appendix F demonstrates very clearly. However, the ability to reflect critically on one's actions, thinking and understandings is both an educational action and an outcome of educational practices and it is the disposition of someone who is educated because it contributes to a sense of self-awareness.

A good example of critical reflection through relational dialogue is described by Palmer (1998, p.152), who uses the example from his own experience, of a Quaker 'clearness committee'. This committee is where members of the community come together with a group of their peers to be supported through a difficulty or issue in their lives. The group asks the individual questions only for the first couple of hours and then with the permission of the individual they can comment on what they have heard. What has been removed from this encounter is any sense of challenge or competition and all come to the group as equals. Palmer says that this dialogical coming together opens up an inner space, where all taking part, experience some sense of awareness and transformation. This is what needs to be the outcome of critical reflection because it opens up the possibility of improvement. It was not evident in the outcomes of the reflective practice I have described so far.

3.6.1 I value critically reflective practice

One of the outcomes of dialogical practice is critical reflection. The kind of reflection I engaged in whilst in primary practice was called by Schon (1984) 'reflection-in-action' and 'reflection-on-action'. I did this all the time. Whilst teaching a literacy lesson, for example, I would adjust what I had planned in response to the way the children reacted or seemed to understand. If key vocabulary was problematic I would revisit it or adapt it to ensure understanding. This reflection-in-action became almost unconscious and it is often what students find difficult to access when observing experienced teachers because it is so implicit in what they do. Reflection-on-action came after the lesson and was usually done on my own or sometimes as part of the formal observations done of my teaching by senior colleagues. This was a look back at what had happened in the lesson. It could also be reflection on other actions I had been part of such as meetings, incidents with the children or parents' meetings. Again this was often initiated by myself and done on my own. All of my colleagues did the same reflecting to different degrees and we did not engage in dialogue with each other to reflect in this way.

This is the kind of reflection that becomes the watchword of current students. A good deal of emphasis is put on the expectation that they are able to reflect on what they are doing. Teacher educators ask them to reflect after their lessons and we even give them criteria by which to structure and guide their reflections. We determine the foci for their reflections. There is an expectation that they can reflect at will about anything. So many of my early session notes, as a teacher educator, start off with phrases like, 'Ask the students to reflect on the last lesson they taught' or 'Reflect on how effective you were at supporting higher order thinking through your questioning.' These reflections would then be used as part of the sessions to enable students to make connections between theory and practice or to be able to share their experiences with their peers.

Reflection is also a key concept in the teacher education discourses and it is seen as an important disposition for student teachers to engage with. In both the old Standards for Qualified Teacher Status (2007) and the new Standards (2011), reflective practice and the idea of a reflective practitioner are mentioned continuously. Students are expected to be able to reflect at will and certainly about any aspect of their practice at any given time. Reflection to order is commonplace.

All of the above descriptions of reflection as it is viewed and undertaken in school and teacher education are inward looking and focused on what the practitioner is doing and the impact this has on their practices. Brookfield (1995, p.8) says that reflection becomes critical when

> 'it has two distinctive purposes. The first is to understand how considerations of power undergird, frame and distort educational processes and interactions. The second is to question assumptions and practices that seem to make our teaching lives easier but actually work against our own best long-term interests.'

By this understanding my reflection on my practice was lacking criticality and so I would suggest had limited educational value that is contributing to my learning in any deep way. I did not challenge or even recognise the power dynamics or assumptions embedded in so much of what I was engaged in as I have described in Chapters 1 and 2. I had internalised the idea that I was part of a great reflective profession who could improve what was

going on in my classroom just by thinking about what I was doing and making necessary changes. I now see that this gave me a false sense of power over what I was doing. Freire (1970) says that the oppressed are given false power by those who oppress them and in this way they are almost colluding in their own oppression. Brookfield goes on to talk about a 'conspiracy of the normal', hegemonic assumptions that people come to internalise and think of as their own whereas in reality they are the result of power exercised by others. The way that I had taken on the understanding that being reflective, but not critically reflective, was what was expected of me was an example of this. I was part of a system that did not reward critical reflection.

Not only are the students expected to reflect on their practice. As a lecturer it is also part of the discourse of improving practice and, as with the school teacher and the student, it is superficial. Macfarlane (2004) says that reflection is being used in higher education as a conceptual framework and this is preparing lecturers with the skills and knowledge needed to teach in higher education, in a way that sees them as competent technicians rather than as critical professionals. He goes on to say that standards such as the professional standards or competencies for higher education tutors, introduced by the then Department for Education and Science (DfES) in 2003, endorse this. The Institute for Lecturers and Teachers in Higher Education (ILTHE) has identified five values for its members to model. The last of these is a commitment to continuous reflection and evaluation and consequent improvement in their practices (cited in Macfarlane, 2004).

3.7 I value the learning that emerges from emancipatory, democratic forms of relational, dialogical practices

As I generate my own living theory of educational accountability it is my claim that I am influencing learning and that learning has the potential to be transformational and educational. I understand that there are different types of learning and the learning I want to influence in myself and my students is of a particular kind. Hargreaves and Fink (2006, p32) suggest that rather than focusing on tests and short term targets

> 'A more sustainable strategy is to focus on learning first, then achievement, then testing, so we never lose sight of the learning that truly matters as we strive to increase students' achievement in it'.

This learning can take time and is underpinned by a philosophy that suggests that teachers should act urgently to improve and wait patiently for results (ibid p.53). There has been a change in the way that learning has been perceived, moving from being seen as something residing with the individual to something that has a more corporate identity (Griffin and Brownhill 2001). Learning is now seen as something that is to be done throughout our lives and in all sorts of situations and it is seen as an integral part of how individuals take responsibility for their engagement with the society in which they live and work.

The idea of a learning society (Hutchins 1970) emerged from the understanding that education and its institutions were no longer able to keep up with the pace of change brought on by the changes in technology and the ways that knowledge was perceived and produced against the background described in Chapter 2. This is a situation that is of course more and more relevant as time goes on because of the way that knowledge is disseminated through the internet and the access most have to it. The idea that learning needed to be at the heart of society and driving society's values developed (Husen 1974; Boshier 1980). The idea of the learning society is part of the current discourses and lifelong learning has been a focus of government discourses in education and changes have been made in teacher education, for example, to reflect this idea. The idea that learning does not stop at the end of formal schooling and that access to opportunities to learn should be many, varied and open to all is understood.

In this thesis, I am making the claim that I have learnt and that what I am doing has the potential to influence the learning of the students I work alongside and also colleagues and my peers. I will now say what I mean by learning in an adult education context to establish what I am looking for in the data and to support what I put forward as evidence. Learning is an integral part of an educational practice and it is also an outcome. I will draw on the work of Habermas, Mezirow and others to explain how I understand this complex and much discussed concept. The work of Habermas is seminal when understanding learning and education (Mezirow 1981). Habermas (1972) suggests there

are three cognitive domains where human interests generate knowledge and each of these have their own ways of assessing knowledge claims and their own learning modes and needs. He calls them 'knowledge constitutive'. The three domains are as follows,

1.Technical work domain

This domain is about how the environment is controlled or manipulated. Habermas says it involves instrumental actions which use technical rules to govern those actions which are based on empirical knowledge. Any choices are based on rules determined by investigation and value systems and those choices rest on alternatives that have been correctly assessed. The instrumental action involves predictions about physical or social events and the technical interests can be understood through the empirical sciences. The perceived need to control the environment leads to hypothetical/deductive theories.

2. Practical learning domain

Habermas says this involves interaction or communicative action and the aim is the clarification of the conditions necessary for inter-subjectivity and communication. The methodology emerging from this is a systematic inquiry which leads to meaning being understood.

3. Emancipatory domain

Habermas considers there is an interest in self-knowledge here. A key question is how historical and biographical contexts and experiences have influenced one's perceptions and understandings and social expectations and roles. Any insights are gained through critical self-awareness and these are released from environmental and institutional influences which Habermas suggests limit options. Self-awareness and self-reflection are key in this domain and the methodology is critical social science.

Each of Habermas' three domains of interests has its own learning goal. The technical work domain seeks learning for task-related competence. The practical learning domain is where learning for interpersonal understanding is possible and lastly learning in the emancipatory domain is moving the learner towards perspective transformation, an idea taken up by Mezirow and discussed in relation to my own learning in Chapter 4. Mezirow says of these three goals that they each involve their own ways of knowing and their own mode of inquiry (Mezirow 1981).

The ideas put forward by Habermas are relevant to this research in a number of ways. The most important one is in relation to the different contributions they make to the theoretical foundation of accountability as educational practice and accountability as technical rational measurement and control. If something is educational it facilitates the process of learning and as I re-conceptualise accountability as educational I am saying that what makes it so is that engaging in it as a process can bring about learning which will lead to impactful transformation of practices, or as Mezirow (1981, p.208) says 'significant learning'. This learning is therefore emancipatory as it leads to the freedom that comes with being able to say what we know and transformational because it can lead to change. On the other hand the more technical rational accountability structures such as the Ofsted framework do not allow for this to happen because the learning is more technical and sited within the technical work domain described above.

Mezirow (1981, p.11) says that learning is about making meaning. 'Learning means using a meaning that we have already to guide the way we think, act or feel about what we are currently experiencing' and he goes on to say 'Learning is a dialectical process of interpretation in which we interact with objects and events, guided by an old set of expectations.' Mezirow calls this transformative learning (ibid xvii) which changes the way we see the world which he calls 'meaning perspectives'. These perspectives are the 'constitutive codes that govern the activities of perceiving, comprehending and remembering.' (ibid p4) It is this kind of transformation that is part of the learning that I have experienced as I have engaged in this research as I have re-interpreted old experiences through the lenses of new expectations and it is the kind of learning that can be part of an educational practice. The new expectations are that I can and must hold myself to account for what I do and in the process set my own epistemological standards of practice (Whitehead 2004). These new expectations have led to a new meaning for the concept of accountability which I have learnt to re-conceptualise as educational because the process of holding myself to account is leading to learning that could be called 'concientization.' (Friere 1970b, p.27) This enables adults to 'achieve a deepening

awareness of both the socio-cultural reality which shapes their lives and their capacity to transform that reality through action upon it.'

The actions I have taken in my practice, as I will describe in Chapter 5, to improve what I am doing are as a result of transformational learning and reflective learning (Mezirow, p.6). He says

> 'Reflective learning involves assessment and re-assessment of assumptions. Reflective learning becomes transformative whenever assumptions or premises are found to be distorting, inauthentic, or otherwise invalid. Transformative learning results in new or transformed meaning schemes or, when reflection focuses on premises, transformed meaning perspectives. To the extent that adult education strives to foster reflective learning, its goal becomes one of either confirmation or transformation of ways of interpreting experience.'

This is the learning I am looking for in the data I collect. I am looking for evidence that I can influence learning that leads to transformation by holding myself educationally to account for my practices and thus creating opportunities for the students to interpret their own experiences and develop their own new meanings. It is through challenging my old assumptions that I am developing new ways of doing things.

Lave and Wenger (1991) set out characteristics of the learning process which include: learning is action, learning is situated, learning occurs in and through communities of practice, learning occurs in socially structured situations, learning is forming identity in a community of practice and learning occurs in communities of practice through legitimate peripheral participation.

For an action or practice to be educational it needs to bring about learning of significance. This of course begs the question; who judges what is significant? Who has this authority? There are issues of power underlying learning and the knowledge that is the result. Here it is necessary to explore the power dynamics in relation to the relationship between the learner and the teacher. For an action or process to be educational, I consider there needs to be a particular dynamic between the teacher and the learner that I would ground in my ontological values (Chapter 3). This relationship supports a particular kind of learning,

the outcome of which is knowledge that has been generated and created through dialogical, relational practices and which can support practices and actions. What I now understand as an important part of what makes my practice educational is that it brings about authentic learning. Guignon (2004, p.81) says that the 'concept of authenticity is identified by privileging the inner over the outer' and what makes a practice authentic is that students recognise and understand their own thoughts, ideas and reflections have a place in the way that their understandings are developed. Hopkins (2011, p.50-55) puts it well.

> 'Learning must involve, if it is to be authentic and rise above mere competence, a dialectical play that is not essentially the application of rules or principles but a letting or disclosing of the being in the situation.'

This is an important idea and it helps me to understand what I mean by a practice being educational or not.

An example of this is learning to drive a car. It is possible that learning to drive can be a technical knowledge transfer exercise. The teacher can go through what skills are needed to drive the car. The pedals need to be controlled. The steering wheel needs to be held and moved in a certain way to be able to steer. Put these things together and it is possible to move and direct the car. Then road etiquette and the Highway Code have to be learnt. However, having recently learnt to drive I know from experience that in fact it is so much more than 'the application of rules and principles'. It was, in fact, a very profound educational experience and needed to be part of a teacher-learner relationship grounded in such fundamental values as trust and caring which manifest themselves as patience and confidence building. What I learnt about the car was technical and a body of knowledge which was very positivist in nature. What I learnt about myself out of the relationships was so much more authentic using Hopkins' definition and I would say made learning to drive the car educational precisely because the learning was authentic.

There are values embedded in the concept of learning that make it educational. Bryk and Schneider (2002) discuss the need for trust between all involved in learning and, at the heart of this, are the interacting values of respect, competence, personal regard and

integrity. As I have already stated in this chapter, values lie at the heart of quality teaching. Cawsey (2002 cited Lovat and Clement 2008) suggests that deep learning needs values and a connection between the student and the learning can lead to personal meaning.

Authentic learning has the potential to bring about certain dispositions which can be used as ways of judging the effectiveness of an educational practice. If a practice is educational, it holds the possibility that those engaged in it will acquire authentic learning. This means that in my context there is always the possibility that I have learnt and that the students have learnt as well. I restrict it to a possibility because I acknowledge the outcome of an educational practice could be that learning has not taken place. I understand that all opportunities to learn are mediated by the learner and for certain learning to take place the learner needs to engage with the process.

In the contexts of my practice, manifestations of authentic learning can include when students are able to critically reflect on themselves and the wider context, take responsibility for what they are doing, articulate what they think is effective and engage in dialogue about teaching and learning. This goes beyond the technicalities of learning how to teach. Understanding that authentic learning is an outcome and part of the process of educational practice can provide standards of judgement by which my practice can be judged and this understanding is also important for my conceptual understanding of educational accountability. I wanted to bring about this authentic learning in myself and this is the learning I hoped to inspire and influence in the students as I transformed my practices to make them more educational.

This is also the kind of learning that engaging in an educational form of accountability can bring about. This learning is a result of the active participation of the learner in the process. It is described well by Hargreaves and Fink (2006, p.53-54).

> 'Deep learning is often slow learning – critical, penetrative. thoughtful and ruminative. It is learning that engages peoples feelings and connects with their lives. Deep learning is more like love than lust. It isn't too preoccupied with

> performance. It cannot be hurried. Targets don't improve it. Tests rarely take it's measure. And you can't do it just because someone else says you should'.

It does not feel like the kind of learning that comes as a result of the managerial, technical rational forms of accountability.

Educational accountability allows the participants to reflect critically on their actions in relation to others through dialogue. It uses criteria and standards of judgement that are determined by all who are involved in the process and the asymmetrical power relationships described in Chapter 2 are minimised. Importantly this leads to actions that are always available for critique to ensure that one of the aims of this educational accountability, improved practices, is met and the validity of judgements is tested. This understanding has helped me to analyse the data that I have collected because it has informed the choices I have made about what I am proposing as evidence of my learning and that of the students. The evidence I am presenting in this thesis is of learning that goes beyond the 'how to' of teaching towards the deeper learning that is authentic. I have looked for evidence that I have held myself to account for what I do in an educational way as I have defined it. I have also looked for evidence that in doing so I have created opportunities for the students to learn to take responsibility for what they are coming to know about teaching and learning.

3.8 Why does it matter if the values I hold are negated in my practice?

The writing of this chapter is in itself a move towards the living out of some of the values I have explicated. This is a way that I have chosen to hold myself to account for what I have done in the past. Some of these reflections do not always show my practice in a very good light. However, I consider this to be a necessary process if I am to say how I have learnt to do things differently and be able to show that by trying to live out my expressed values in my practice I am contributing to my learning and having the potential to contribute to the learning of the students and the social formations in which I work.

In this chapter I have said what I value: educational practice which contributes to emancipatory, democratic ways of being and knowing through relational practices that

develop a student's ability to engage in critical reflection and dialogue. I have given examples from my practice to show how these values have sometimes been denied in my actions as I have frequently experienced myself as a 'living contradiction' (Whitehead, 1989, p.41-52). The examples I have given also show how the technical rational ways of holding myself and the students to account that I have described in Chapter 2 often provide the contexts and discourses from which my practices negate my values. The examples given in this chapter have been difficult for me to put into the public domain as part of my research. It is not a comfortable thing to do especially when it exposes one to the entirely justified accusation that I was not doing the best job I could do. However, I consider this exposure or de-centring (McNiff and Whitehead 2009) to be the starting off point for improvement which is one of the declared aims of this research. I agree with Lawson (1979, p.96) that we are,

> ' expected to exercise some responsibility for the way we appear to others and it is in the acceptance of some of the responsibility for what we are which is also held to be the mark of a human being, and this is also an aspect of what is meant by autonomy.'

This negation of my values in my practice matters because it would be easy to continue in the same way. I find myself preparing sessions which will enable students to pass assignments well or teaching on modules designed to help students tick the Standards' boxes and this is what they want. Their expectations, and as I have shown above, sometimes mine, are that they just want to know what they need to know as quickly and as un-demandingly as possible. They are often happy, if a little bored, when they do not need to engage too much and all of them are very focused on how to pass the assignments. As this extract from my journal indicates it is tempting to just take the easy path.

> *'I find myself increasingly being drawn in to preparing students to pass assignments successfully. When I start a module like the research article I struggle to get students to focus on their practice and forget the assignment in the short term. I want them to reflect on their experiences in school and consider an aspect of this that will enable them to ask a question that will move their understanding on. They want to know what the criteria are for this work and how to pass it. They ask for a list of possible questions and they are very focused on the right question, not to generate more understanding but to be able to find enough texts or write enough words. They are very happy to reject questions grounded in their pedagogical needs for one that is easier to answer. I must focus*

> *on how I can release them from this pressure to pass and offer them opportunities to become confident that they will engage more fully and write with more commitment if they ground their assignment in something they really want to know about.'* (Renowden 2009, unpublished journal)

What I think I am struggling with here is this dilemma of a situation where students are naturally driven to a focus on what to do to pass the course and my desire to educate them so that they can be critically reflective and reach their potential. I am not implying that the two things are incompatible; in fact, I think they are entirely compatible. What I think is that the way students are held to account in a mechanistic, propositional and competency driven manner does not enable them to show what they know fully. In my context I understand the practice of teaching to be about an emancipatory, democratic form of education as I have described it above and I constantly need to be vigilant that the core purpose of my teaching is not compromised.

Why does this matter? I managed to have a successful career in the classroom so why won't they? The children I taught learnt well and were happy and motivated so why did it matter that I was accepting of the changes imposed in the top-down way described in Chapter 2? Why did it matter that I was unquestioning and as I have come to see it now, compliant? It matters because I am concerned because my role has changed. Whilst I was teaching in a primary school the influence I had was limited to the individual children. This was of course significant because my actions could impact on the child's self-esteem, love of learning and relationship with education. I also had a sense of representing the teaching profession, influencing how those outside school viewed teachers and teaching. What I did not have was a sense of influencing a wider field. Now as a teacher educator I have a real sense of influencing some of the next generation of teachers and thus impacting on the children they teach and the schools they work in. This has made me want to be sure I am doing the right thing in a way I have never experienced before. I feel the need to hold myself responsible for my actions by explaining them and explicating the values that underpin my practice as I hold myself to account and look to improve what I do.

It matters now because I have developed an understanding of my practice as more than just a technical endeavour. I see it as an ethical one which is part of my responsibilities as an intellectual whose purpose is as described by Giroux (1997, p.66) who says that public intellectuals should,

> 'advance a notion of pedagogy that provides students with modes of individual and social agency that enables them to be both engaged citizens and active participants in the struggle for global democracy.'

The negation of my values in my practice matters because it has the potential to close down the opportunities for dialogue I see as so important for my practice to be educational which in turn does not offer the students and me the opportunity to come to know together. This matters because if they do not experience themselves as knowers and they do not engage with the idea of being what Freire calls a 'liberating educator' (1987, p.172), then potentially they will be vulnerable to the normative discourses of compliancy which I have described in Chapter 2. They may be unquestioning practitioners engaging in superficial reflection. Brookfield (1995, p.9) says,

> 'Becoming alert to the oppressive dimensions of our practice (many of which reflect an unquestioning acceptance of values, norms and practices defined for us by others) is often the first step in working more democratically and co-operatively with students and colleagues.'

On a more personal level it matters because I consider that my role as a teacher and higher education tutor involves integrity, which comes from the Greek word meaning whole. This is important because I consider that integrity is made up of a number of other values such as honesty, truthfulness, sincerity, fairness and justice. It also involves behaving in an ethical way. All of these work together in the practice of teaching to create a whole picture. I consider that to be acting with integrity in my role as a higher education tutor it is important to be doing certain things. As an academic in teacher education it is part of my role to act with integrity as someone who is in a position of influence and responsibility. The idea of influence is at the heart of my research as I seek to determine what that influence is and whether it is how I would want it to be.

It matters because I have come to understand the influence that a teacher can have on their student as I have worked alongside postgraduate M level students. The module they do asks them to reflect on the events in their lives that have led to them becoming student teachers. Many of them write about what they have learnt about their values from teachers they had in school. They say that those teachers have helped them to understand what it means to respect the pupils, to treat everyone fairly and to promote inclusion and equality of opportunity in their classroom. These are very important values which they say have emerged as they look back on their relationships with teachers they have been influenced by.

As part of this research and the work with students I too have critically reflected on the influences in my life that have led me to be the teacher and person I am today. The individual examples have been the foundations from which my values and understandings have developed and this is indeed how the students see these influences. What I have come to understand through these collaborative, critical reflections is that often individuals can be fundamentally influential without actually realising it. Because it is often with hindsight that we realise what has influenced us we do not get the chance to tell those involved the impact they have had on our thoughts and actions.

This realisation has become very important to me as I have worked to put my values at the forefront of my actions. I have come to realise the unconscious possibilities embedded in my practice to influence those I work with and it has made me mindful of whether I am living and working in such a way as to be a positive influence. Pring (2004, p.200) says that 'to educate is to develop the capacity to think, to value, to understand, to reason, to appreciate', which are all intrinsically human activities and qualities. It matters that I live out my values because their realisation has the power to influence in a way that I did not realise was possible.

Lastly it matters because formal education continues to be in a state of change and this does not seem likely to stop. As the pendulum swings and things change who is to say that we will not ever go back to a situation where teachers are acknowledged as

professionals able to determine what constitutes effective practice in their contexts? Hargreaves and Shirley (2009, p.1) are of the opinion that change is indeed in the air.

> 'We are entering an age of post-standardisation in education. It may not look, smell or feel like it, but the augurs of the new age have already arrived and are advancing with increasing speed'.

They point to moves to go beyond standardisation such as the Welsh Assembly abolishing the external testing of children under the age of fourteen in 2004.

As I write we are in a period of great financial uncertainty which is likely to last some years. Value for money comes to the fore and as Brundrett and Rhodes (2011, p.128) suggest,

> 'It is possible that we are entering a period when the purpose of education may be re-evaluated in such a way that approaches to quality and accountability may be completely evaluated in turn'.

If this is the case teachers need to be able to speak with a voice that is worth listening to and they need to be sure that the judgements they are making are indeed leading to quality teaching and learning. The student teachers I am working alongside now more than ever need to be able to engage in the discourses.

This chapter has set out why I am concerned about the concerns I describe and explain in Chapter 2. It has described examples from my practices in 2004 and 2005 and explained how those practices negated my values as I have re-conceptualised them in this Chapter. Importantly it holds up these practices as examples of what can happen when a teacher becomes complacent and compliant and content to use the standards of others to determine the value of what she is doing. The Chapter has explored why this matters.

The next Chapter explains how I have conducted this research which has enabled me to move from the 'then' of Chapter 3 to 'now' of Chapters 5 onwards. It describes and justifies the methodological choices which have informed the ways data have been gathered. In the next chapter I set out the standards of judgement, which are grounded in

my values as explicated in the last chapter, by which I would like this thesis judged in addition to the standards set by the University of Newcastle.

Part 2. Transition from 'then' to 'now' – a bridge over troubled water

Chapter 4. How I began to make changes – methodological decisions

This chapter will describe and explain what has enabled me to move from the 'then' I describe in Part 1 of this thesis to the 'now' of my practice which will make up Part 3. It will describe how I have planned and carried out the research and say why I have chosen a self-study action research methodology. The chapter will consider the methods I have used to gather data to provide evidence to support my claim that I have generated my own living theory of educational accountability. It will set out the standards of judgement by which I want my account to be judged and I will say why this setting of my own standards is crucial to an understanding of my claim that I am developing an epistemology of educational accountability. Finally the chapter will consider the ethical implications in this research.

This chapter is in many ways the most important of the whole thesis because it describes how I realised that I could do things differently and answer so many of the questions that were emerging from the turmoil that was my reflection on practice. As I developed the concerns described in Chapter 2, and began to realise why I was concerned, the choices I made about how to do the research acted as a signpost towards a major change.

In Chapters 2 and 3 I have said what concerns provide the reasons for doing this research and why I am concerned. I have grounded these concerns in my practices from 1990 until 2005. In 2005 I became part of the newly formed research group in the School of Education in my institution and the possibility of meaningful transformation and change opened up. It is in this chapter that I will describe the significance of the part of my narrative from 2005 to 2008.

I understand my methodological choices to have been determined not only by the historical and social contexts in which I practise but also the following considerations; my theoretical position; what I understand knowledge to be; how I think theory can be generated and used and also my ontological understandings. These explanations are an important part of this research because the values embedded in my ontological, epistemological and methodological understandings will become standards of judgement by which I want this thesis to be judged (Whitehead and McNiff 2006). The ontological and epistemological values I hold - relational practice and emancipatory, democratic and dialogical ways of knowing which are grounded in critically reflective practices will help to explain the methodological values I hold which have emerged from them. However, before I do this I want to contextualise these understandings because, as is always the case, my narrative has had a significant influence on the choices I have made.

4.1 Becoming aware

Woven throughout this thesis are a series of mini narratives with me, the narrator, in them (Geertz 1995). This is important because they have been the context from which my values and concerns have developed and because I see my life story as a resource for learning (Goodson, Biesta, Tedder, Adair 2010). Looking back at my professional life from a position of insecurity and anxiety in 2006, I came to realise two important things. As Geertz (ibid, p.9) says, 'Ambiguity is the warp of life, not something to be eliminated', and I realised that my narratives contain ambiguity. In addition I needed to, 'accept ambiguity, and allow for learning along the way' (Bateson 1994, p.235), and in so doing emerge a better practitioner. These narrative resources could help with the necessary change and transition from a practitioner who felt they knew nothing, to one who was becoming more confident about what they know (Goodson 2005). I have started from my own context and so this thesis is in part a narrative enquiry because, 'Narrative inquiry characteristically begins with the researcher's autobiographically oriented narrative association with the research puzzle' (Clandinin & Connelly 2000, p.41).

Two opportunities arose for me not long after I made the transition into teacher-education. Both were entirely separate but they both had a profound affect on this research and the

understandings that have emerged from it. The first was attending a course in 2005. I met an education researcher who told me she was not a teacher and in fact had not worked in any school, in any capacity. She did not think it necessary to do so in order to research into teaching and learning and determine the policies to be implemented by the government. I was very surprised by her dismissal of the idea that those working with students, whose profession was teaching and learning, should be driving forward changes and policies. This example typified for me a lack of expectation that teachers, as knowledgeable professionals, should generate their own respected theories of practice.

The more I thought about this, the more I began to realise that this represented a particular viewpoint and that I was not sure what my contribution to the discourse could be. As I studied for my MA throughout 2005, I became familiar with Stenhouse's idea (1975) that teachers should be researchers and began to identify with the need for teachers to engage in researching their own practices, which had passed me by entirely when I was teaching in primary schools. At the same time, again as part of my MA study, I was engaging with the debate between Hargreaves (1996) and Hammersley (1997) on the role of teachers in the research process which has proved a useful lens through which to reflect on my time in school.

Hargreaves, in his lecture to the Teacher Training Agency (1996), wrote; ‘teaching is not at present a research-based profession. I have no doubt that if it were teaching would be more effective and more satisfying.’ Reading this made me consider for the first time why this was not the case. Undoubtedly there was a lot of professional knowledge embodied in the practice of the teachers I worked with in the 1990s, yet none of us were engaging with key questions around our practice. We were all accepting the changes and, in some cases, criticism of the profession from above without any real attempt to put forward what we knew was good practice in a systematic and informed way. We lamented the loss of our professional standing yet we did nothing more than carry on in the same passive way, behaviour which Ball (1990) has suggested is teachers developing their own discourses of derision. Teachers were resistant to research. This was brought home to me in my own higher education context where the reluctance of the experienced

practitioners who are colleagues to become involved in research is regularly evident. They often see themselves as practice-based and as such do not need to be involved in too much theory.

I agree with Hargreaves (1996) that teachers were able to be effective in their work, by certain standards of judgement, without engaging in what he calls the 'knowledge base'. I was a very good example of this when I was teaching in school. I had not engaged with any theory around the teaching and learning process since I was at college and theory was, for me, very separate from practice. I realised that this was a contributory factor in the way that research in education had become largely separated from practice. The colleagues I worked alongside in the classroom were not research active. It was remote, unconnected and irrelevant to my day-to-day engagement with children in the classroom. As this extract from my MA learning log shows, I had not even thought about this in any meaningful way.

> *'I am fascinated by the points made by Hargreaves in his TTA address of (1996). Where were the theoretical underpinnings to my practice and did I in fact need any? I have spent many years in the classroom implementing different ideas about what constitutes good practice. I have taken the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies for example, and used them and adjusted them to fit the needs of my classes. I did not ask to see the theoretical underpinnings of these initiatives. In some cases my colleagues and I felt that some things we were told to do, (yes told or else we run the risk of failing inspections!) we knew to be detrimental to some children's progress. We had adapted and adjusted, using our own knowledge and understanding, to make them successful. At no time did I ever take a look at why this was the case. On what was I basing my practice? Certainly not any theories I could readily articulate and, colleagues and I did not engage in dialogue around the theoretical underpinnings of our practice. We had neither the time, nor more significantly perhaps, the inclination! It was not something I thought about, yet I called myself a reflective practitioner.'* (Renowden 2005, unpublished journal)

I now understand that this view of theory is grounded in the positivist ontological understandings which were and still are to some extent the normative discourses in education. The knowledge of what was the right way to teach or support children with behavioural difficulties for example, resided 'out there' to be passed on by those in a position to do so. Furthermore, it was becoming clear to me that teachers' personal and tacit knowledge (Polanyi 1958) was not valued as it could be and there was a

complacency and lack of confidence in the profession as a whole that allowed teachers to be driven by ideas and initiatives generated by bureaucrats and politicians. As I looked back on my days in the classroom, it became obvious to me that I had never really engaged with the changes and initiatives beyond the implementation stage. Even when my experience was telling me, for example, that the prescriptive nature of the Literacy Hour curriculum had the potential to stifle teacher creativity or contribute to teacher passivity as they followed pre-determined plans, I continued, as the Literacy co-ordinator, to implement it unchallenged. With the benefit of hindsight it became obvious to me that I had become accepting of changes and was not valuing what I knew about teaching and learning.

The second opportunity I had also came at the same time as my engagement in M level study. In 2005 I joined a group of tutors from the School of Education to be part of an initiative to increase the number of academics who were research active. Within my institution there was a noticeable difference in attitude to the research process amongst colleagues from different faculties; some were very research active and had a history of publishing while others, such as the School of Education, did very little research. This group would explore research methodologies with a view to finding a way to research that would keep practice at the forefront.

The differences within the institution were not just confined to the amount of research tutors were engaged in. There was also a difference in how we felt the School of Education was viewed by other colleagues in the University College. When I took up the job of senior lecturer in 2004, the School of Education seemed a very self-contained school with few contacts with the other schools on a day-to-day basis. There was a 'them and us' feel to the relationship and anecdotally I was told by colleagues that we did the teaching and learning work, which brought in the money through the students, and the other side, the other faculties and senior managers, did the research and writing. It was said amongst colleagues that the reason that as a School we did not involve ourselves extensively with the research was that we were too busy teaching. We had large numbers of students and a heavy teaching load and so it took us all our time to keep up to date

with changes in teaching – we had no time to be research active. The common attitude amongst some could be described as 'give us the time and we will be research active but until then we will focus on what is really important, teaching and learning.'

Most of my colleagues had been teachers in schools before coming into higher education and this ambivalent attitude to the research process is, I would suggest, a result of the way that teachers in school view the research process. Most of my primary colleagues had no relationship with it at all and I did not know anyone engaged in research in all of my years in school. This attitude seemed to have been taken into higher education and it was not uncommon to hear colleagues state that they were not academics, they were teachers. It was the case that colleagues within the School of Education did little to dispel that view. The resistance to research and the idea that teaching was of importance but that research was unrelated to it could also be heard articulated by some in management roles in the School of Education. Indeed, at my appraisal meeting in 2007, it was suggested that it was our role within the School of Education to be excellent teachers and that had little to do with research and the generation of knowledge. I was told that the latter was of little benefit to the former. I have come to understand this in the light of Richert's comment (1992, p.193).

> 'Teachers aren't heard because they don't speak, and they don't speak because they are part of a culture that silences them by a set of oppressive mechanisms such as overwork, low status and an externally defined standard of practice.'

There was however a perceived need by some managers, including the Head of School, for us to be research active so sessions with Professor Jean McNiff started in 2005. The reaction to this initiative was mixed and reflected the ambivalence felt by some colleagues to the idea of engaging in research. After an initial surge of interest partly driven by an understanding that we had to attend, the numbers slowly dwindled in the research group to leave a core of committed lecturers who were focusing their attention on higher accreditation, MA or doctoral study. I was near the end of my MA study at another University and I kept attending the group for several reasons.

First, as I have already described in previous chapters, my practice at the time was in a state of flux and I recognised that by being part of the group I would be able to talk to colleagues and become a member of a community which I considered would be a positive step. Second, I thought the study of different ideas alongside colleagues engaging in MA work would help me to finish mine. Third, I wanted to be part of an initiative that was seen to be important by the Head of school and senior managers within the institution. Last it sounded so interesting and would be a way for me to get to grips with some of the theory I needed to engage with. Apart from a rather dry research methods module taken as part of my MA programme I had never had any contact with research. My own university undergraduate dissertation was long forgotten and of course I had no need to think about research as a teacher, so it was all new. As I have described in Chapter 2, I was at a time in my life when I was looking for personal challenge and something meaningful to fill my time with. This seemed just the thing.

So at a time when I was uncertain about so many things and felt stripped of any solid foundation in terms of teaching and learning, I continued to attend the sessions with colleagues and the possibility of teachers being researchers into their own practices was opened up before me. In fact, it was actively encouraged. It is difficult to over emphasise the difference this understanding made to me at the time. An extract from my post session notes says,

> *'I really enjoyed today's session with Jean and colleagues. It is such a supportive group and now we are beginning to feel more secure and confident things are developing. What surprises me the most is that the things we are discussing, ontology and epistemology for example are really about my practice. What I mean is that although they are difficult to understand they are completely relevant to me because they are beginning to help explain why I have had so much difficulty with the large teaching groups. I feel as if I am beginning to articulate the difficulties in terms of what I believe in which is so helpful. Also it is providing me with a theoretical framework which I just did not have before and if I am going to be able to teach students effectively then I need to be confident that I know what I am talking about. I love these sessions and I am learning so much. I cannot remember a time when I felt so in touch with me the learner and I feel a renewed sense of improved self esteem. I feel as if I am on an aeroplane and the oxygen masks have just come down because there is a problem. I am expected to*

> *sort myself out first before I am ready to help anyone else. How exciting!'*
> (Renowden 2005, unpublished journal)

The sessions made complete sense because the simple question I needed to ask was, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' I did not want to know what others were doing because I did not feel as if I knew what I was doing. I realised that I could do the research I was being asked to do and focus on my practice by putting myself at the centre of the study as the learner by engaging in self study action research. As Palmer says (2000, p.3), 'Before you tell your life what truths and values you have decided to live up to, let your life tell you what truths you embody, what values you represent'. Even at the time I realised I was at a turning point in my life. So much of what I had done in the past had been with a view to meeting the needs and requirements of others. I was still doing the same to some extent (as some of my motivations for doing doctoral study show), but I also had a real awareness that I was, as Palmer (ibid) says, getting the opportunity to live my life from the inside out rather than the outside in.

I changed my MA dissertation so that it was a self-study action research enquiry asking the question, 'How can I improve my practice as I prepare students for teaching?' (Renowden 2006) with a focus on how I improved the sessions I delivered to the large groups of a hundred or so students and I gained my MA in 2006. As I engaged with this study through 2005 and 2006, I realised that part of the problems I was experiencing was that I was poorly prepared for the kind of changes I needed to make and the sort of understandings I needed to develop to be effective in my role as a higher education tutor. In school, I had become so set in my ways and confident in the 'how to' of teaching that I did not know where to begin when circumstances changed. I was so out of touch with myself as a learner that I did not know how to start getting in touch. My confidence in what I knew about teaching and learning was lost. That tacit knowledge (Polanyi 1958) had been underdeveloped and unarticulated and was irrelevant to the measures of success by which I was judged and by which I judged myself in the primary classroom.

In the concluding chapter of it my MA dissertation, I wrote the following,

> *'I have worked towards creating plural structures by offering up my account as one of many and I have begun the process of internalising theory and practice. I have become more confident professionally and this has been developed because I have been able to draw on my more informed judgements (Grundy, 1987.) I have become empowered as a professional educator and I have raised the volume of my voice within the institution in which I work and this has allowed me to take more control of my working life. I feel myself to be a participant in a change situation rather than an observer.*
>
> *Personally it has also been a positive experience. I have experienced the growth in my self-esteem that comes from the success of work undertaken. I have deepened the collaborative working relationships I value and my understanding of the needs of my students has developed through my work'* (Renowden 2006, unpublished MA dissertation p63-64).

Through doing that dissertation I felt as if I were beginning to engage for the first time in my practice and that I was growing into the idea that I was capable of developing theories of practice worth listening to. I began to want this voice. Through becoming increasingly exercised by this notion of the agenda for my professional life being determined by remote researchers, and of not being given, and more importantly, not asking for opportunities to articulate what I knew around primary practice, I was beginning to engage in the conversations others were having about what constitutes effective teaching practice. I no longer felt as if I were the type of teacher that Hargreaves describes.

> 'Today teachers still have to discover or adopt most of their own professional practices by personal preference, guided by neither the accumulated wisdom of seniors, nor by practitioner-relevant research. They see no need to keep abreast of research development and rightly regard research journals as being directed to fellow academics, not to them. Teachers rely heavily on what they learn from their own experience, private trial and error' (Hargreaves 1996, p.7).

I felt that Hargreaves was right and I thought I should continue to be engaged in research around the actions I was involved in. Private trial and error did not seem to be enabling me to improve my actions. Research began to feel like the right thing to do and in some ways I needed to make up for lost time.

I enrolled immediately for doctoral study in 2007 because the MA dissertation felt like the first cycle of an action research process and I understood the need to continue because

there was so much more for me to understand. I was beginning to realise that there were other more fundamental concerns about my practices and my understandings. These were brought to the fore by my engagement with and observation of the power dynamics within the institution.

The need to improve what I was doing and understand my practice was reason enough to engage with self-study action research as a methodology. However, there was a further reason for doing it which emerged from my first contact with the use of power as control and marginalisation. While I was in primary practice, I had been very lucky with all the senior managers and heads that I had worked with. I always felt a part of dynamic teams that gave a voice to all within the school. The weekly staff meetings helped this perception and the managers themselves were warm, caring individuals. Of course, the power dynamics existed and there were colleagues who crossed swords with management, but that was not my personal experience. Since the primary schools themselves were small places, contact with management was frequent and it was easy to see managers in relaxed non-management roles such as teaching. The team ethos was strong and because the schools were Catholic, as I am, we were part of a clearly defined community.
At this time I was also at my most compliant and unquestioning. I was a part of the system and I worked hard to tick all the right boxes, making sure that everything was done in preparation for Ofsted visits. I completed paperwork and created policies to suit the requirements of others. I conformed to the idea that higher standards would be possible if teachers reflected on what they were doing and followed the latest suggestions from others.

In my new job things felt very different, partly because of my own changing perception of myself and partly because of the reality of the situation. My line management consisted of senior colleagues within the School of Education and the hierarchy was explicit and accessible. I was however aware of the University College structures which the management of the School of Education came under; a typical higher education hierarchy. This was very different to anything I had experienced before and a discourse of 'them and us' seemed to be alluded to. Whether or not this divide existed in reality it

was how it was perceived by my colleagues. It did seem to be borne out by what I was experiencing. Tutors from other schools did not always have the heavy teaching load that I had and they were often publishing and researching which was given a high premium within the institution.

It was with this discourse as a background that the newly formed research group I have described began to engage with self-study action research as their methodology of choice. As I will explore later this methodology offered us as teacher educators an opportunity to engage with academic study in a way we had not done before. Historically, it is only as recently as the 1990s that it was acknowledged as a rigorous, valid way of researching. Many higher education institutions struggled with the idea of first person practitioner research being a suitable methodology for doctoral research. Within my institution, the 'them and us' perception epitomised the debates in the wider research world about the worth of positivist, technical forms of research as opposed to practitioner, 'softer' forms of research.

The relevance of these positions to this thesis is the influence it had on my choice of methodology. Justifiably or not, I felt myself to be engaging in a research methodology that was seen to be a soft option and one that had limited value in the research world. In 2007 I put in a PhD proposal which was rejected by the institution despite being considered of value by those who were leading the field. Other colleagues had the same experience. At the time, I felt that decisions and attitudes were being made and formulated based on the underpinning discourses in the wider research context, that is, the well-documented paradigm wars (Gage 1989). Senior managers were and had been research active in the so-called 'hard' sciences and I felt that they were unable or unwilling to take the leap they needed to see the value of what colleagues and I were doing. In the end, I took the proposal to a different institution.

The impact this experience had on my choices at the time was profound. Real or imagined, I felt I was experiencing a deep-seated idea that teachers researching their practice had limited value and that this practitioner research was problematic when

considering such things as impact and relevance. By now I had the bit between my teeth and I developed a rather crusading mentality. Not only did I want to understand my practice and research it, I also wanted to produce something that would be recognised in the Academy. I wanted to influence the discourses and show that teachers could be researchers.

I am aware that it could be said that at this time I had made the transition into higher education and that I was not a teacher but had become an academic and as such part of the research community that was perceived by practitioners to be remote from the practice. I did not and do not see the two roles as being mutually exclusive. At this time I was not part of the Academy because I was unable to engage fully in the 'habitus' (Bourdieu 1990). I was outside the academic community of the institution because of the lack of the right qualifications or because of the role I was fulfilling. I considered myself to be a teacher who was looking to become an academic-teacher and at the heart of my research was the practice of teaching and learning. Choosing self-study action research enabled me to theorise my teaching thus bringing the academic and the practice together in a way that was uncommon in other forms of education research.

So whilst agreeing with the general principle that teachers should be researchers I was acutely aware once in higher education that I did not want to be engaged in research that would be re-enforcing a model that I increasingly saw as suppressing the voice of teachers. In Chapter 3 I have considered the influence that scientific and positivist ways of knowing and knowledge generation have had on the discourses around knowledge, which in turn has had and still has an impact on the way that less objective, more qualitative ways of knowing are viewed within the Academy. It was certainly my perception within my own institution that there was a difference in the value assigned to knowledge generated through empirical research and to that coming from practice. I wanted to change that idea but I wanted to do it on my own terms. I am rather ashamed to admit that I developed an 'I'll show them' mentality.

What I was sure of was that I did not want to become part of the research body which was largely unread by the majority of teachers. I wanted to engage in research that would make a difference. I had a very real sense in 2006 that, unless I came to understand what I was doing in order to improve it, then I would be in some way selling myself, my colleagues and the students short. I felt a moral commitment to my practice so had to take full responsibility for my actions. My understandings about my practice had been so unsettled by my move to higher education that I needed to do something about it. I wanted to become confident again and be able to explicate the tacit understandings and personal knowledge (Polanyi 1958) embedded in my practices.

Furthermore, if I am honest, I felt a sense of guilt about the years I had spent in the classroom. I realised that I had in some ways become complacent about my practices, happy to say I was a reflective practitioner without really engaging with the normative assumptions underpinning them. Now was my chance to put this right. I experienced a need to engage with the why's of my practices because if *I* did not understand my own teaching, then how could I support the students to understand their emerging classroom practices? How could I say that I valued emancipatory ways of knowing or dialogical critically reflective practices if I was not engaging with these discourses in my own practice?

Mezirow's (1981) idea that what he calls perspective transformation gives the learner accurate understandings of his historical situation, was lived out by me as I adjusted to being a higher education tutor and entered the world of research. Mezirow says it is an emancipatory process of the learner becoming critically aware of how and why the psycho-cultural assumptions they hold have come to inhibit and constrain the way they see themselves and their relationships. This then reconstitutes the structures to enable a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experiences. These new understandings are then acted upon. I wanted to challenge the power dynamics within which I had worked for so long and to challenge the way I saw myself in relation to the structures in which I practiced, particularly those related to accountability. Mezirow says that

perspective transformation contains the following elements. I have related them to aspects of my historical context.

	Mezirow's elements of perspective transformation	My historical context
1	A disorientating dilemma	How can I improve my practice as a higher education tutor?
2	Self-examination	What am I doing and what do I know?
3	A critical assessment of personally internalised role assumptions	What was and am I doing as a teacher and what were and are the normative assumptions I base my practices on?
4	Relating this to the experience of others	What do my colleagues say as we engage in dialogue? What are the theories of others?
5	Exploring new options for actions	What might I do differently? (MA dissertation)
6	Building competence and confidence in new roles	How can I improve my lectures and engaging in M level teaching?
7	Planning a course of action	What next as I move into doctoral study?
8	Acquiring knowledge and skills to implement plans	Engaging in doctoral research
9	Provisional effort to try new roles and assess feedback	Gathering data and putting ideas forward for critique
10	Re-integration into society on the basis of the new conditions dictated by the new perspective	How can I learn from the research and change what I do?

Table 1.

This understanding meant that the choices I should make were becoming more obvious. I needed to focus on my own learning to be able to establish my own understandings of what constitutes effective practice in teacher education. I needed to be able to account for what I knew and was coming to know in such a way as to be able to feel that I was doing the right thing by myself and the students that I felt a responsibility towards. I also felt I needed to do it in such a way as to have that knowledge validated within the Academy. I wanted to produce a piece of work that would show that teachers are capable of theorising their practice in such a way that is considered to be professionally and personally worthwhile and academically worthy of note. The obvious choice was doctoral research through which I hope to influence others to put their validated accounts of practice into the Academy thus in some way beginning to counteract the corrosive effects of teacher passivity.

Before embarking on this research certain things were central to what I wanted to accomplish and these developed throughout the enquiry. The foci of the enquiry emerged from aspects of my narrative as described and explained in Part 1 and in this Chapter. If I was going to speak truth to power, or as Said (1998) said refuse to accept the automatic truth of received ideas, then I needed to be recognised within the field of education as having something to say so it was important that I engaged with the idea that I would and, almost as importantly, could make an original claim to knowledge. That claim needed to be grounded in my practice. On a personal level I needed to take responsibility for my actions and in so doing open up the possibility of influencing others to do the same. Due to the understandings I was developing around my ontological and epistemological positions, the way I chose to conduct this research became central to its purpose and indeed part of the explanation and demonstration of my learning and my newly re-conceptualised idea of educational accountability. As my thesis has become for me a practical act of holding myself to account for what I know, the way that I have conducted the research is part of that. I agree with Dadds and Hart (2001, p.169) when they suggest:

> ‘Practitioner research methodologies are with us to serve professional practices. So what genuinely matters are the purposes of the practice that the research seeks to serve, and the integrity with which the practitioner researcher makes

> methodological choices about ways of achieving those purposes. No methodology is, or should be, cast in stone if we accept that professional intention should be informing research processes, not pre-set ideas about methods of ideas'.

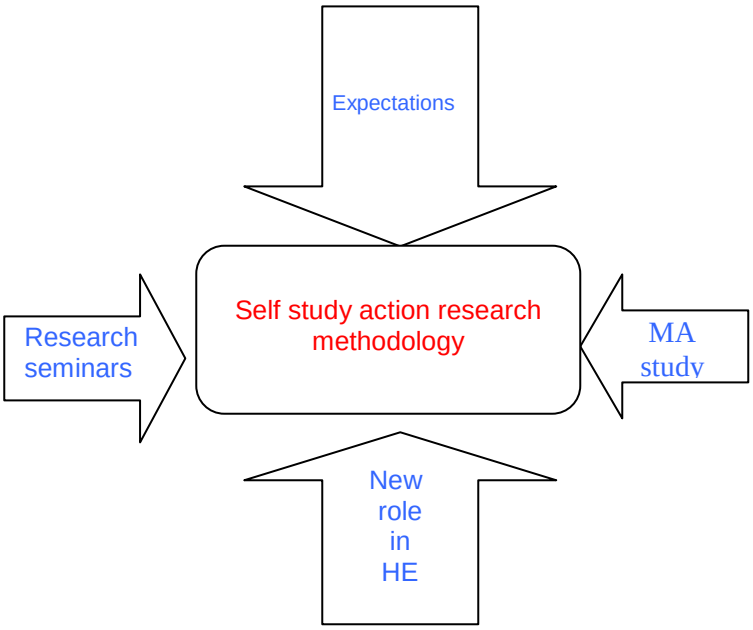
All of the above aims for the research were instrumental in the methodological choices I made and that choice was a way of re-connecting with a sense of integrity about what I was doing.

It is my stated intention throughout this research to understand what I have learnt and how I have learnt it, as I hold myself to account for what I am doing because learning is part of and the potential outcome of educational accountability. My methodological choice has been made in order to further my knowing and to enable me to demonstrate the way I think that knowing has come about. I consider this to be holding myself responsible for what I am doing and thus acting with integrity as a teacher. The purpose of this research is to offer an explanation of how and why I am attempting to influence the learning of others and to influence the learning of social formations in which I work and so I choose to conduct a self-study action research enquiry. I believe that the opportunities to influence others can be most powerfully opened up through the power of personal example and this idea, and others expressed in this chapter, serves as justification for my methodological choice.

4.2 How have I made choices about how to do this research? - self-study action research methodology

The contextual setting for my methodological choices was a set of circumstances, ideas and changes that all came about at the same time and although I have explicated these it is important to understand how they all impacted on each other and came together to make a self-study action research enquiry methodology the appropriate choice for my research. I have set them out in diagrammatic form to support my written descriptions, which, because of the limitations of the written narrative, appear in this thesis in a linear form.

Table 2.



The way I have chosen to do this research is a direct result of the experiences I had when I began teaching in a higher education environment. I had no experience of doing research until 2006 so everything about it was very new to me. I had no pre-conceived ideas and the research question emerged from my own context so it was very much a case of finding answers to my questions in a way that felt real, close to me and authentic, rather than treading a pre-determined pathway.

4.2.1 What ontological assumptions underpin my choice of methodology?

In Chapter 3 I set out my ontological values of relational practice. In research terms, the way one sees oneself in relation to the world determines the paradigm and methodology one chooses and the type of focus one has. The final decades of the last century saw considerable changes in the way that what Kuhn (1970) called a paradigm has been understood. Crotty (2003, p.35) says, 'It is an overarching conceptual construct, a particular way in which scientists make sense of the world or some segment of the world.' Burrell and Morgan (1979) identify four sets of assumptions embedded in two conceptions of the world around us. The first of these is the ontological assumptions one holds, which can be described in two ways.

1. The world which makes up our reality is external to us and is considered something that can be viewed objectively. The world can be looked at as if one is a spectator. This has been known as positivism. Positivism is described by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000, p.8) as thinking that, 'all genuine knowledge is based on sense experience and can only be advanced by means of observation and experience'. This view of coming to understand the world in which we live prevailed and underpinned scientific thought in the western world for centuries (ibid). The scientific world is well-ordered, systematic and regular. 'It is a world of regularities, constancies, uniformities, iron-clad laws, absolute principles' (Crotty 2003, p.28). This is, of course, not the world of human experience, and it is certainly not the world of classrooms, children and teaching.

2. Our understanding of our social reality emanates from a view that individuals create it through their own consciousness. Individuals come to know about the world through engagement with it and through being a part of it. This is called anti-positivism or interpretivism. Crotty (2003, p.67) describes it as looking for 'culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social-life world.' This perspective is characterised by concern for the individual and a desire to understand the world of human experience which tends towards the subjective (Cohen et al 2000).

These philosophical positions lead to particular views of theory. Theory is an explanation of the meanings embedded in situations. The way research is conducted is determined by the paradigm within which one is situated ontologically. The positivist paradigm leads to research that is more traditional in nature and this is understood to generate particular forms of knowledge through the choice of particular methodologies such as experiments and surveys. This research is often quantitative, and objectivity, generalisability and replicability are sought. Positivist research generates a particular form of theory which is characterised in the following way:

- It must generate laws that can be empirically tested
- The theory must be compatible with previously validated theories and with previous observations
- The theory must not overlook what is difficult to explain

- It must be parsimonious
- It must be replicable
- It must be generalisable

(see also Popper 1968; Lakatos 1970; Mouly 1978; Laudan 1990; Rasmussen 1990 cited Cohen et al 2000, p.12)

On the other hand the subjectivist or anti-positivist paradigm conducts research differently, being largely qualitative. Within this paradigm, methodologies are chosen to reflect the view of the world as being humanly constructed so less emphasis is put on objectivity, as researchers use amongst other methods, observations and listening to narratives. The theory generated in these research reports is underpinned by the idea that because the understandings are grounded in a human reality, they are diverse and many. The theory is less certain, less fixed and tentative. Ontologically, as described and explained in Chapter 3, I see myself in relationship to those around me. The question I want to answer seeks to understand my own learning, the learning of the students I work alongside and the learning of the social formations in which I work (McNiff and Whitehead 2009). It therefore emerges from my practices which I acknowledge are, as Schon (1983) says, as being like swampy lowlands. What I wanted to do was set the problem.

> 'When we set the problem, we select what we will treat as the 'things' of the situation, we set the boundaries of our attention to it, and we impose upon it a coherence which allows us to say what is wrong and in what directions the situation needs to be changed. Problem setting is a process in which, interactively, we name the things to which we will attend and frame the context in which we will attend to them' (Edwards, Hanson and Raggatt, (eds) 1996, p.16).

This would enable me to focus on my context and my practices.

4.2.2 What epistemological understandings underpin my choice of methodology?

As my research is conducted in the field of education, which I understand to be diverse, multi-layered and faceted and full of human engagement and interaction, the positivist theoretical perspective, that the world can be understood through objective means, does not seem suitable in this context. Experience tells me that the same lesson, delivered to

different children on different days in different classrooms could have a myriad of possible outcomes and what I would come to know about myself, the children and the school would differ greatly. Certainty does not seem to be the most likely outcome. In 2006 I was beginning to value the knowledge generated from this environment and as I looked to enhance my voice through my MA and sought greater understanding of my practice, I wanted a worldview that would value this knowledge and consider it worthwhile.

There is now the development of what Gibbons et al (1994) call a new model of knowledge, Mode 2, and there are changes in the way that knowledge is viewed which, according to Delanty (2001, p.4), 'warrants the claim that we are living in a knowledge society', thus leading to a major epistemic shift. Knowledge users have become more involved in its production and so it has become democratised. This newly evolving move away from knowledge seen as a meta-narrative (Egan 2005, p.105) has led to a growth in research by practitioners within complex fields of practice which is qualitative in nature. It generates knowledge which

> 'has ceased to be something standing outside society, a goal to be pursued by a community of scholars dedicated to the truth, but is shaped by many social actors under the conditions of the essential contestability of truth '.

This has led to the challenge to the idea that knowledge is of value in itself (Power 1997) and that the way that knowledge is used is of prime importance. This is the type of knowledge that underpins this research and it is knowledge that emerges from the context and which leads to action.

4.3 What I decided to do

The research I am conducting is largely qualitative in nature and resides in the anti-positivist paradigm so as to acknowledge the complexities of the world of education, teaching and learning. I have chosen to use self-study action research as the methodological lens through which to address my concerns as expressed in Chapter 2. The reasons for this choice have been contextualised already and further explanation will unfold throughout this chapter.

4.3.1 Action research

I realised that one way to understand what I was doing was to engage in research that importantly, would be grounded in, and lead to further action. Carr (2006, p.422) says,

> 'what action research derives from philosophy is a theoretical account of the distinctive nature of the 'action' that constitutes its object of study and an epistemological justification for the kind of knowledge it seeks to generate'.

Above all, what I wanted to do was act to improve what I was doing through researching my practice, so action research seemed to be the answer. Kemmis and McTaggart (1992, p.10), state that, 'to do action research is to plan, act, observe and reflect more carefully, more systematically and more rigorously than one does in everyday life'. This was what I wanted to continue to do, as well as bridging the gap between research and practice (Somekh 1995). More than this I wanted to bring together in my research the following things:

- an improvement in my practice
- an opportunity to take action to improve my personal and social situation, based on theories I generate
- an ability to generate knowledge of a particular kind
- an opportunity to develop a voice within the Institution
- a chance to understand and develop what I knew
- a chance to develop and explore my potential

In action research according to Mellor (1998) the methodology is the struggle, that is the struggle to understand what is going on. To be engaged in action research is, according to Van Manen (1990), to question lived experience and it has the potential to make a pedagogic difference. Elliott (1978) says action research is distinct from other educational research as it is concerned with everyday practical problems rather than theoretical ones. It sets out to deepen understanding. The term 'action research' is attributed to Lewin (1946), who described it as a form of inquiry that would enable the laws governing social life to be challenged in practice. Mills (2003) suggests that there are three main action research schools of thought. First there is critical action research, which is emancipatory and draws from postmodern, critical theory (Carr and Kemmis

1986). This type of action research is committed to moving away from traditions of reform and social impact (Mills 2003). The second is technical action research which is scientific in nature and last there is practical action research which is not so clearly theoretically framed (ibid) and focuses on the 'how to' and 'how do I?' (Elliott 1991). The features of action research were appropriate for the type of research I wished to engage in. As Kemmis (2009, p.463-474) says,

> 'Action research changes people's practices, their understandings of their practices and the conditions under which they practice. It changes people's patterns of 'saying', 'doing' and 'relating' to form new patterns- new ways of life. It is a meta-practice: a practice that changes other practices. It transforms the sayings, doings and relating that compose those other practices. Action research is also a practice composed of sayings, doings and relating'.

This outlines what I wanted to achieve. I would need to be able to make the familiar strange (Derrida 1997). I wanted to deconstruct the knowledge I had and the knowledge embedded in things I was doing. I needed to understand my own and others' human experiences in the context I was working in and to be able to transform my understandings of what I was doing in a way that would be directly relevant to my context. Lakatos, cited Feyerabend (1975, p.113), puts forward the idea that 'methodology must grant a breathing space to the ideas we wish to consider'. That was exactly what I needed so that I could understand my actions and practices and be more self-confident as a lecturer.

Feyerabend (1975) goes on to say that it is the evolution of a theory as time passes that is important as we appraise it methodologically, not how it looks at any given moment. This idea introduced a level of freedom around my choice of methodology. Lakatos is comfortable with the idea that methodological standards can be criticised, challenged and even replaced and it became my intention to contribute to Boyer's (1990) idea of a 'new scholarship', contributing to new ways of knowing. I would be able to challenge and critique the more traditional types of methodology and I would be contributing to this new culture within my own institution as the culture of enquiry developed in the School

of Education. My practices would have the potential to be different and my theory of practice could be dynamic and evolving as it emerged from them.

What I did not want to do was to adopt a conceptual framework that would be prescriptive and inhibiting and as I read about different methodological possibilities I realised I was looking for one that would value my own emerging understandings and knowledge. Through 2005 and 2006 I genuinely felt that everything that I knew was 'up for grabs' and that I was going to be able to construct my own understandings through asking the question, 'How can I improve what I am doing?' (Whitehead 1989) and it would be necessary to do this in collaboration with both colleagues and students. For the first time in many years, I experienced what it was like to be consciously learning and the value of others in that process. The epistemological assumptions underpinning action research would enable me to have the freedom to do what I needed to do. McNiff and Whitehead (2006, p.26) say these assumptions are that,

- The object of the enquiry is the 'I'
- Knowledge is uncertain
- Knowledge creation is a collaborative process

I was beginning to identify with these ideas in my practice.

4.3.2 A self-study action enquiry and the generation of living theory

The positivist, traditional form of research that is underpinned by the rationale that knowledge is 'out there', waiting to be discovered did not seem suitable. That type of propositional knowledge would be able to inform my actions and ideas. It would however, be on the understanding that what I knew and would come to know would be as worthy of recognition and be as significant in terms of answering my questions as any other types of knowledge. The more I engaged with the ideas of Whitehead and McNiff (2006), it became almost imperative that my doctoral thesis become an explanation of the educational influences of my theories of practice on my own learning, the learning of the students I worked alongside and the wider social situations I found myself in.

It was in the light of this understanding that it became clear that a self-study inquiry would enable me to put myself at the centre of the research on the understanding that, 'looking inward can lead to a more intelligent and useful outward gaze' (Mitchell, Weber, O'Reilly and Scanlon 2005, p.4), and it would also enable me to look outward to draw on the understanding of others. When I reflected on how my context had influenced my understandings, the focus of my practice changed from a preoccupation with the learning of others to a need to explore and account for my own learning so as to better understand the learning of others. At the heart of my questions was this sense of needing to improve my own actions, to understand my own learning and fulfil my own potential and in so doing be able to support others in doing the same. At no time, until engaging in this research, had I truly begun to reflect *critically* on what I was doing. This meant that I *needed* to become involved in a self-study inquiry and answer the question 'how do I study myself?'

This methodological approach has been developed in part by Whitehead in response to his desire to answer the question, 'How do I improve my practice?' (1989) and to his emerging understanding that the disciplines approach to educational research, constituted on the ideas of philosophy, sociology, psychology and the history of education was unable to represent sufficiently the understandings of practitioners.

> 'I believed then, and I believe now that the profession of education requires a professional knowledge-base of educational theories that can explain the educational influences of individuals in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations in which we live and work' (Whitehead 2008, p.104).

The type of theory emerging from the methodology is what he calls living theory, which is the explanation of an individual's involvement in their own learning. He describes the generation of a living theory as emerging from narrative enquiry, action reflection cycles, social and personal validation and methodological inventiveness. The theory is unique because it comes out of the cultural and historical context of the individual and their lived experience. Whitehead (ibid, p.1) says,

> ‘A living theory is an explanation produced by an individual for their educational influence in their own learning, the learning of others and in the learning of the social formation in which they live and work’.

It is also phenomenological as it starts from the position of the researcher experiencing phenomena, and trying to understand them. Living theories are explained using values as the explanatory principles of the way individuals choose to live out their lives and their practices.

Whitehead's idea that practitioners see themselves as a ‘living contradiction’ (1989, p.45-52) resonated with me at the time that I was not living out my values in my practice. The possibility of fully engaging with the idea of being more educational in what I was doing was timely. In his writings, Whitehead calls for a distinct difference to be made between education research and educational research. He says,

> ‘I am suggesting that education research is research carried out from the perspective of disciplines and fields of education such as the philosophy, sociology, history, psychology, management, economics, policy and leadership of education. In my view, educational research is distinguished as the creation and legitimisation of valid forms of educational theory and knowledge that can explain the educational influences of individuals in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of the social formations in which we live and work' (2008, p.105).

By engaging in self-study action research, I would be able to generate my own unique living theories of practice from my emerging understandings and this theory would be grounded in my values around what is educational. This would enable me to become more confident about what I was doing and I would be becoming a teacher who could explain their practices in a way that could have the potential to influence others. I would be fulfilling one of the purposes of the research.

I began to understand that in engaging with self-study action research I would be conducting an educational enquiry, what Elliott (2006, p.169) calls a democratic perception of rationality, a practical science. According to Elliott, ‘What made research educational is its practical intention to realise educational values in action.’ It is a form of

commonsense reasoning that would value my own tacit understandings (Polanyi 1958). By doing this research I have taken action in such a way as to live out my growing understanding that the journey was as important as the destination. The idea of holding myself to account for my actions has emerged and the power that this can have for transformation and understanding has become the focus of my research.

By engaging in action research I have been able to test the practical usefulness of my tacit understandings and by engaging in self-study action research I am able to generate a particular type of personal theory that will show what I am learning (McNiff and Whitehead 2006). Importantly this has been made public and offered for critique because of course these theories could in fact be incorrect. Having made my choice, I agreed with Habermas (1972) that it is not possible to be in a position to know with absolute certainty. The type of knowledge produced through a self-study methodology is embedded in and expressed through the practices and relationships of the individual, unlike the more traditional forms of scientific research, concerned with producing knowledge which is considered fixed and cumulative. The idea that this is the value neutral product suggested by positivism has been challenged (Kuhn 1964) and it has been suggested that knowledge is more subjective and dependent on the context in which it is generated. Habermas (1976) valued scientific knowledge but he acknowledged that it was one type of knowledge amongst many and as such was not in a position to judge all knowledge. Habermas (1972), in his 'theory of constitutive interests', considered that the different typologies of knowledge were shaped by the human interests which they serve and the social and historical conditions around their generation. Knowledge is an outcome of human activity.

I am generating the kind of knowledge that comes through holding myself to account for my actions with a moral purpose. The type of knowledge generated through the application of a self-study methodology is grounded in the acknowledgement that the individual is able to use their tacit understandings to generate their own theories of practice. This is underpinned by the work of Polanyi (1958), who said that personal knowledge is not only worthwhile and of value but that it is a part of even the scientific

knowledge generated through the positivist paradigm. He said that we know more than we can say and that we know this through personal knowledge. Chomsky (1986) develops this by suggesting that we have, as part of our genetic make-up, the innate capacity to generate a grammar. This idea was developed by McNiff (2007) who suggested that we have the innate capacity to generate an unlimited amount of knowledge. These ideas are important in the context of my thesis because my claim to know is premised on this valuing of my own personal understandings. I am doing as Polanyi suggests by being committed to my own act of knowing and it is an act of faith that this claim is potentially right. My self-study action research methodology is allowing me to test this claim that I have learnt something and that this act of learning has the potential to influence the learning of others. The theory is emerging as my life is lived and it is an explanation of my understandings of my actions.

It became obvious to me that the choices I made about the best way to understand my concerns about my practice could not be separated from a wider context and discussion. My choice of methodology became more than the best way to find answers to my questions. It became a break for freedom from an almost pre-determined 'right' way to engage in research emanating from the so called paradigm wars underpinned by the norms in the institution which were grounded in what Guignon (2004) describes as a binary view of the world: artificial or natural; inner or outer. This involves a ranking where one thing is seen as better than another. My choice of self-study action research also enabled me to account for what I was doing and what I know in a way that valued my voice, while at the same time enabling me to demonstrate that I can hold myself to account for what I do in a way that could be seen to be worthwhile and have influence. It would enable me to begin to address some of the issues in my practice and some of the wider issues I have described in Chapter 2.

4.3.3 Self-study action research and setting standards of judgement

Pring (2004, p.32) suggests that standards are 'benchmarks; they are the criteria whereby one assesses or evaluates the quality of a particular activity or process.' These standards are linked to values and he goes on to say, 'Performance against standards does not go up

and down; standards simply change, because what we think to be important changes' (ibid).

One of the key features of self-study action research is that it opens up the possibility for me to be able to set my own standards by which I would like this research to be judged which will sit alongside the institutional standards of the University of Newcastle. This is very important because in doing so I am beginning to address some of the concerns I have in Chapter 2. I am concerned because I am increasingly being held to account against the technical rational criteria set by others and which emerge from discourses of power and control. These discourses and accountability structures are leading to the perception that I am unable as a teacher to determine my own standards of practice and this has the potential to lead to teacher compliance which in turn lessens opportunities for teachers to say what they know, and are coming to know, differently. It is my contention that I am able to contribute to the judgements made about the effectiveness of my actions and so I am asking you, the examiner and others to judge the quality of my claim that I am contributing to my learning, the learning of the students and to the learning of the social formations in which I work through the development of an epistemology of educational accountability, in several ways.

I acknowledge that I will be judged by the Standards of Judgement for good quality research set by the examining committee of the University of Newcastle for a PhD thesis. These will include some of the following:

- How rigorous is the methodological and epistemological framework?
- Are the ideas scholarly enough to be held alongside the ideas of others and are the ideas worthy of merit? Is my claim significant in the field?
- Has the truthfulness of the claim been tested?
- Does the thesis describe, explain and critically analyse?

Throughout this research, I acknowledge that the reality of the context in which I practise and in the wider field, for the moment, is that effectiveness and quality are judged against standards set by those who are removed from the practices. This is the reality of the situation and it has never been my suggestion that such things as the QTS Standards and

the Ofsted Standards should be ignored and personal standards of judgement replace them. It has not been my intention to remove myself or the students from the reality we are part of. It will be necessary for me continue to account for what I am doing to others in a way that is technical rational and bureaucratic.

My intention throughout this research is to understand what happens when I hold myself to account for what I am doing and to see if doing this influences my learning and the learning of the students. I do not think that I can learn enough about that by just ticking the boxes and meeting the criteria set by others. As I have come to understand the value of what I know about my practice I want to be able to use the values that are embedded in this to judge the quality of my actions. This understanding is at the heart of this research. I am testing the validity of my claim that because I am holding myself to account for what I am doing, using my values as living standards of judgement, I am learning to do things differently and that this is contributing to my learning and the learning of the students and so I am generating my own living theory of educational accountability. I am asking that those values I have explicated in Chapter 3 be used as additional standards of judgement by which this claim can be judged. I have checked the data to look for evidence that these living standards of judgement are being enacted in my practice (McNiff 2002). These are in addition to the standards set by the University of Newcastle. In doing this, I am exercising the voice I consider to be so important.

To this end I would also like the following living standards of judgement to be considered as they have emerged from the ontological, epistemological and methodological values that are explicated in this thesis. I would like it noted that I am able to explain what I am doing in such a way that it can sit alongside the other validated accounts of practitioners and contribute to the knowledge base in the field of education. These are the standards by which I would like examiners to judge the claims I make in addition to those mentioned above.

- Is there evidence of a commitment towards the living out in my practice of the value of education as an emancipatory and democratic process that emerges from critically reflective, dialogical and relational practices?

- Have I evidenced my claim that educational accountability as I conceptualise it can lead to my own and other people's learning?
- Is this thesis evidence of a developing epistemology of educational accountability?

The values which I set out in Chapter 3 will transform into my standards of judgement and so the relationship between the methodology and the living standards of judgement will be established. Self-study action research enables me to use my explicated values as the standards by which my life and my work can be judged and the methodology opens up a space for me to show how holding myself to account for what I do in relation to those values can lead to improvement.

4.4 Data collection methods

The data is related to the subject of this thesis: how I am learning and contributing to the learning of students and the social formations in which I work as I develop an epistemology of educational accountability. Data has been collected to look for evidence that my practice is moving towards my values as explicated in Chapter 3. I have looked for evidence of educational dispositions such as critical reflection, dialogue and transformational learning as I learn to hold myself to account for what I do thereby enabling the possibility that the students may do the same.

The methods used to gather data in this form of research are qualitative in nature (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000). Qualitative research has characteristics that distinguish it from other ways of conducting research studies, for example quantitative research. Creswell (2007) lists these characteristics, which will relate to this research.

- Natural setting- The data I have gathered is from the place that I experienced myself as a ‘living contradiction’ (Whitehead 1989, p.45-51). The participants in the research are also from the context in which my practice is located.
- Researcher as key instrument- I am the gatherer of the data. I am involved in every aspect of the data collection process. I have not used instruments generated by other researchers.

- Multiple sources of data - I do not rely on a single source of data. I have used audio recordings, interviews, journals, field notes and questionnaires. I have done my own data review, organisation and analysis.
- Inductive data analysis- I have built the themes and categories from the data and I have asked participants to help with this process (Chapter 6).
- Participants' meaning - I have fore grounded this ahead of my meaning and the meaning from the literature as I have analysed the data in Chapter 6.
- Emergent design- the research design has been fluid and has emerged from the research as it unfolds.
- Theoretical lens- this research has looked through different lenses such as the concepts of education, accountability, learning and values.
- Interpretive research - I interpret what I see and hear throughout and these interpretations are inextricably linked to my context, historical and contemporary, and my prior understandings and background. I have done this alongside the participants and anyone else who reads it, which leads to multiple perspectives on the issue.
- Holistic account- The picture I present is a complex one that considers the different factors involved (Creswell 2007, p.175-176).

The following data collection methods have been used.

- Audio recording of dialogue between students and myself after lesson observation and throughout link tutor meetings
- Written feedback from me to students after lesson observations
- Student post-session written feedback comments
- My research journal written intermittently over the research period
- Field notes made by myself during conversations with students throughout sessions

A number of different methods have been used which according to Denzin (1978) supports methodological triangulation. Triangulation 'gives a more detailed and balanced picture of the situation' (Altrichter, Feldman, Posch and Somekh 2008 p.147). I understand that the generation of evidence from the data is an important way to test the

validity of my claim. These methods have been chosen to provide data as the grounds of evidence of my learning and the learning of students.

In the data I am looking for evidence that establishes the link between holding myself to account in a particular way, which I am calling educational, and the actions I have taken which can lead to learning. I am looking for evidence to show that by transforming how I work alongside students I am creating opportunities for them and me to be able to articulate what we know and to be able to say how we are coming to know it. I am looking for evidence that I am contributing to an increase in our confidence about ourselves as learners which will have the potential to enable us to contribute to the dialogue about what is worthwhile in teaching. I am looking for evidence that I am developing a theory of what I know and how I come to know it, developing an epistemology of educational accountability which has the potential to transform what the students and I are doing.

4.4.1 Research Participants

The research participants have been chosen from the Year 4 BA Initial Teacher Training Programme and the full time Postgraduate students from within the institution in which I work. These cohorts have been invited to participate for a number of reasons.

- The Year 4 students have been within the University College for more than 3 years so they have been in schools on a number of occasions. This is important because I wanted to record my engagement with them as a link tutor and I wanted them to be as familiar as possible with the expectations embedded in this relationship.
- The experience I have had of Year 4 students is that in their fourth year they develop a confidence in their relationship with tutors which I think will contribute to more honest feedback. This is important because for the data to be valid it needs to be as free as possible from the inherent power dynamics which are a part of the student/tutor relationship.

- They are the only small groups that I teach on my own and to be able to say that I have influenced their learning in our sessions I need to be the only tutor teaching them during the sessions.
- My experience of Year 4 students is that they are more able to be articulate about themselves as learners

There are potentially problematic issues with these groups which need to be considered.

- I assess the modules they take, which could influence what they say or do. To take account of this as much as possible I have made it clear that choosing to participate in my research will not influence the marks they are given. They are aware that their assignments are marked anonymously and they are all moderated by colleagues to ensure the marking is fair and accurate. A sample is then presented to the programme exam board for confirmation of the marks. I have also gathered some data after they have received their assessment mark.

- As I have chosen to record the link tutor/student dialogue I needed to be sure that the students were completely comfortable with this and that they did not feel pressurised into allowing the recording. I asked student permission and made the recordings available for them to listen to. It was made it clear that they could also withdraw permission once they had listened to the recording if they were uncomfortable with what they had said.

In the case of all the data collection methods used, the ethical protocols have been adhered to at all times and written permission has been given by all of the participants and these are kept in my data archive.

4.5 Ethical considerations

When examining the ethical considerations that emerged before and during this research, I have referred to three codes of practice; those of St Mary's University College which is my own institution, those of the University of Newcastle, and the British Educational Research Association (BERA 2011). At the beginning of the research, I completed the pro-formas of the two Universities and received ethical clearance for the research.

BERA ethical guidelines say that research must be conducted with respect for the person, democratic values, academic freedom, knowledge and the quality of educational research. BERA says the researcher's responsibility to individuals is as follows.

> 'Individuals should be treated fairly, sensitively, with dignity and within an ethic of respect and freedom from prejudice regardless of age, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, nationality, cultural differences, partnership status, faith, disability, political belief or any other significant difference' (2011 p.5).

I understand it is my responsibility as the researcher to do the following:

- Get voluntary informed consent

All of the participants in my research have freely consented to being a part of the research. An integral part of the module is the creation of opportunities for myself and the students to reflect on our learning individually and together and it is those reflections which the students will give me permission to gather as data. What I collect will be the student's own reflections on their understandings and as such they become part of the research process as researchers. I have explained why I have invited them to be involved and I have told them how they will be contributing to my understanding about what I am doing in our sessions together. They have been informed of the purpose of the research. They know who the research will be shared with. In the case of the student participants they are aware that I have the dual role of being their teacher and the researcher and they have been assured that their participation will have no impact on their progress through their studies.

- Openness and disclosure

There was no subterfuge or deception throughout the conducting of this research. Where audio tapes were used to gather data all those in the room were made aware of the recording.

- Right to withdraw

All of the participants were offered the opportunity to listen to the recordings and withdraw their consent if they wish. Other participants were reminded that they could withdraw from the research whenever they wished.

- Incentives

None have been offered and students in particular have been made aware that their participation does not offer any assessment advantage.

- Detriment Arising from Participation in the Research

Any detriment could come because of the changes I am making to my practices. As I make the changes I am of course not completely sure they will improve my teaching. This could potentially impact on student attainment and learning. As I have made changes it has been to practices that are less than satisfactory and those changes are representative of the actions taken by practitioners following critical reflection. The changes have been monitored throughout and student feedback has been gathered regularly to try and ensure that what is happening is not detrimental to students' learning.

- Privacy

The data collected throughout this research is stored safely. All participants remain anonymous throughout.

- Disclosure

Participants will be given the opportunity to read the finished research report and they will be debriefed as to its findings. As the researcher I have no responsibility to sponsors.

4.6 Establishing the rigour of the research process

Freire (1997) says that work is rigorous when it is committed to the teaching and learning process. To establish the rigour of this research I have drawn on the work of Winter (1996), particularly his six principles. Winter says that if researchers pay heed to these principles it is highly likely that the work will have rigour. They are:

1. reflexive critique
2. dialectical critique
3. risk
4. plural structure
5. multiple resources
6. theory/practice transference

In terms of this research it has been all about becoming aware of the assumptions that have underpinned what I have been doing. I assumed that I *was* supporting my learning and the learning of others and I have brought the understanding of this assumption and others into my explanations. At the heart of this research is the idea that I have been and

will continue to be a 'living contradiction' (Whitehead 1989) and I have given examples of the tensions that have been a part of my practice in Chapter 3. The risk in this research lies in the challenge it is making to the idea that teachers have to be held to account using standards of those in positions of power such as Ofsted and that that power cannot be challenged in any meaningful way. It challenges an educational discourse that is dominated by vocabulary that is dominated by government inspection agencies (Ferguson, Earley, Fidler and Ouston 2000). I have brought a range of ideas into this account including the propositional ideas of others and the ideas of the students and colleagues as they have been mediated by me. I have tried to move away from text based analysis by offering evidence in the form of YouTube clips and I have brought theory and practice together as I have developed a living theory of practice.

This chapter has said how and why I have chosen to use a self-study action research methodology in order to help me understand how I contribute to my learning, the learning of the students I work with and the learning of the social formations in which I work. It has been a bridge over which I have travelled in order to transform understandings and thus my practices as I hold myself educationally to account.

The next chapter of this thesis sets out the actions I took as part of this research. It will describe and explain the changes I made so as to be able to claim that I am living out my values more fully in my practice. In addition, these changes will be put forward as evidence to support my claim that I have improved my practice by improving my learning (McNiff and Whitehead 2006).

PART 3. 'Now' 2006-2011- eyes wider open

Chapter 5. Taking action to improve the situation

This Chapter will describe the actions I have taken as part of this research to see if I can transform what I am doing in order to improve it. It will describe the changes I made to my practice because of learning to see things differently as I hold myself educationally to account using my values as standards of judgement to determine the effectiveness of what I do. These changes and the responses of the students constitute the data from which I will look for evidence that I am teaching in the more democratic, emancipatory and educational way thereby enabling me to claim that I am living my values out more fully in my practice.

So far this thesis has done the following;

- Outlined what concerns me as a teacher educator about the way teachers, students and myself are held to account for what we do in such a way as to have the potential to de-value what we know and lead us to compliance (Chapter 2).
- Outlined why I am concerned about this situation which negates the value I put on relational, critically reflective, dialogical practices and emancipatory, democratic forms of education. (Chapter 3).
- Explained why I have chosen a self-study action research methodology to enable me to answer the question, 'How can I improve what I am doing? (Chapter 4).
- Set out the standards of judgement by which I would like this thesis, my act of educational accountability, to be judged.

In Part 1, I gave examples from my practice taken from the period before I began this research to show how I was not always engaged in practices that were educational. The examples provide evidence of practices that were not always relational and that did not always enable students to engage in dialogue and critical reflection. Those described

practices perpetuated the view that knowing how to teach can be achieved by assimilating the knowledge provided by a more experienced other, in this case me. I was engaged in practices that emerged from the way that I saw myself as one who held a certain power over students and I often closed down opportunities for them to develop their own understandings. I held on to knowledge in a propositional way (Chapter 3), as I focused on the teaching rather than the learning.

The practices often manifested themselves in the way I understood my own relationship to accountability and in the way I thought I should hold students to account. This deep-seated understanding, that I was responsible for holding students to account, has only recently been transformed and it has been a very difficult idea for me to let go of, partly because the idea that we are accountable to those in power is so deeply embedded in the current accountability discourses and the actions of my practice. I am expected to hold students to account for what they have learnt in particular ways as I have described in Chapter 2. Not only am I expected to hold students to account for what they know but I am increasingly expected to hold them to account for what they do.

This has been emphasised very powerfully to me as recently as November 2011. I attended a meeting and was informed that one of the measures by which we would be judged as successful as an Initial Teacher Education (ITE) provider would be whether the students we help into teaching are still teaching 5 years after the date they graduate. The idea that we can be responsible for the career choices of adults beyond their first appointment is clearly absurd yet it is a measure of accountability that we may have to consider. It is a very powerful discourse supported by sanctions if we come up short. This kind of blunt-edged measure of effectiveness has been such a feature of my career in education, that as a teacher and a learner I have struggled to think differently. This Chapter sets out what happens when I do think differently.

5.1 What have I done about the situation? Developing practices that are grounded in my values.

At the start of this research in 2007 I felt the need to take responsibility for what I was doing by examining my intentions with the students and trying to move away from an exercise in conveying information towards one of creating opportunities for thinking together to test the idea that in doing so I would create a situation where we might learn together as we engaged with ourselves as learners and knowers. The opportunities produced by my MA research (2006) for students to engage in their own learning would no longer be sufficient if I wanted to enable students to experience our interactions in such a way that they would feel they were creating something new together with me (Bohm 1996). I had to engage with the students in a way that was less about the students coming to know what I knew and more about offering opportunities for them to understand what they knew and how they were coming to know it.

In 2009 and 2010 I began to put in place changes to my practices so as to address some of my expressed concerns. If I was going to learn to do things differently, thinking about it was not enough. I needed to take action and then evaluate the impact of that action on my learning and the students' learning. I needed to explain how I hold myself to account for the values that were being re-conceptualised and I needed to be sure that the emerging recognition of the values underpinning my practice as standards of judgement would lead to the transformation necessary to be able to say that I was striving to be the best teacher I could be. I began by looking at my practices through the lens of my values as explicated in Chapter 3.

I looked at them in the light of the perspective change (Mezirow 1991) that I was coming to understand. As my ontological and epistemological understandings transformed and I moved from a model of pedagogy that is teacher-led to one that is learner-focused, I saw the difficulties I describe in Chapter 3 become explicit. I had not been opening spaces for dialogue, critical reflection and relational practices. I had been foregrounding myself throughout any dialogue and presenting myself as the knower in the teaching and learning process. I had not opened up opportunities for the students to say what they know and to begin to develop their own living theories from their emerging understandings of their practice.

The changes I made were to key areas of my practice. The changes were to what I did and were in the following ways.

- I started off the modules in a different way
- I conducted them differently
- I engaged with students in school in a different way

I made these changes to the same type of practices I put forward as being particularly problematic in Chapter 3. Each of the changes was intentioned to create more opportunities for students to be able to have a voice and be free to engage in dialogue that could lead to more transformational learning. They were attempting to enable students to explore their own ideas rather than focusing on mine and they were an attempt to build a more equitable learning environment.

5.1.1 I take action to transform how I start modules

I wanted to start the modules in a very different way from the way I had conducted the sessions in the previous years. In previous years, I had begun by explaining that the assignment would be the way that the students would be asked to account for what they knew (see Chapter 3). I did this because it was what the students expected and asked for. Twice a year each of the programme directors hold programme boards which provide opportunities for students to feedback about the programme and the modules through their representatives. These meetings are minuted and the comments are collated into strengths and areas for improvement. In 2009, the current postgraduate students said 'talking through the Standards would be a good addition to Professional Studies' (Programme Board student report 2009, p1). The module feedback also stated that students wanted clearer assignment guidance 'from the start' (Module feedback 2009). The students want to know as soon into modules as possible how to pass assignments by meeting the criteria and then how this would contribute to being able to achieve more Standards. At the same time the School of Education introduced a portfolio of Standards which asked students to gather evidence to show they were meeting the QTS Standards which I felt was focusing the students even more on these narrow foci.

What I realised as I began to clarify my values, was that this was emphasising the importance of the outcome over the process through the learning journey. My journal shows a growing realisation that I wanted to influence students to move beyond this technical-rational focus for their learning and move towards additional standards by which they could judge their success.

> *'I have just looked at the feedback from the Year 4 students and they have said they would like more information on meeting the Standards earlier than I am coming to it with them. This is problematic because I want to try and move away from the perception that the students have that the Standards are the entire focus of what we do. The Portfolio of Standards does not help either because they are now focused on gathering evidence to show they are meeting the Standards. I am frustrated by this. I do not want to start off by presenting the students with a list of pre-determined Standards because I think it sets up the idea that my sessions are all about outcome and the process is incidental. At least I want to establish with them that the way they learn is as important as what they are learning and that if they learn well they will learn better' (Renowden 2009, unpublished journal).*

The change to the start of the modules in 2009 was about the creation of a more open space for students to feel able to engage in dialogue and critical reflection however I was unsure how the students would react to a different way of working which did not start off with an exploration of the assignment or the Standards. Despite this I decided to completely re-think everything.

The starting point needed to have the promise of moving the whole project forward (Shor 1987) and enable the students to move beyond superficial conversations towards the purposes of dialogue; self awareness, self critique, the ability to become aware of the opinions of others and the ability to reach informed decisions (Burbules 1993). Through the changes I describe in this chapter I wanted them to move beyond a focus on the technical rational assignment criteria towards an understanding that they could develop wider dispositions and be able to engage with more profound issues. This held the possibility that they would be able to express more clearly what they knew and were coming to know. I also hoped they would come to see the value of this re-focusing for their work with children in the classroom which would make their learning sustainable and impactful.

I decided to do things differently with the groups of Year 4 students who began to work with me in 2009 and 2010. Instead of preparing slides and setting out in advance what we were going to do, I introduced an idea, a question or a reading to stimulate ideas or thoughts and allowed the sessions to unfold through dialogue. The module was the first M level module and I gave the whole of the first session over to the following question and stood back to see what emerged as the session progressed. I asked 'What do we know already about teaching and learning?' Crucially, I did not present this question on a Powerpoint slide or on the board.

I premised these changes on two important things I had learnt about myself and the students as learners. First, since engaging in this research in 2007, I had come to understand what it is like to be in the position of somebody who feels that they know very little about anything. I did not know much about research; only what I had learnt to enable me to justify the methodological choice in my MA dissertation. When I began working with colleagues on the doctoral study, I felt shy and really just wanted to listen. One of my colleagues seemed particularly knowledgeable about our foci and this contrasted sharply with what I thought I knew. Again I draw on my journal for insights into how I was feeling at the time:

> *'I am not sure I acquitted myself very well over the weekend because I was very aware that I am formulating my ideas as I speak which means that they seem to me to be rather disjointed and incoherent. What I am realising is that I am going to have to get over this if I am going to be get anywhere with this PhD. At least I have managed to stop myself apologising for what I don't know. I am also beginning to respond to Jean's gentle but insistent encouragement. It is a great feeling when I do make connections between something I know about from my practice and what we are discussing. A good example of that is Schon's idea of the 'swampy lowlands' of practice. I see that really well and it makes me understand that this research needs to help me to understand my own swamps!'* (Renowden 2007, unpublished journal)

This lack of confidence in a situation where I was positioned as the learner is how I thought the students were feeling but I was not sure so I decided to ask them how they felt coming into the dissertation sessions and then the M level sessions with me in 2010.

Many of them doubted their ability to engage at Masters level and all of them felt apprehensive about what was to come.

Interestingly, what they said about how they felt as we started our sessions together was exactly how I felt at the beginning of my doctoral study. This was a very important connection for me to make because it meant that I could empathise with the way they were feeling and consider how any changes I made to the start of sessions needed to support them to feel safe and able to engage. It was not enough to be aware that they would feel apprehensive and anxious coming into the sessions for the first time. I needed to act on that understanding and act in a way that would allow for the development of their confidence which would enable them to engage more fully in the dialogue during the sessions, just as I had.

The second thing I had learnt through engagement in doctoral study was from the research seminars and dialogical experiences with colleagues. I had been part of these interactions over the duration of this research. They had given me a real sense of myself as a learner and it had been a very profound experience. It helped me to become more fully aware that I needed to feel what it was like to learn so as to be able to help others to learn. I understood that this was a possibility because of the opportunity to engage in dialogue with colleagues. What I learnt from my own experiences in the research seminars was that this could be done most effectively by unpicking the dynamics of power embedded in some of the sessions I was responsible for setting up. The reason for my increased confidence in the research seminars was partly because of the way I changed my perceptions of myself in relation to the experience and almost entirely because of the way the sessions were led by Professor Jean McNiff. Taylor (1998) says that it is the role of a tutor to bring about transformational learning (Mezirow 1991) through the creation of a trusting and caring environment. The research sessions were set up by Jean as meetings between equals and I began to lose the sense of a knowledge hierarchy within the group as I began to trust my own understandings. Others did and may always know more than me about a subject but that did not mean that they had

power over what I knew or would come to know. I could be a knower too and this could impact on what we all knew.

Just as I was encouraged to engage in dialogue and to hold myself to account for what I knew and was coming to know, it seemed appropriate to adopt the same approach to the sessions with the students. Of course I had what Freire (1972) calls an horizon to reach because ultimately it was my responsibility to support the students to pass their Level 4 assignments and their MA assignments. I needed to support them to meet the TDA and institutional requirements. I wanted to create the opportunities to do this and to do so much more.

I felt as if I were opening up opportunities for the students to be able to think for themselves and become aware of how it was important that they do that. I was learning to trust my own understanding about the value I put on dialogical practices and I was getting a sense, through observation of the students that they were growing in confidence. I continued to conduct the next six sessions with the students in the same sort of way and at the end of the module gathered the data I present in Chapter 6 to see what the students had to say about the sessions.

In addition to transforming the way I started the sessions I made other changes. At the start of all of the modules that made up my timetable in 2009 and 2010, I asked the students what they wanted to learn and made a note of what they said. This is because I wanted to start our work together acknowledging their expectations as well as mine, thereby looking to make the sessions more democratic. My field notes (which are in my data archive and can be accessed there) show that overwhelmingly they wanted to engage with the 'how to' of the module; how to write academically enough; how to do the research; how to meet the Standards embedded in the module. None of them identified the more educational aims I had in mind such as being able to critically reflect and engage in dialogue with each other. I also asked them to say how they would know if they had learnt to do the things they had identified as results from the module and they all said that the measure of success would be the passing of the assignment. As I have

described in Chapter 2, this is increasingly seen as a measure of my effectiveness by students and those holding me to account within the institution and beyond.

However, I wanted to support them in a way that could support a more transformational learning (Mezirow 1991). My aims for the session were different to the students and were as follows.

- to be able to reflect critically on what we know and what we do
- to engage in dialogue with each other
- to develop a community of learners

As I presented my list to the students and put it alongside their declared foci, I asked them to talk together to think about how their list was different to my list and make any comments they wanted to. As they began to feedback to the whole group what they had been discussing amongst themselves, they saw the relationship between the two lists. We talked about what it meant to be in dialogue and we came to a shared understanding about what our groups would mean for us. We would:

- engage in dialogue so as to be able to critically reflect on what we knew about teaching and learning
- try to feel more confident about speaking in the sessions
- come to the session to relax and enjoy each other's company
- know how to be successful in terms of passing the module (Year 4 session field notes January 2010)

The session was exciting and for me successful because I had enabled them to participate in the establishment of the expectations for our sessions together. My excitement comes through in what I wrote in my journal after the Year 4 session.

> *'Today went better than even I expected. The students seem to have made the link between how we go about the sessions together and what the outcomes will be. We established together at the end, a set of agreed aims* (listed above) *which I had not planned. At the end of the session I asked them if they had any questions. The almost inevitable question was asked about when they would find out about the assignment. I asked them to be patient and wait for the criteria. None of them were ready to start the assignment so they did not need to know today. What I did*

> *say was that if we met our aims in each session then we would also satisfy the module assignment criteria which I would give them in a couple of week's time. They were happy with that. I really enjoyed today and I think in terms of being a learning experience it is much better than the first sessions I was doing'* (Renowden 2010, unpublished journal).

As the module progressed, the students seemed to me to be comfortable with the idea that I would not be giving them information or knowledge in a particular way. After the first 2 sessions I asked for comments on the way we were working. This was so that I could use their feedback to inform the next sessions. I hoped they would want to continue in the same less didactic way although I had to face the possibility that they might say they wanted to have more teacher-led sessions. Out of the eight students only 2 responded and this is what they said.

> Student 40-4 *It's a different level of thinking – not so much directed. It's what we think, we often talk about what each other thinks and how to help each other. I think that's really helped.*

> Student 41-4 *What I've learnt from you is not necessarily the knowledge you've passed. Obviously I've learnt a lot with that as well but just how you are with us as an educator. I've learnt it's OK you don't always have to do, you know, like follow a bullet point list. It's OK to do something a bit different. We're also learning, it's just in a different way that people are scared to do and in fact we all found it really beneficial and I think sometimes for children to feel more independent with their learning – it's quite liberating as well. I think I've managed to do this without being spoon fed and compared with A levels and GCSE where we were completely just given everything – like this is what you need to do.*

This encouraged me to continue in the same way whilst acknowledging that there could be some students who were less happy than those above. Throughout the module I continued to provide them with readings and things to think about and sometimes I had additional sessions to cover such things as academic writing conventions to vary what I was doing and to enable to students to address the assignment criteria.

5.1.2 I take action to change the way I conduct teaching sessions

Many of the teaching sessions I engaged in at the start of this research were as I have described in Chapter 3, that is they were conducted through the use of a Powerpoint presentation style (Appendix A and B) which sets up the learning environment in a particular way. The students all faced the front and the knowledge on the slides was presented in a propositional way. I was also forced into standing at the front because of the over-reliance on slides.

The changes I made were designed to re-balance the power dynamic in the session. I decided to present the foci of the module from the beginning and base each session around themes. This is the plan of a session which I had with Year 4 on the same theme as the session I critiqued in Chapter 3 (Appendix D).

Aims- to help students understand the importance of pupil participation

To introduce them to the 'Rights of the Child

Key questions- what is participation?

Can you give me examples of when you have participated in something?

Why is it important that children participate in their education?

It focused on the key themes and started from the idea of participation. Instead of presenting the students with examples of practice I asked for their examples which enabled them to participate more fully. I moved with the students as we discussed what the foci of the session meant; participation in what, with whom, and who are the participants? At the end of the session, I gave them copies of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and we discussed it.

I conducted subsequent sessions from a physical position that re-enforced the idea that I was working alongside the students rather than from an hierarchical position. We arranged the seating as the students would like it and I sat on a chair amongst them. I no longer always answered questions immediately but referred them to the group and this

created opportunities for students to have a voice. These changes were designed to work towards the removal of the idea that I am the font of all knowledge and that students always need to be told. I planned myself out of the session wherever possible. What I was doing is acknowledging, as suggested by Bohm and Peat (1987, p.247) that in the early stages there needs to be a facilitator. However, 'Guidance when it is felt to be necessary, should take the form of 'leading from behind' and preserve the intention of making itself redundant as quickly as possible' . This required a fundamental change in the expectations that the students had of the sessions and we would all need to learn a different way of working and learning.

All of the changes I made were trying to create opportunities for the students and I to give accounts of our practice through engaging in dialogue and critical reflection on what we were doing. They were designed to enable us to experience ourselves as learners and to become aware of our own learning. The changes were trying to increase student confidence in what they know and to open up the possibility that they would become aware of what they knew and how they were coming to know it. All of these aims made the sessions more educational than the ones typified by Appendix C. The students were asked if they would comment on the sessions and this data is presented in Chapter 6.

5.1.3 I take action to change the way that I engage with students during link tutor meetings in school

Having looked at the way that I conducted link tutor meetings with students through the lens of my values, I wanted to do things differently. I wanted to create spaces for the students to engage in dialogue and reflect and engage with their own practices, which would lead to the possibility that they would generate their own living theories of practice. I also wanted to create a space for the students to talk about what they were doing and explore why they were doing it in a way that moved away from the Standards checklist approach towards their own emerging values. I wanted the experience to be more educational so it needed to be more relational and dialogical and also to value the students' ways of knowing and to develop the kind of relationships I value (see Chapter 3).

This is what *I* wanted but as I tried to work towards a more emancipatory and democratic form of pedagogy it became important for me to see what the students wanted. In doing so I could move towards the development of a pedagogy that was more about learning than teaching. It would put the student more at the centre of the relationship than it was in the link tutor meetings I describe in Chapter 3. In those meetings I assumed that the students had the same expectations as me and the reality was I had no clarity about what they considered to be an effective link tutor.

In 2010 I invited 11 Year 4 students to share with me their thoughts about the role of the link tutor by asking them to make a list of the qualities that they thought an effective link tutor has. I did this to enable me to be guided in my actions by the students and to see if the values that were emerging for me were the same as the students' values. The lists they created have between 6 and 12 qualities and they are all available in my data archive. Eight of the students thought that a good link tutor would be approachable and they also listed qualities such as friendly (Students 4c, 4e), empathetic (Students 4f, 4j) and other related qualities (Student 4a 'builds relationships, 4b 'supportive', 4d 'helpful' and 4h 'comforting'). All of these qualities are grounded in relational practice and for most of the students they were the first qualities they wrote down.

The students also mentioned feedback in their lists. Student 4a listed the ability to give 'constructive honest criticism' as a quality and Student 4c said a good link tutor provides 'constructive criticism which helps with your practice (positive feedback)'. Student 4d mentioned the need for 'constructive feedback' and Student 4j went further saying that good link tutors would 'help you to improve weaknesses – suggest what they would do but help you reflect as well'. Student 4j also highlighted the need to be included in the feedback. These qualities listed by the students informed my understanding of the sort of relationships the students value. It would seem that they want link tutors to be able to put them at their ease but they want a level of guidance and direction from the tutor.
This need for link tutors to be relational and able to guide students is shown in the list created by Student 4g who wrote:

'Link tutors are good when:
-firm enough to keep student on task yet....
-able to step back a bit and adapt to student needs
-allow student to find their own areas of development
-be able to give a varied amount of solutions to a problem so student can pick best suited to style
-know that student/teacher is an individual
-be approachable and calming'

This shows a good understanding of what Student 4g expects from a link tutor and it highlighted the way that the link tutor meeting I describe in Chapter 3 did not always meet student expectations. It confirmed my understanding that I needed to enable the student to speak for themselves in the meetings yet at the same time balance that with being 'knowledgeable' (Student 4f) and being able to support the students 'to develop ideas' (Student 4h).

Out of the 11 students, only 1 student (Student 4k) listed qualities that seem to imply passivity on the part of the student teacher. Student 4k said:

' A good link tutor:

- *Know what is expected of the student in terms of their teaching load*
- *Regularly check file to make sure student is well organised*
- *Punctual to observations*
- *Identifies both strengths and weaknesses and identifies how the student can progress further*

This list is much more about the link tutor taking on the role of the person holding the student to account through their files and through the Audit which sets out what the student is to do each week. It is much more aligned to the description I give of myself in Chapter 3. It seems to imply that it is the role of the link tutor to tell the student teacher what their strengths and weaknesses are and this is an example of a number of concerns that underpin this research. At the end of the student observation pro-forma which link tutors use there are two sub-headings which say 'strengths and weaknesses'. This was always filled in by me at the end of the observed lesson and then shared with the student which would fulfil the role Student 4k values.

What I realised from this list was that I would need to consider how to meet the needs of all the students yet live out my values through a more emancipatory pedagogy as

described in Chapter 3. The meetings still needed to enable students to see if they were meeting the standards in their Profile of Standards because this is an institutional expectation and therefore a student expectation however, I needed to make my meeting with students more open to their own ideas about their emerging pedagogy. Asking them about their perceptions of what makes an effective link tutor was a start.

These responses informed the changes I made to the way I approached link tutor meetings. In previous meetings my voice was the loudest and most frequently heard and opportunities for dialogue between myself and the student was limited. I intended the changed sessions to allow the student's voice to be heard more often and as I have just shown I set out to listen rather than make assumptions. This is the manifestation of a very important understanding about educational accountability as I conceptualise it. The power of teacher talk is strong and the outcomes are very well described by Richert.

> 'As teachers talk about their own work and name their experiences, they learn about what they know and what they believe. They also learn what they do not know. Such knowledge empowers the individual by providing a source of action that is generated from within rather than imposed from without...Teachers who know in this way can act with intent; they are empowered to draw from the centre of their own knowing and act as critics and creators of their world rather than solely respondents to it, or worse, victims of it' (1992 cited Brookfield 1995, p.197).

Creating opportunities for students to develop their own powerful voices could have the potential to counterbalance the voices of those who are making decisions about what matters in education. Just as with the sessions described earlier in the chapter, as well as seeing what the students expected, I also started with my own learning in order to try and understand what could be done to influence the students' learning.

Examination of my own narrative has taught me the importance of acknowledging my own understandings and taking responsibility for sharing them and offering them up for critique. I have learnt how to do that partly because of the relationships that have developed throughout this research. These have consisted of critical friends, colleagues and my research supervisor, who have all been prepared to commit time and effort to reading my writing, listening to my ideas and engaging in meaningful dialogue around

them. As these relationships develop, I have grown in confidence and that has enabled me to say what I know and articulate how I am coming to know it. Those people have held me to account for what I am saying and doing and coming to know, in such a way as to make it educational for me. Through doing it I have learnt about myself and my pedagogy. I have not been told what to think but have been encouraged to critically reflect on what I am claiming in an emancipatory and democratic way. I realised as I reflected on these meetings that this was a possible way forward for me in my role as link tutor. I needed to create spaces for students to reflect critically on what they were doing in lessons and tutorials thus enabling them to account for what they were doing and what they were coming to know.

All of the above would depend on me moving away from actions that were a manifestation of an ontological and epistemological position that arose from an understanding that I was the knower and so had a position of power. They would be the actions that came as a result of a changed view of my role as a link tutor through the living out my values more fully in my practice. As I prepared for link tutor meetings with students I did the following:

- Allowed more time for the meetings
- Considered how to organise the meeting so that the student had more time to speak
- Planned how to discuss the Standards more towards the end of our dialogue together so as to open up the possibility that the students would reflect on their own understandings

I also made a determined effort to re-consider my role in the meeting. As I re-conceptualised the concepts of power and accountability this was happening anyway as my writing in 2010 and 2011 showed. The draft research question I was working with in 2010 was asking how I could hold students to account for what they were doing as I developed an epistemology of educational accountability. This changed to the final question this research asks as late as 2011 because of the realisation that if I was living my ontological values fully in my practice I would not position myself as responsible for holding them to account. The students would be holding themselves to account.

This chapter has described the changes made to the sorts of practices described in Chapter 3. It describes the actions taken as I learnt to take responsibility for improving my practices using my re-conceptualised values to inform what I do. It shows how the changes also emerged from my transformed understanding about what the students expected because I recognised the need to listen to their voices. In the next chapter I will show what I have found out as a result of making the changes to my practice described in this chapter. I invited the students who were involved in the changed practices to feedback to me about the impact that the sessions had on them. This enabled me to look in the data for evidence of their learning and to consider whether I could make a connection between the changes and this learning, my learning and theirs. Finally the next Chapter will say how I have tested the validity of the claims I am making.

Chapter 6. What happens when I hold myself educationally to account for what I do? Key findings

This chapter will show what I have found out through making changes such as the ones I describe in Chapter 5, to the sort of unsatisfactory practices I describe in Chapter 3. It is my claim that by learning to hold myself to account for what I do I have transformed my practice and that there is a link between this action and enhanced opportunities for learning. I will show how what I have done in my work is evidence of educational accountability because it has contributed to learning. This Chapter will also explain how I have tested the validity of my claims.

In Chapter 5 I have told the story of how I developed new practices which are grounded in my values as they have emerged from this research. These changes are significant because they have been made as a result of using the newly re-conceptualised values, which I consider to be embedded in educational forms of accountability, as standards by which to judge what I am doing. It is my claim that doing this has led to more emancipatory, democratic and relational practices that enable dialogue and critical reflection, which has contributed to learning.

This chapter continues the story by describing what happened over time as the changes were enacted in my practice. It provides evidence of my own learning and evidence that the students have also learnt. It is my contention that my learning and the students' learning are interdependent; they have learnt, because I have learnt to do things differently and I am doing things differently because it is transforming their learning. As McNiff and Whitehead (2006, p.81) say, 'If you are looking for data to show learning processes you will look for actions that appear to show learning taking place, and how the learning enters into actions.' This chapter will set out the actions that show learning and it will show how that learning enters into my actions. I will not only show what I have learnt and provide evidence of that learning but I will say how I have learnt, thus

developing my epistemological understanding. This epistemology has emerged as I learn that the only person I can hold to account for what they do is myself, and that it is my responsibility to do so. It is my thesis that, as I have come to realise this, I have begun to engage with my practice and in so doing I am improving it.

As I analyse the data, I am theorising my practice and so creating a living theory of practice. This act is grounded in the research process and this process is of my own act of accountability. Through holding my practices as a teacher in a higher education context up for public scrutiny, and as I seek validation for my claim that I am transforming what I do, I claim that by describing what educational accountability looks like, studying how I have held myself to account and working to improve the situation I describe in Chapter 3, I am making what I do more educational as defined throughout this thesis.

As I have interrogated the data I have looked for evidence that the living standards of judgement articulated in Chapter 4 are being enacted in my practice.

- Is there evidence of a commitment towards the living out in my practice of the value of education as an emancipatory and democratic process that emerges from critically reflective, dialogical and relational practices?
- Have I evidenced my claim that educational accountability as I conceptualise it can lead to my own and other people's learning?
- Is this thesis evidence of a developing epistemology of educational accountability?

These living standards have been developed to see if my embodied values are being lived out in what I am doing because if they are not, as Raz (2001) suggests, the values become meaningless because they are not lived out in practice. I have also looked for evidence that the students have learnt because I have learnt to do things differently, thus establishing the link between my actions and their learning. As I look for evidence of this I am establishing the personal validation of my claim to knowledge by taking responsibility for those claims. I am exercising my responsibility to be truthful (Polanyi 1958).

6.1 Is there evidence of a commitment towards the living out in my practice of the value of education as an emancipatory and democratic process that emerges from critically reflective, dialogical and relational practices?

The values I have espoused throughout this research are grounded in a form of education that is both emancipatory and democratic and that enables learning that is worthwhile. Throughout this action enquiry my actions have been informed by this. I have started with myself by holding myself to account for the living out of those values in what I do. In doing so my living theory of educational accountability has developed and it is embodied in me, a practitioner who is taking responsibility for what I do so as to improve it. Evidence of my commitment to this educational accountability and the values that have been re-conceptualised because of it is this research, and this thesis which reports on it.

Throughout this research I have been committed to my own learning and this thesis is all about what I have learnt about the values I hold and it describes the manifestation of my values in the actions taken in Chapter 5. It demonstrates how I have learnt to exercise my freedom to choose the focus of my research (Chapter 4) and how I have learnt to exercise my democratic right to challenge the normative discourses of power embedded in the technical rational models of accountability described in Chapter 2. This research shows a commitment to being accountable in a way that has the potential to contribute to the learning of others, which is part of my responsibility as a teacher, and it judges the quality of that learning through the judgement of others, which demonstrates my commitment to involving all in the accountability process.

Educational accountability is dynamic and it is engaged in by those who feel they have a moral responsibility to show that what they are doing is of value. It does not avoid the issues of quality and worth. Educational accountability uses the values-based practices of teachers and students to establish what is effective. I have put forward my own values as standards of practice in this thesis to show this theory in action. The challenge comes when this is made public, as it must be. All of the actions I describe in Chapter 5 show

my commitment to the idea that when I live out my values in my practice it can lead to transformation and improvement.

I want to evidence my claim that I am developing a more values driven pedagogy. The meetings I had in school with three students in Semester 1 of the academic year 2010/11 were recorded and transcribed to enable me to see if there is evidence that I have learnt to do things differently, more educationally, and, if I have done so whether this has led to the creation of opportunities for the students to reflect on, articulate and discuss what they know. These transcriptions form part of my data archive and I have used extracts throughout this chapter.

I looked for evidence of the following practices which would show that I have learnt to put my educational values into action.

- Questioning and the opening up of thinking time to create opportunities for the student to reflect critically on their teaching and their own learning
- A foregrounding of the student voice which gives them opportunities to engage in dialogue. This dialogue would be focused on their learning rather than on what I know
- A way of being in relation to the student which is less hierarchical
- Democratic, emancipatory practices in the form of opportunities for the students to say what they understand or determine what they want to discuss

All of the meetings with the three students show a determined effort on my part to listen rather than to speak. In the link tutor meeting referred to in Chapter 3 (Appendix E) my voice was dominant and I told the student what needed to be done to improve their teaching. In the later meetings I have posed lots of questions to stimulate dialogue and critical reflection moving away from a more dogmatic form of words as I try to create an environment that is less about what I know and more about the students already knowing and coming to know.

As well as recording the meetings to enable me to see if I was creating the opportunities described above the students were invited to reflect on how I fulfilled my role as their link tutor, an opportunity that two of the students took advantage of. This was after the school experience was finished and my role as their assessor was ended. I interrogated the data which was in the form of student feedback to see if there was any evidence of students commenting on opportunities to reflect and engage in dialogue.

These comments are representative of feedback from the students.

> Student 51-1 says *Jane likes to hear students' opinions and experiences which she will then respond to and it leaves much room for debate and discussion.*
>
> Student 52-4 says *Before Jane gave me her feedback she would always give me the opportunity to reflect back over the lesson* and *I felt very much involved in the feedback*

I also looked for evidence of some of the qualities that the student's value in a link tutor as articulated in Chapter 5 because I have learnt to value their expectations. I looked for evidence that the students thought I was 'approachable'

> Student 51-1 says *Jane was certainly able to set me at ease and I went into the practice knowing that Jane and I had a good rapport* and *Jane's friendly and warm manner meant that I felt I could speak to her about anything; she is approachable and honest.*
>
> Student 52-4 *Jane always spoke in a calm. supportive , understanding and positive tone to me, enabling me to feel more relaxed and supported; this allowed me to connect in the conversations.*

I also found evidence of the students appreciating the guidance I gave them which was another quality the students in Chapter 5 valued.

> Student 51-1 *Each meeting would consist of a lengthy talk, discussing progress and tar*gets. *Jane would communicate clearly with me, leaving me in no doubt as to my progress and how I was to develop. This was immensely helpful, allowing me to reflect on my practice purposefully and evolve with each meeting.*

This is an interesting comment because it makes me sound rather dogmatic and it seems to indicate that I told the student what to do to develop. In fact he set targets for himself

but it highlights the need to be vigilant about how students see me in the meetings. The feedback helps me to understand that this is still a work in progress.

All of the transcripts show a work in progress and they have been a real eye-opener for me. I have often become so involved in the meeting that I have not really been able to reflect critically on what I was doing or saying. The transcripts highlighted clearly the need for change and there is still a need for me to continue to strive for improvement. The transcripts show I need to continue considering the balance between giving students ideas and suggestions, which they like, and opening up more opportunities for students to develop their own. This research is one turn of the action research cycle and there will need to be more which is valuable learning for me. This comment led me to reflect on this again.

> Student 52-4 says *Jane pushed my thinking and reflection onwards and very much helped me achieve the best of my ability*

Once again this need for challenge is valued by the students but it needs to be done so as to allow the students to identify their own challenges and to develop their own intrinsic challenge if I am going to be able to say that I am allowing them to develop their own thinking.

6.2 Have I evidenced my claim that educational accountability as I conceptualise it can lead to my own and other people's learning?

6.2.1 What have I learnt?

As a direct result of this research, I have learnt to do the following things which have enabled me to generate my own living theory of educational accountability which is about both theory and practice. I have learnt:

1. how to do things differently
2. how to determine my own standards of judgement by which I can evaluate what I do
3. that it is not my responsibility to hold others to account for what they do but rather it is my responsibility to allow them to speak and articulate their own understandings as they have done in Chapter 5 and will do later in this chapter

4. how to live my values more fully in my practice

This thesis is in itself evidence of my learning and it is 'a vehicle and an artifact' of my learning experience (Mezirow 1991, p.xvii). In Chapter 5 I have described the actions I have taken because I have learnt to ground those actions in my values as explicated in Chapter 3. It is part of the establishment of a moral relationship between actions. This idea is at the heart of this thesis and it is both the motivation for and the intended outcome of this research. I have already said why I feel the need to account for my actions. I need to take responsibility for what I am doing in order to learn and transform what I do. I did this in 2006 when I completed my MA which asked the question, 'How do I improve what I do?' (Renowden 2006, MA unpublished) I am doing it now through the writing of this thesis. I am holding myself educationally to account for my practice because in doing so I am learning to do things better and well. I am respecting and foregrounding the personal knowledge (Polanyi 1958) embedded in my practices by being accountable in this way, contributing to democratic, emancipatory ways of knowing through the development of a loving, caring relationship with myself, with students and with my colleagues. Through this research, I have discovered a sense of personal agency, as I take responsibility for what I am doing and for what I know and I have found this to be empowering and life affirming. It is through the very act of holding myself educationally accountable that I have come to understand myself and what I am doing so I am able to take a more morally committed form of action.

How I have learnt to do things differently is by understanding myself as a 'living contradiction' (Whitehead 1989, p.41-52) in my practice and then taking action to resolve the experience of the contradiction. Bonnett (2009) says that the self has a unique perspective on the world and I realise that the valuing of that viewpoint was not part of the discourses underpinning the technical rational forms of accountability described in Chapter 2. He says, 'we reveal ourselves most fundamentally through those of our actions that directly affect others, and that by choice or necessity are taken up by them in some way' (ibid, p.360) and rarely had I been held to account for the way in which the children and students learnt. If the outcomes were deemed to be satisfactory then it almost did not

matter how they were arrived at. I felt and feel the need to account for my actions using a more ethically grounded set of criteria which would help me to understand and improve the educational parts of my practice which work towards the worthwhile and the good.

Educational accountability is related to this idea of the good, which goes as far back as Aristotle. In fact, the idea of a good life is part of the current soul searching about the perceived moral malaise in British society today. Only through action, praxis, can the good be realised. Carr (2006, p.426) says of praxis,

> 'knowledge of its end cannot be theoretically specified in advance and can only be acquired on the basis of an understanding of how in a particular concrete situation this knowledge is being interpreted and applied. Praxis is thus nothing other than a practical manifestation of how the idea of the good is being understood, just as knowledge of the good is nothing other than an abstract way of specifying the mode of human conduct through which this idea is given practical expression.'

By engaging with the idea of educational accountability, I have come to see it as a form of praxis which is guided by practical wisdom or intellectual virtue called phronesis by Aristotle. Carr and Kemmis (1986, p.37) say of phronesis that

> 'it consists of spontaneous and flexible direction and re-direction of the learning enterprise, guided by a sensitive reading of the subtle changes and responses of other participants in the enterprise.'

Educational accountability as I conceptualise it contributes to this. MacIntyre (1984, p.141) says that moral and intellectual virtues are dispositions to 'do the right thing in the right place at the right time in the right way.' This emerges from deliberation, reflection and judgements, all of which I understand to be part of educational accountability.

I have learnt the value of accountability that is grounded in a discourse that sees teacher education as a way of developing intrinsic goods. Walker (2006) points out that there is a need to reassert a moral and ethical discourse. Educational accountability is part of informed, committed action. How I have come to learn to do things differently has been by becoming more informed. Throughout this thesis, I have demonstrated how I have used a variety of things to inform my emerging ideas. I have used the propositional forms of theory generated by others to inform me. I have used the theory generated by

colleagues and students to inform me. Above all, I have used my own living forms of theory, as they emerge from my practices, to inform me. It is through becoming informed that I have learnt other ways to be, to know and to act, some of which I knew but did not understand and some of which I did not know at all. Becoming informed has been a very important part of how I have come to know as is evidenced throughout this thesis.

I am also, through doing this research, engaged in committed action which is how I have learnt. By this I mean committed to my clearly explicated value base which I have also put forward as standards of judgement by which this thesis can be judged. On a deeper level, I also had an understanding that in my life, I was accountable for my actions and my parents brought me up to believe that what I said or did was my responsibility. I needed to hold myself to account for my actions on some level. This sense of responsibility for one's own actions is one of the most important understandings that primary teachers want to help children realise and it was something I wanted my own children to know. In my working life, this idea manifested itself in a sense of wanting to do 'a good job.'

Being educationally accountable means first and foremost that this sense of responsibility is not just something that I talk about as an aspiration, something that I say is important to me when asked what kind of teacher I want to be. I have learnt that this research has come about, partly because of my concerns as expressed in Chapter 2, but also because of a growing sense of it being the right thing to do once I became a higher education tutor in 2004. As I moved from being a teacher who reflected on their practice to being a teacher who critically reflected on their practice, I learnt that the measures by which I had been judging the effectiveness of what I was doing had not been determined by me and did not always align with my values as articulated in Chapter 3. Crucially I had not learnt to do things differently in any fundamental way and had been blind to the discourses embedded in the policies and practices I was involved with.

I have learnt to do things differently in order to live out my value of emancipatory, democratic, educational practice. Instead of closing down opportunities for students to

say what they know (see Chapter 3), I have learnt to open them up (Chapter 5). The sessions have become learning focused and more democratic and emancipatory, and therefore more educational. It is my contention that the changes have moved the sessions away from being a vehicle for the didactic transmission of what I know and think and want the students to know and think.

6.2.2 What have the students learnt in their own words?

I have looked for evidence that the changes described in Chapter 5, which have been brought about because I am holding myself to account for my practices using the values I articulate in Chapter 3, have been able to influence student learning through the creation of opportunities for them to engage in critical reflection and dialogue with myself and each other. I have interrogated the data to look for evidence that tests the validity of my claim that because I am taking responsibility for improving my practice I have made changes which have led to improved opportunities for students to learn. Several themes emerged out of the student feedback pro-formas and post-session focus group evaluation meetings. These are

- that the students say they have learnt to be more confident
- they value the place of dialogue and reflection in their learning
- they acknowledge the significance of their values for their practices
- they have also become aware of their own learning.

The data I have gathered from the students has shown that some of them have become more confident about their ability to participate in the sessions.

> Student 1-4 – *Prior to our first lecture I felt quite nervous about engaging in masters work as I am aware it is on another level so to speak in terms of critical thinking and analysis.*

This same student went on to say this in the same piece of written feedback:

> Student 1-4 – *I am thankful for the ways in which you set the group up and encouraged everyone to participate and voice their personal opinions. I feel you praised contributions extremely well and established an atmosphere where people were comfortable in sharing their ideas with the group.*

Another student from the group said:

> Student 12-4 – *I felt comfortable taking part in discussions a couple of weeks into the module because the lecturer created an environment where all views expressed were respected. I did not have this confidence at the beginning of the class. It was also reassuring to be told that no idea was silly or wrong.*

This feedback has also shown me that even after six weeks of working towards trying to create equitable relationships this student has not called me by my name in this feedback but refers to me as 'the lecturer' which feels impersonal. The same student continues:

> Student 12-4 – *Being able not to worry about writing things down and sit facing the lecturer meant that I did not lose focus. When the lecturer changed from sitting at the front of the room to the back, I found that I spoke more often and with more confidence.*

This comment is acknowledging how the change I described in Chapter 5 to the way I position myself in the group has had an impact on the student's confidence.

Other students have also commented on an increase in their confidence to be able to engage with the sessions and their own learning.

> Student 25-4 – *Completing the Masters level work was a very new and enlightening experience for me. I felt quite daunted about starting to answer the posed questions, as discussing myself is a topic I had not previously given much though*(t) *to and do not feel particularly comfortable with doing so. However through lectures and meetings, the task seemed quite clear, as the questions should be answered honestly and can therefore be wrong, as it is an exploration of our learning journey. Once I had grasped this, I felt much more confident.*

> Student 32-4 says that because of being part of the session *I have grown in both my understanding of my own learning and in confidence in my own practice.*

> Student 34-4 says *I have been able to relate my own ontological and epistemological stances, along with my values found in module one, to theorists. This has allowed me to ground my own opinions, which inevitably has made me more confident with them.*

> Student 36-4 says *When I was first faced with the thought of working at Master level, I was very daunted. I didn't think I had the academic capability to do so, however I was wrong. I believe that in lectures and through our presentations, in this module, I have become a student working and thinking at Masters level. This is something I am very proud of.*

Other students comment on the specifics of the sessions that have led to their increased confidence.

> Student 37-4 – *I have not felt worried to share my opinions as I know I have been listened to and critiqued in a professional way.*

I have also found evidence in the data of students saying their growth in confidence will have an impact on their future practices.

> Student 25-4 says *I feel I have developed a great deal of confidence as an emergent teacher, having now completed two Masters modules, with an awareness of the positive contribution I can make to my career.*

> Student 24-4 says *I feel I have developed a greater deal of confidence as an emergent teacher, with a greater awareness of the positive contribution I can make to my career than before I started this Masters module. Therefore I hope to develop these traits in my professional practice and engender successful learners and confident individuals in my own classroom.*

This link between confidence and future practices is important because professional confidence is necessary if individuals are to use their voices and be able to articulate their own theories of practice. The increased confidence I have experienced through the M level and doctoral study sessions I participated in has been an important part of my growing sense of myself as someone who knows and is able to talk about what makes teaching and learning effective. This increased confidence creates the possibility that the students and I will have be able to use our voices to account for what we know in a way that will be listened to.

The impact of the confidence that came through the more relational sessions is summed up by a student during the post session focus group discussion.

> Student 36-4 says *This time last year looking at all our friends who graduated in the summer I was looking at them and thinking 'I really don't think I could have done this'. I didn't feel ready for it but now this time round, even in this last two or three months, I feel like we are all ready to go out there now and we have had this boost of energy and enthusiasm. I really feel like the Masters module and the dissertation have re-evaluated my reasons why I came into teaching. This is why I am doing it and just having that time to think about it in a way that you have never thought about it before, I think that comes in when you are applying for jobs and interviews. I think that enthusiasm really comes through because you*

> *have had that time to reflect on yourself and feel comfortable with who you are as a practitioner and then to be able to freely talk about it.*

This is the same student who responded to the question I asked at the start of the module, 'How did you feel coming into the Masters session?' by saying '*Scared – nervous*'. I acknowledge that there are other factors that can contribute to student confidence levels however these students attribute their increased confidence to the sessions in which I had made changes designed to create an environment conducive to reflection, dialogue and learning all of which need students to feel able to engage. The sessions have become more educational and part of education as Wenger (1998, p.263) describes it.

> 'Education must strive to open new dimensions for the negotiation of the self. It places students on an outbound trajectory toward a broad field of possible identities.'

The changes described in Chapter 5 have also been designed to create opportunities for students to engage in dialogue so that this opens up the possibility that they can account for what they know and articulate this in their own way and in their own voice. The data gathered have provided evidence that the students have had this opportunity and that they have valued it. Once again I have drawn on post-module written evaluations and the recorded focus group sessions. Students say:

> Student 6-4 *Jane allowed the session to be free – not structured – but group lead. The critical discussions were very helpful and allowed me to formulate my beliefs and thoughts. (in a non-threatening environment.* and *Through reflection and discussions I understand more about myself.*
>
> Student 11-4 *The back and forth dialogue in lectures was amazing.*
>
> Student 12-4 *Sharing the critique with the class helped to get ideas from others about how the article could have been interpreted, and made me aware of being able to give reasonable explanations for my choice of critique. The discussions that took place were also helpful for clarifying my thoughts. Being encouraged to speak during the sessions meant that I would not leave any issues unresolved by keeping them to myself. This setting allowed me to address thought as I had them.*

This student directly relates her dialogical engagement to the environment the students and I created together at the start of the sessions and that is because I stopped teaching in a didactic way, from the front, as the expert. The students have looked to each other for

understanding as well as me. Student 12-4 says she felt 'encouraged to speak' just as I had been in the doctoral seminars.

Other students have commented about dialogue.

> Student 31-4 says *I have been able to think more critically about how my own beliefs influence my teaching and through engaging with my peers, I have begun to think how to utilise the valuable beliefs of others to benefit my practice.*
>
> Student 40-1 says *It has become very clear that I strive* (thrive?) *on dialogue and discussion and that this type of collaborative interaction develops my thinking and understanding.*
>
> Student 49-1 says *Working with a critical friend to critique the articles has been very helpful, as it gave me the chance to work with my fellow peers, and all of our ideas were combined giving more knowledge than before.*

These comments seems to be showing understanding that knowledge is co-created which is an important understanding for an emerging teacher who will be leading learning in the near future. In fact this student goes on to say '*I hope that the knowledge that I have gained from this will be transferred into my classroom, and help me become a better teacher'*. This is evidence of the possibility that the influence I have on the student's understanding may be taken into the wider social formation that is the classroom and the school.

My declared reason for engaging in a more relational and dialogical form of practice is to create the opportunities for students to engage in critical reflection and worthwhile learning as I have defined it in Chapter 3. The increased confidence and acknowledgement of the value of dialogue needs to be supported by evidence that the students have become aware that they have learnt in some way as a direct result of participation in my sessions with them.

6.2.3 Evidence of students acknowledging the significance of the sessions for their learning

Many of the students have spoken about their learning in the post-session feedback, both written and recorded. Here are some of their comments acknowledging they are aware that they have been learning. Many of them say what they have learnt as well.

> Student 7-4 *I have learnt about myself and my strengths and areas for development in my practice.*
>
> Student 8-4 *I have learned more about myself and the values I hold around teaching. I have learned the value of reflection and how it benefits my continuing professional development.*
>
> Student 9-4 *I have learnt so much about myself and my practice.*

Avis (2009) talks about learning being a process of becoming and says 'Learning leads to the transformation of identity.' These students would appear to be suggesting that they are becoming more self-aware throughout the module. This is the kind of 'perspective change' that Mezirow (1991) discusses. These students say they have learnt about themselves and that this will guide their future actions. I have also found evidence that the sessions have created opportunities for the students to become aware of how they have been supported in their learning. Here is what they say:

> Student 47-1 *I now feel that I have a better understanding of myself not only as a teacher but as a learner, and by revisiting past experiences, I am now able to determine the best way to further my professional development.*
>
> Student 46-1 *I have learned that having a vision of where I want to go and what I want to achieve, as well as striving to achieve and progress, is very important to developing my own self-confidence and ability in any area. Reflecting on my learning has help identify the type of teacher I want to be. It has made me aware of the importance of pupil teacher relationship as the root of a successful class.*
>
> Student 42-1 says *I have been able to reflect critically on my own learning experiences and highlight ways in which I learn best. This not only enables (*me*) to identify different ways I learn by (*but*) allows me to understand how they are effective. I have found the use of a critical partner very valuable to extending my learning.*
>
> Student 38-4 *I also came to understand some of the important conditions in which I learn.*

> Student 25-4 highlights *I now consider the learning process one goes through to be much more meaningful.*

All of these and some others stored and accessible in my data archive show that students are aware of their learning through the reflective process and some students comment directly about the significance of being able to reflect on themselves as learners.

> Student 14-4 says *It took the process of reflection for me to tease out that what I do is already based on my values*

> Student 48-1 *I have a greater appreciation for the reflective practice and aim to continue to involve myself in the process so I not only understand how I teach, but why I teach and most importantly, how I can actively improve the way I teach.*

This is evidence of the student intending to turn reflection into action and contributing to Mezirow's idea (1991, p.12) that 'Learning may be understood as the process of using a prior interpretation of the meaning of one's experiences in order to guide future action'. As I interrogated the data I also found evidence from the student post-module feedback of what they have learnt through reflection and dialogue. Here are some of the comments and others are stored in my data archive. I have chosen to represent here student voices that have yet to be heard in this thesis to enable as many students' voices to be heard as possible.

> Student 15-4 *I have learnt a great deal about my practice identifying areas which I need to develop and strengthen.*

> Student 17-4 *Reflecting on my own learning journey, and significant people who have influenced the development of my values and beliefs around teaching and learning, has helped me to understand the fears and anxieties children may have in the classroom. I can now use this understanding to enable them to overcome these anxieties about learning.*

> Student 35-4 says the module has *nurtured me towards a realisation of myself as a successful learner, as I progress towards Qualified Teacher Status.*

> Student 39-1 *I have really understood how learning is not a one way process and how important it is to remember that there are always opportunities to learn.*

The following students say what they have learnt from the modules, and they also say what the impact of that learning will be on their future practices. The following quotes

provide evidence of potential impact on the wider social formations in which the students will work thus extending my influence further. This is important for the claim that this research has a worth beyond my own practice. Students are saying in the data that what they have learnt in the sessions about their own learning will influence what they do in the classroom.

> Student 46-1 *Taking this newly acquired knowledge with me into school will defiantly (*definitely?) *influence how I will approach each child and address the best way for them to reach their full potential*

> Student 10-4 *I have grown as a teacher. I feel that this will have a very good impact on my teaching. I now know what underpins my practices and know where I come from.*

An educational experience is one that contributes to an individual's growth and potential which these students have said has happened to them because of the sessions.

6.2.4 Evidence that the students have learnt to become aware of the significance of their values

One of the recurring themes that has emerged from the data are the students' realisation that their values can and should inform their practice. This has been made possible through the opportunities for reflection and dialogue that have been created by the changes I describe in Chapter 5. Some of the students clearly make a link between the sessions and this new understanding.

> Student 6-4 *I have learnt about my values and beliefs and how they have come about. Through reflection and discussion I understand more about myself.*

> Student 7-4 *I have strengthened my knowledge of my values and beliefs and how the process of reflection can play a role in reaffirming these.*

> Student 15-4 *Perhaps the most significant thing about this master's module is that I have recognised where I developed my values which have a great impact on the type of teacher which I am. Through understanding where my values originated from, I believe I have a more in depth understanding of my practice. I will continue to reflect upon my practice throughout my career as I recognise how beneficial this practice can be.*

> Student 20-4 *I have particularly enjoyed looking threw* (through) *my learning journey and analysing the events within it in regards to the emerging values shown from them.*

Other students comment on the impact their emerging understanding of their values will have on their teaching.

> Student 29-4 *Reflecting on my practice has reminded me of my values and the influence I can have on children. I have gone through the process of unconsciously knowing to consciously knowing my values. For example, I expected children to treat each other with respect and fairness, however I now realise that this derives from my values, which others have shown me.*

> Student 30-4 *I appreciate the opportunity this* (the sessions) *has given me to consider my beliefs and values in terms of current educational theories and practice, and strongly believe that I will be a better teacher for it in living out important values in practice.*

The following student makes a clear link between what she has learnt through reflection on her own learning and the values she will take into the classroom.

> Student 39-1 *I realised many of the values I hold are due to my experiences with my Mum and her including me in her learning. Through reflecting on this as an experience which has made me part of who I am, I have seen ways to improve my practice when I am teaching. I have really understood how learning is not a one way process and how important it is to remember that there are always opportunities to learn. I think that including children in my learning as well; learning together would encourage children to become more interested.*

Other students say that as a result of engaging in the sessions there has been a profound transformation in their understanding. This understanding has the potential to have an impact on the student's practices in the classroom and opens up the possibility that the students can use the values as their own standards by which to hold themselves educationally accountable for their actions.

> Student 38-4 *I have come to realise even more so the great responsibility which is on my shoulders every time I step into the classroom, in terms of me as a role model and the influence I can have on 30 lives.*

> Student 45-1 *I feel I have understood more about myself because I asked questions I never would have asked myself before regarding my values. I knew these values were always there but I did not regard them as such a major part of my identity.*

> Student 11-4 *I will now have in mind to be more aware of my values and to use them in making decisions.*

> Student 5-4 *I will go into my practice as a professional with a greater understanding of the meaning and importance of good quality teaching and learning, in light of my core beliefs and values.*

These are powerful comments and are evidence of critical reflection on the part of these students. As Mezirow (1991, p.15) suggests it is 'a critique of the premises or pre-suppositions upon which habits of expectation are predicated.' They have suggested that they have realised as they have engaged with the sessions the place of their values in determining the way they will teach and this connection has been a profound one for them. They are beginning to develop 'critical self-reflection, thereby recovering the personal and a stronger sense of self-understanding.' (ibid, p.193)

6.2.5 Evidence that the students have felt they were engaging in a democratic, emancipatory learning experience

It has been important for me to learn to develop a practice that puts the learner at the heart of the experience and enables them to feel able to speak for themselves. There is some evidence in the data that students have been able to do this in the sessions.

> Student 2-4 *Input throughout the lectures has always been related to our own thoughts and experiences and therefore felt more relevant to my learning and how I could apply it in the future. The sessions have always been very vocal with our own thoughts and opinions.*

This student goes on to say how this has impacted on their learning.

> Student 2-4 *This strategy is one that I felt really comfortable with when trying to learn as my thoughts were never criticised, you could never be wrong, they were approached with the thought that they were a scaffold to our next stage of learning.*

> Student 19-4 *I appreciate the opportunity this has given me to consider my beliefs and values in terms of current educational theories and practice, and strongly believe I will be a better teacher for it.*

One student in particular said this about the link tutor meeting that we had together.

> Student 52-4 *During this meeting, Jane established the expectations of everybody involved including herself; this relaxed the atmosphere for me, as the student, because everybody had been equalled.*

This is particularly pleasing for me because I had felt so unhappy about the link tutor meetings where I was adopting a position as an expert and it is evidence that I have begun to move away from this to a position which the student feels is more equitable.

None of the comments I have quoted have prioritised learning what to do to pass the assignment and this was pleasing. All of the students commented on individual Standards because the School of Education self-assessment form asks them to do so however what was pleasing was that this often came *after* they had commented in the way I quote above. None of them talk about the teaching of a set of skills or say that I taught them how to pass the assignment although they clearly did learn how to do so because they all passed. This is evidence that by conducting the session in a more democratic, student-led way I have opened up the possibility for influence in students' learning. The students have realised the significance of reflective practice and they understand, as evidenced by their feedback, that it is important to hold and explain their values of practice which they indicate is new learning for them.

6.3 Is this thesis evidence of a developing epistemology of educational accountability?

In Chapter 2 I define educational accountability as a process that creates the possibility of the following

- personal engagement of the individual
- the development of the capacity of individuals to exercise agency
- significant learning and the valuing of informed personal knowledge
- the development of 'capable human beings' (Ricoeur 2005)
- those involved contributing to the setting of the standards of judgement by which their practices are judged in collaboration with others.
- rigorous improvement in practices

For accountability processes to be educational I suggest they need to create the opportunities for those involved to cultivate and develop the dispositions above. I have not been held to account throughout my teaching career in a way that has enabled me to feel capable or to feel empowered through the determination of my own standards of practice. The technical rational forms of accountability I describe in Chapter 2 have not only robbed me of any sense of participation in the process but they have led ultimately to me becoming compliant and powerless. It is a process that is 'done to me' rather than one that is 'done with me.'

What I have learnt through the development of my living theory of educational accountability is that it is possible to be held to account for what I do in a way that values what I know and allows me to transform what I do through learning to do things better. The learning to improve has come out of problem solving and it has led to transformation. What I have learnt is that if I am to improve what I do I need to understand it and ground my actions in my values. I have learnt that those informed actions must be offered up for the critique of others in a way that is dialogical and enables me to contribute in a meaningful way as one who knows something of value. I have learnt that being educationally accountable is grounded in the idea that I am a responsible and capable individual and as such the onus is on me to take responsibility for what I do and look at what I do through the eyes of those involved, as well as through my own. I have developed and tested this living theory out through the research process and reported on what happened when I held myself educationally to account for what I do in practice.

What I have learnt is the imperative of holding myself educationally to account for my values because it has the potential to improve what I do. *How* I have learnt this is through doing so. This is my epistemology or theory of educational accountability as I have said what I have come to know and how I have come to know it. The knowledge I have generated is tentative, provisional and co-created with others and above all it contributes to my living theory because it emerges from my practice.

6.4 Testing the validity of my claim that I am generating my own living theory of educational accountability.

The quality of action research is tested by asking how rigorously it has been conducted, how valid the new knowledge is and whether it has been tested by the critical evaluation of others. Is the claim to knowledge believable and does the thesis do what it says it does? Validity is multi-faceted and is perceived as being the key to effective research (Cohen et al, p2000). However it is a concept that has been challenged. Scheurich (1996, p.55) suggests that the judgements made about validity in research are in fact privileging the 'same' over the 'other', thus leading to a possible lack of respect for the theories of others. A dualistic, either/or view of validity can lead to the potential for a narrow view of what constitutes valid theory. My thesis does not seek validation in a propositional way. It does not tell others what to do because this would be denying the ontological and epistemological values expressed in Chapter 3.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that in qualitative research external validity is problematic because of the centrality of the context and the potential for influence by the historical and social situations. The educational context of this research lessens the replicability of the findings because of the variation in people's behaviour, the multiplicity of the foci and the way the settings change (Hammersley 1990). Although I am not looking to produce findings that are replicable, I want them to have influence which is commensurate with my expressed ontological and epistemological understanding of the autonomy of the learner and the role the learner has in the process. Despite the perceived lack of replicability and generalisability the claim's validity must be clearly established. What is sure is that in whichever paradigm the research is located validity has to be tested.

This research is qualitative in nature and so it will draw on a particular view of the way that research validity can be established. A self-study action research methodology includes the processes of validation and one of the ways to test the quality of any action research inquiry is to consider how valid the new embodied knowledge is. This validation is done through the standards of judgement which are applied to it. As I seek this

validation I ask if my claim to be generating my living theory of educational accountability can be believed. Have I done what I set out to do? Does my claim have any meaning for myself and others? How have I achieved certain standards in my practice, grounded in values and commitment?

In this research I have used several types of validity to establish the truth of the claims I make to knowledge.

6.4.1 Personal validity

I am seeking personal validity of the claim that by holding myself to account in a way that contributes to my own learning I can influence the learning of others. I am doing this in the following way;

- being open with the participants and with myself
- being explicit about how I have developed my understanding through reflection
- working with colleagues
- being honest about my values (Ball 2003)

Whitehead (2008) says that in seeking personal validity the researcher has decided to see their world from their own point of view (Polanyi 1958) thus being original and exercising responsibility and their right to make judgements. Self-study as a methodology puts the living 'I' at the centre of the enquiry so I am trying to see my world from my unique perspective.

Using personal validation of claims means that values are put forward as the criteria by which my practices can be judged. The validity of my claim is considered to be the extent to which I can be seen to be living out my values in what I am doing. My values have been set out in Chapter 3 of this thesis and Chapter 5 gives some examples of how I have started to live out those values through changes I have made to my practice. Personal validation in this self-study enquiry has taken the form of an ongoing dialogue with myself. My values have emerged and been re-conceptualised over the course of this research journey and it has in part been because of the reflection I have done after

engagement with my own questions and the questions asked by others. So much of it has been private and remains unshared but it has been an essential part of the learning process.

6.4.2 Social validity

When testing the social validity of a claim to knowledge, one is doing so with and through the critical feedback of others. This asks the question, 'How well do I communicate my claim so it can be tested in relation to objective criteria and standards of judgement?' This claim is tested by the critical feedback of others. The validity of the judgements I am making can be supported by Habermas' (1976) criteria of truth claims and I am asking,

- How can I improve the comprehensibility of my account? Is the account making sense?
- Is there enough evidence to justify my claims?
- Have I shown enough awareness of the normative assumptions and cultural influences that are impacting on my writing?
- Does the account show authenticity inasmuch as over time I have shown commitment to my values?

These standards can be applied to the ways I have sought to enhance the social validation of my claims and be part of the examination process.

Throughout my research I have taken opportunities to test my understandings publicly by attending conferences such as the Collaborative Action Research Network conferences, the British Educational Research Association conferences, the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction conferences and others. All of these have offered me the opportunity to explain what I am doing and to offer up for discussion the theories that have emerged as the research has progressed. One such post-presentation critique of my ideas is on YouTube. I am discussing how I generate my own living theory of accountability. Another example of how I have sought social validation is participating with colleagues in a keynote symposium at the BERA conference in 2009 which offered

another opportunity for me to test my ideas in a public forum. Both of these examples can be accessed at www.youtube.com/results?search_query=jane+renowden+at+bera

Occasionally I received feedback from someone who was present. An example of this is an email I received in 2008 after a meeting at the BERA conference.

> *'I found meeting you very inspiring. I was really taken with 'epistemological accountability' and the quality of your ability to articulate and communicate your values, theories and practices have moved my own thinking on a lot.'* (Huxtable personal email. September 2008. BERA symposium.)

Using the criteria set by Habermas for judging social validation, I have had to present my work in this forum comprehensibly. In the examples, I am holding myself to account for my ideas in a way that is living out my values in what I am doing, that is through dialogue and the opening up of opportunities for others to critique my ideas. I have used the feedback of other to revisit and develop my ideas. My tutor Professor Jean McNiff has played an important role throughout the research process and her verbal and written feedback and critique of my emerging understandings has been invaluable.

Another opportunity that I have taken to enhance the social validity of my claims is to invite the engagement of critical friends which is what Habermas (1972) would call an ideal speech situation where validity is established through critical discussion. I have met with a group of colleagues on a regular basis since starting this doctoral research. These meetings have allowed me to discuss ideas and have my emerging understandings critiqued. Colleagues have commented on my work as I have described it and Appendix 10 is an example of the type of feedback I have received. It shows the notes taken at one such meeting where I am seeking validation for my claim that I am making changes to the presented teaching session and that those changes are made to enable me to live out my values more fully in my practice. These meetings have challenged my ideas and often led to epiphanies of understanding. It was following one such meeting in 2010 that I had just such an epiphany as I wrote in my research journal.

> *'As I heard myself explain my current understanding of accountability I suddenly realised that I was referring to the role I have to hold students to account for*

> *what they are doing. Of course I am expected to hold them to account for their ideas and actions in school however if I am living out the educational values then I have to unpick the power dynamics embedded in how I see that role. I need to let go of this idea that I should hold them to account. I need to support them to do that for themselves'* (Renowden 2010, unpublished journal).

I have also tested the validity of my claims with the students, who I think are well placed to critique the claim that I am influencing their learning. I asked the students who have been participants in the research to reflect on the data I have gathered. Validity can be established through the data analysis processes so I have chosen to engage in what Creswell (1998) calls member checking, that is, checking the findings with those who have been participants in the research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) consider this to be a valuable way of enhancing validity but they ask whose perspective stands if there is a disagreement about what the evidence shows? I do not see this as problematic in the context of this research. One of the key aims of this research is to establish the value of the embodied understandings and knowledge of others and I acknowledge the possibility that this may be different to my own. There has always been the possibility that I will need to re-visit assumptions and that the way students interpret data such as the link tutor meetings may not be mine. This is one of the challenges of testing the validity of my claim to know and there is always the possibility that what I see as evidence from the data is not seen by others. I consider that the different perspective of those who are participating in this research adds richness and it is an important way of answering one of the oft repeated critiques of self-study action research, that it is introspective and compromised. It is also a valuable contribution to my own learning.

A key data collection method used in this research has been audio recordings of the engagement of myself as a link tutor with students. I invited the students who took part in the transcribed meetings (which are accessible in my data archive) to consider what they thought the transcripts showed. This was done after the school experience was completed and the evaluations made. I invited them to answer the following questions:

- Did JR fulfil the role of link tutor as you expected her to?
- Did JR allow you enough time to speak?

- Did you talk about the parts of your practice you felt you wanted to talk about?
- Did JR support your learning in any way? If so how?
- What, if any, of JRs values did you see in her practice? Can you give evidence of when they are evident i.e page numbers etc?
- How could JR have supported you further?
- Do you have any other comments?

I referred to myself as JR throughout to try and lessen the personal nature of the questions although with hindsight I am not sure that was necessary. The questions were designed to see if the students experienced the meetings as I had. Had they experienced them as relational and dialogical and had they felt that they were able to contribute and have a voice? I also wanted to see if they considered them to be a learning experience. Here are their comments.

1. Did JR fulfil the role of link tutor as you expected her to?

JR exceeded my expectations as a link tutor, as she helped me out more than other link tutors
She held higher expectations than my other link tutors, demanding more of me, but at the same time, did so in a pleasant manner, which helped to motivate me. Her advice and feedback were more useful than some that I have received from other link tutors.

2. Did JR allow you enough time to speak?

I don't tend to talk much as when receiving feedback I like to listen. That being said, I did all of the talking I needed to and my concerns were addressed and my actions explained.

3. Did you talk about the parts of your practice you felt you wanted to talk about?

Yes, all of my concerns at the time were addressed. However I did not bring these concerns into the conversation as I think they were evident in my practice.
I did especially about getting ideas.

4. Did JR support your learning in any way? If so how?

JR supported my learning by not telling me, instead by questioning me, I could come up with the answers all my own.
I find that many things in teaching are common sense, just that in practice sometimes, there are classroom or school factors that have an effect on action, which later upon reflection, when common sense kicks in, become evident. JR posed the right questions to perform this reflection.

5. What, if any, of JR's values did you see in her practice? Can you give evidence of when they were evident i.e page number etc?

JR, as a link tutor showed her value of caring. Although this is a vague idea and not one that can be proven by quoting the transcript, her manner of speaking and smiling are evidence of this.
The fact that we spoke about areas of development instead of her just telling me what they are is evidence of this (caring).
JR showed her value of fairness, by stating my strengths as well as my weaknesses. This allowed me to maintain my confidence, despite being told what to improve. This showed me her sense of professionalism as it is something teachers do with class children.
JR also showed her sense of support, as I felt I could ask her anything and contact her outside of her visiting time with any concerns.
I do not think I can give evidence from the transcripts, as transcripts do not show tone of voice, mannerisms and emotion, which is how I saw her values.

6. How could JR have supported you further?

I would like to have been observed more towards the end, as there is still and will always be a lot to learn from more experienced professionals.

7. Do you have any other comments?

She was firm but fair and always spoke in a manner that was calming, and personally made sure I felt good after each visit.
Other link tutors give you the necessary feedback and nothing else, with little conversation and do so in more of a cold manner, without much consideration about how I felt about the school experience.
I have learnt from her as well as through her and this was my most successful placement yet, in terms of my professional development.

The students have all commented on the relational way the meetings have been and they do feel as if they have had time and space to engage in dialogue. What is less clear is that the sessions have been as democratic as I would want. I still give the impression that I am there to tell the students what to do or what is wrong with their practice (highlighted in red). These comments certainly point to the improvements I still need to make to be living out my values fully. What is worth noting is the value of doing this with students because for the first time I am enabling their voice to be influential in what I do.

I also asked the students to comment generally on their experiences and here are extracts from their responses. I am using as evidence the parts of the texts that refer directly to my influence. The whole response is available in my data archive.

Student A: *You have given me all sorts of advice about what to do to improve my teaching. I will use the sandwich one. The questions made me think about what I*

was doing. You told me about the things I was doing OK which spurred me on a bit. I wasn't nervous about the next observation after this one.

Student B: *The meeting was more relaxed than I thought it would be. I was able to relax and answer your questions. You encouraged me to think about what I was doing and suggest things I could do to make the lesson better.*

Students A, B and C all noted that I asked questions and they all said they had chance to speak. After looking at the transcript of one of our meetings Student C wrote:

Student C: *During the latter 2 visits Jane observed me teach two lessons and gave me feedback. The feedback Jane gave me was of great value; Jane always spoke in a calm, supportive understanding and positive tone to me enabling me to feel more relaxed and supported; this allowed me to connect to the conversations. Before Jane gave me the feedback she would always give me the opportunity to reflect back over the lesson by asking 'How did you feel that lesson went?". She would often stop and question me; sometimes rhetorically which allowed me to go away and think about the comment as well as questions which I could answer on the spot. This kind of reflection was highly effective as it enabled me to develop and improve upon my practice; which will stay with me throughout my career. Throughout our meetings I felt that I was not 'talked down to' as a student, I felt very much involved in the feedback which was ultimately about my practice. Jane pushed my thinking and reflection onwards and very much helped me achieve the best of my ability.'*

Student C has noted the relational way that I engaged with her and she has commented on the way that the questioning has stimulated her thinking and her reflection which I would suggest is more critical because she intimates that it will impact on her learning. This is by way of a contrast to the transcript in Appendix E which is with the same student in the same context. This meeting does not allow for the same opportunities that she highlights above.

This chapter has provided evidence to support the claim that because I am holding myself to account for my actions I am developing a pedagogy that is becoming more relational, dialogical, emancipatory and democratic thus making it more educational. This is evidenced in the actions described in Chapter 5 and in the voices of the students who have been participants in the sessions which have become transformed. I have found out what can happen when I take responsibility for my actions and I have established the link between those actions and the learning of the students. I have shown what developed over

time and I have provided evidence using the students' voices to show that this learning is at least in part as a result of my actions. I have also described how I have tested the validity of my claim through the presentation of evidence.

The next chapter looks at the significance of this action enquiry. I am claiming that my practice has improved in ways that I have described because I have taken action, that is I have held myself educationally to account. I am claiming also that in doing so I have contributed to the learning of others. I am also claiming that this is opening up opportunities to influence the movement of social formations towards 'hope for the future of humanity (McNiff and Whitehead 2006, p.236). Chapter 7 explores these claims.

Chapter 7. Next- The significance of this action enquiry

This Chapter will ask the question, 'What is the significance of this research?' and also explain the potential impact the new knowledge it has generated can have on my practices and the practices of others. It will look at three particular domains (McNiff and Whitehead 2006),

1. **The significance for my learning**
2. **The significance for the learning of others**
3. **The significance for the learning of social formations**

All of these are intertwined and contribute to the realisation of each other as each of my declared aims are met.

In Chapter 2 I set out the concerns which have formed the background to this research. I am as concerned now as I was in 2007 when I began to formulate the focus of this work. I am still concerned that the models of accountability to be found in schools and teacher education are contributing to the idea that teachers are unable to determine their own standards of practice and the role of the teacher is becoming less significant when those in power decide what good educational practices look like. I am also concerned that teachers are held to account in a way that is leading to passivity and compliance amongst the teaching profession. This chapter will show how this research is significant because it has the potential to contribute to a different view of teachers as well as influence and contribute to other significant understandings in the field of education.

In 2011, I attended a School of Education day and the new Principal of the University College talked about the continued drive to stimulate research within the School. He talked at some length about the type of research that would be the most useful in terms of getting recognition nationally and internationally for the School of Education and the University as a whole. One of the key criteria that would be used to determine whether the research was going to achieve that end was economic impact. He pointed out that the research does not need to exclude the esoteric, it does not need to be capable of

measurement and it can tell a story. The key question that we were to ask ourselves, as academics and non-academics, was 'What impact does my research have?'

To explain the significance and the impact of this research, I am drawing on the work of McNiff and Whitehead (2009, p.163) to structure my explanation. This Chapter will show the significance of my research using their headings. It will show the significance of what I am saying, the significance of how I am saying it and the significance of the fact that I am saying it. It will say to whom this thesis matters and why this thesis matters.

7.1 What is the significance of what I am saying?

Throughout this thesis I am saying that, by engaging in research into what I am doing, I have transformed my understandings about who I am and what I am doing. I have developed the capacity for reflexive critique (Winter 1989) by challenging my entrenched assumptions about what I was doing. The reason I embarked on this research was to be able to make personal and professional improvements through the development of deeper understanding.

7.1.1 The significance of my research for my own education

For my own learning, this thesis has been deeply significant on two levels, personal and professional which are both practical and theoretical. Professionally, I am now engaging with the idea that I am able to say what I know. I am saying that, through doing this research, I am demonstrating my commitment to dialogical and critical ways of working which are embedded in relational practice. I am showing, through my actions, that I value emancipatory and democratic ways of knowing. This is significant because through this research I have come to understand what that means for what I am doing. I am being educated into new ways of taking action. Through this research I have developed an understanding that my own learning has been suppressed by the way I was, and still am, expected to account for what I am doing. I had become compliant and unquestioning, which for someone engaged in teaching and learning was a poor place to be. As I was working to support children to be questioning, thinking adults who saw themselves as responsible for engaging in their own learning, I was not doing the same myself. I am

now doing this and importantly have learnt why that is necessary if I am going to challenge the discourses of power and break down the idea in my own mind that I am a member of what Chomsky (2000) calls a specialised class.

Personally it has enabled me to connect with a sense of my own self worth as I have developed an understanding of myself as a learner. Tillich (1973) talks about one's sense of being and that is what I have come to understand. Before engaging with this research, I saw myself through the eyes of others and I was defined by others; my family, those in authority in school and those in authority in the wider education context. What I have learnt to do through this research is to engage with my life in a way that I had not done before. I have clarified what it means to be me and I have come to a new understanding of myself. Through the process of holding up my practices for personal and public scrutiny I have begun to develop an honesty about what I am doing that means I have an increased sense of integrity. I have connected with the idea that I am able to think for myself and this understanding informs the way I relate to what is going on in both my personal and my professional life.

Throughout this thesis I have challenged the way I think. I have re-thought key concepts such as knowledge, learning and education in the light of my practice and in doing so I have developed actions that are more commensurate with these re-conceptualisations. I have changed my thinking and in doing so I have contributed to the formation of new cultures. It is my claim that the improvements I have evidenced in my practice have come about because I have learnt to engage in actions that are more educational through a realisation of the significance of dialogue and critical reflection in what I do as a teacher. I have learnt to see myself as a knower in relation to other knowers. I have realised that I can think for myself and that others can do so too. This is significant in relation to my expressed concerns because I have found a voice and this has to be done to enable me to use it.

7.1.2 The significance of my research for the education of others in my context

What I have learnt about my self and the actions I take has a direct significance for the student teachers who fill my classes. What I have said throughout this thesis is that I am learning to do things differently and better so as to enhance the opportunities for the students to learn, which is the raison d'etre of my work. This is dependent on the relationships I develop with the learners I work alongside. Splitter (2009) says that what lies at the heart of education can be found within the relationships and that we enter into these relationships when we become students. If this research does not contribute to the learning of the students I work alongside then it is of limited value. What transforms this research from what a colleague called 'an exercise in navel-gazing' into research that has a much wider potential for influence is the possibility of influencing the learning of others. As those 'others' are student teachers whose declared intention is to be engaged in educating children, then the opportunity for me to influence, through them, a much wider context is there. This research is not significant because I hope they will be clones of me. In fact, that is the last thing I want them to be. This research is significant because it shows that if I live out my values as explicated in Chapter 3 then it is possible that the students will become able to do the same. This leads to the possibility that they will take those values into the classroom in which they work which could extend my influence further.

What this research is showing is that individuals are capable of being able to determine their own understandings and students and teachers are able to think for themselves and articulate what they know. I am saying that by modelling ourselves uncritically, according to the standards set by others, we are losing any sense of ourselves as learners and participants in our own professional identity. This research is significant because it has led to a transformation in my understandings, that has led to different ways of doing things which in turn have led to students engaging with their own learning in a way that they say is new for them.

In Chapter 6, I noted that students said that because of the sessions we had together, they engaged with what it means to be an educator and for the first time they had come to

understand their own values (see Chapter 6). This is significant because it could mean that they take these new understandings into the classroom and this has the potential to transform the learning experiences of the children they work with. I have learnt that it is not my responsibility to tell the students what to think or impose my understandings on them. It is my hope that as the students have come to develop their own ontological and epistemological understandings they will use them as the basis for what they do in the classroom and elsewhere.

This is significant because it contributes to the idea that what we say about what we know is of value. Holding ourselves to account for our ideas can act as an antidote to those who would exercise power over what we think and do. This begins with the students developing a sense that their own living theories of practice have a value and that what they come to know about their practice is worthwhile. The creation of a climate that opens up dialogue and critical reflection through relationships has developed a confidence in students that will enable them to feel empowered to give their accounts of what they know and what they are doing. Significantly, it has helped them to understand the value of their own knowledge as a way of improving what they do in the classroom, an outcome of importance for me. Effective teachers understand the importance of improvement and this research contributes to the idea that the standards by which those improvements can be judged can emerge from the values that teachers hold. This understanding will only be articulated in a way that has the potential for influence in wider contexts if teachers have learnt to value what they know and be able to account for it in a way that is seen to be leading to the improvements that we all want. I have shown in this research that students have come to understand this as they learn to value what they know and are able to articulate it.

As students learn to hold themselves to account for what they do, they may be influenced to engage with the discourses that imply that teachers need to be told what to do and how to do it by those who are far removed from what goes on in the classroom. Their explanations of their actions may act as an antidote to the perception that teachers are practitioners who are unable to theorise what they do. This engagement can challenge the

imbalance in power and reclaim the influence that has been lost to successive governments over the discourses about what works in the classroom. There is the potential to increase the influence that teachers have over the discourses and normative practices in schools and education. If teachers can say what they know, how they have come to know it and crucially test the validity of these claims in a way that is recognised, then the opportunities for influence are there. This research is significant because it shows that through doing this myself I have influenced others.

7.1.3 The significance of my research for the education of cultural and social formations

McNiff and Whitehead (2009, p.64) say that a social formation is 'the existing social and professional groupings that claim social and cultural capital and make statements about the way things should be.' One of the declared intentions of this research has always been to take action to influence the way teachers are perceived and perceive themselves in relation to their ability and need to generate their own validated theories of practice. The reasons for this are stated elsewhere in this thesis and it is significant because it is my contribution to educational theory. I am a teacher first and foremost and I have put forward my theories or explanations of practice for validation.

Cultures and social formations have their own knowledge systems (McNiff and Whitehead 2009). Certainly within education, the knowledge systems that have become part of the different social formations and cultures are very entrenched and can be quite destructive. My research is significant because it is contributing to new knowledge systems which can change the way that teachers as researchers are perceived. This is particularly evident within the existing research culture in the University I work in. What I have to say about my practice has assumed a value because it is contributing to the declared aim within the institution of more staff becoming research active. There is also a need for staff to get their doctorates and what I am saying is contributing to this as well. By being one of the lecturers perceived to be teachers as well as academics, and also working towards a doctorate, I am contributing to an erosion of the perception that

teachers are unable to articulate what they know and make that knowledge and understanding public. I am a teacher and I am able to contribute to change within the culture of the University by having a voice. I am no longer an observer and implementer of the research of others. I am fully engaged with my own research.

When I moved in to higher education in 2004 I became part of a context that did not hold teaching as I understood it in very high regard. The imbalance between the value put on teaching and the value put on research by those in authority at the time was marked. My thesis makes a contribution to the significant changes that have taken place over the last few years and this doctoral research is an important part of that. I have become part of the research community within the institution and I have had opportunities to engage in the strategic decision making about research because of this public engagement with my own professional development. Yet importantly at the heart of my professional identity I am a teacher and that remains a major part of my role. I have shown that my identity is dynamic and that it 'is not a fixed category; it is a living, creative process' (McNiff and Whitehead 2009, p.169). My identity is now created and importantly understood by myself and not determined by those who hold the power and this understanding means I am released from the need to account for myself using the standards of others alone. This research has re-balanced the power dynamics and enabled me to find a voice as a teacher within the Academy. I have the opportunity to use that voice to influence other teachers to use their voices to influence the discourses I described in Chapter 2.

The significance of what I am saying lies in the fact that I am saying that it is possible to be a teacher and a researcher and put that teaching practice at the heart of the research which will be worthy of note in the Academy. I am contributing to a new way of thinking within my institution and I have released myself from the powerful dominant discourses I have described in Chapter 2. I have shown that I have something worth contributing and I am enabling my voice and possibly the voice of others to be heard.

It is here that I need to acknowledge the limitations of this idea. My work at the moment involves preparation for our next inspection which now comes with very little warning.

For all this work and all of this significance I am still locked into the technical rational systems of accountability and I would be treading a dangerous path if I ignore them. I am not naive enough to think that because of this research much will change quickly on a macro level. However, it is apparent to me that on a micro level my findings can influence the quality of what goes on in classrooms and this will impact on decisions that are made about quality, like a pebble in a pool.

7.2 What is the significance of how I am saying it?

How I have chosen to say what I have learnt is very significant in terms of my learning, the learning of others and the learning of the social formations in which I work. I am claiming that as I have developed an epistemology of accountability (Renowden 2009) which I consider to be educational, I have contributed to learning. I have chosen to do this because I have understood, as Polanyi (1958, p.327) says,

> 'I must understand the world from my own point of view, as a person claiming originality and exercising his (or her) personal judgement responsibility with universal intent'.

This is what makes my claim to knowledge original. It is grounded in my own practices and my own narrative which is uniquely mine. In telling this story, I am in some sense making up for lost time and this is very personal. 'If only I knew then what I know now' is a feeling that runs throughout this research. I am saying what I am saying by holding myself to account. I am holding myself to account for what I have done, what I am doing and what I intend to do on the understanding that this is necessary to bring about worthwhile learning and transformation. This research is my act of educational accountability as I engage in critical reflection and dialogue with myself. I am holding myself to account in a very practical way and I am doing it on my own terms. This thesis is an example of educational accountability in practice and as such it is significant. It demonstrates how it is possible to be accountable for what one knows and does using personal values-based standards of judgement, while being accountable for what one does also using the standards of others such as the Academy. It is bringing together a vocational and professional necessity and an educational ideal and it is contributing to the

not insignificant idea that it is possible to have some synergy between education for itself alone and education for the workplace.

7.2.1 The significance of how I have said it for my own education

I have learnt how to say what I have to say in a way that has given meaning to my life. I have done this by holding myself to account. The way I have chosen to say what I know has emerged from my practices and just as they are constantly being revisited and reviewed, I expect my understanding of what I know and how I have come to know it to be the same. My epistemology is one of Schon's (1995) 'new epistemologies' and I have developed it through action research. I have come to know by being accountable in my own way, not as others have told me to be. If education is to be defined in broad terms as a democratic, emancipatory process which develops through dialogue and reflection, and if it is to be for itself *and* for the realities of the world in which I live then this research has done both. I have learnt how to move from a position of being a living contradiction to a position where I understand what it means to be involved in my own education more fully which enables me to fulfil my own potential. I will always experience contradictions in my life however I have learnt how to set about understanding them and using them as springboards for learning.

7.2.2 The significance of how I have said it for the education of others in my context

My action research is part of the 'New Scholarship' (Boyer 1990) and my developed and developing epistemology of educational accountability is both fluid and transformational (McNiff and Whitehead 2009). I deliberately say it is both developed and developing because I understand that this 'living theory' (Whitehead 1989) is not a fixed idea that is made public in the same way as other propositional theories waiting to be accessed by others. What makes my epistemology unique is that it emerges from my own practice, my own act of accountability and it is an example of what can happen if I hold myself to account for the life I am living. As I engage with my practices and continue the action cycles my understandings will develop and respond to challenge in a way that reflects how I see knowledge and theory.

The significance for others is that how I have told my story has the potential to encourage other teachers to do the same. This is already happening as I am working with a number of Masters students who are engaging in research into their own practices. One example of this is a teacher in a school in Ireland who is asking the question 'How do I support the learning of the traveller children in my class?' As an undergraduate several years ago she was present at a seminar in which I discussed my research. Another example is of a teacher who has completed his MA study as my tutee who has asked the question 'How can I improve what I am doing as a co-ordinator of mathematics?' They have both written about the re-focusing of what they understand about their practices. Of course this is all their own work and a manifestation of their learning but I claim some influence, based on the evidence I have presented in Chapter 6, in how they have chosen to say what they have to say because I have been able to show them the possibilities from doing so.

7.2.3 The significance of how I have said it for the education of social formations

How I have chosen to tell my story is very significant for the research culture within my own institution and the wider University culture. One of the reasons I chose to engage in self-study action research was to challenge the prevailing hegemonic discourses that were prevalent within my own institution and the wider world of research. It would not have been impossible for me to conduct a more empirical, positivist research enquiry which would generate propositional knowledge setting out ways for improving this or developing that. However, that would have been contributing to the detrimental discourses I have described in Chapter 2. I have told my story in such a way that it has the potential to contribute to a more emancipatory, democratic way of knowing which can lead to improvement.

As I have developed my epistemology of educational accountability I am contributing to the way that the University will view knowledge generated by teachers and to a culture that values all different kinds of knowledge and that values all sorts of different ways of coming to know. This is significant because, within the University, this has not always been the case and indeed in some Universities is still not the case. Taken to its extreme, if

those in power consider that there is only one way to know and one type of knowledge that is the right way then we are at risk of being exposed to the dictates of dictators.

The fact that I am engaging in self-study action research and this is being put forward as a rigorous and academically recognised methodology for research is still worthy of note in the wider university culture. I am one of the first academics in my own university to conduct a self-study action research enquiry at doctoral level which makes it significant because it is contributing to new ways of doing research which are grounded in the worth of the embodied personal knowledge of the individual. As I build on this research and look to publish my work and use what I have learnt to create opportunities for others to do the same I am contributing to a change in culture within the university and the teaching profession itself. I am creating the possibility that other teachers in different contexts will be influenced to theorise what they are doing and make this public and so in their turn influence others. I see the significance of how I have chosen to tell my story like a pebble in a pool which creates ripples and waves which spread outwards.

7.3 What is the significance of the fact that I am saying it?

What is significant about my claim to knowledge is that I am able to make it. This research contends that the technical, bureaucratic systems of holding myself as a teacher, and students to account is not supporting our learning and it is creating the conditions for teachers to become compliant and unquestioning. It is showing, through the telling of my story, how transformed understanding of this situation can lead to improvement.

7.3.1 The significance of the fact that I speak for my own education

I have learnt that it is not necessary for me to accept the idea that it is inevitable that others will determine what good practice looks like. As a result of this research, I now see it is my role to create opportunities for others to say what they know, through their own accounts of practice. I have taken responsibility for what I know for the first time and the fact that I have done so in such a public way is significant. This has enabled me to speak with growing confidence about what I know and to take responsibility for speaking 'the truth to power' in terms of good practices. Above all I have learnt through reflexive

critique about what I was doing, that I was not as good as I thought I was or was told I was. This has been a very powerful and disquieting journey which is far from over. What I have learnt is that I am capable of learning and that I can be free of the false generosity (Freire 1973) which contributed to an inability to see my practice as it was, an unexplored, ill-informed shadow of what it can be.

7.3.2 The significance of the fact that I speak for the education of others

This research is significant because it has the power to influence. As I have shared my learning with students, colleagues and teachers I have developed an ability to articulate what I know which will influence what I do in the classroom and beyond. As I continue to critically reflect on what I am doing and seek the feedback of those I work alongside I want my practice to remain dynamic and transformational as I respond to the ever-changing context that is teacher education. The students I work alongside will go into schools with their own pedagogical understandings which have emerged through our dialogue and reflection. My new living theory of practice will be disseminated through my practice and it will be my hope that those ideas influence others.

7.3.3. The significance of the fact that I speak for the education of cultural and social formations.

This research and the accompanying report in the form of this thesis means that I have learnt how to write which opens up the opportunity that I can have an influence beyond my own context. I am saying throughout this work that if teachers hold themselves to account for what they know and what they are learning they can influence what determines the way that effective practices are judged. I am saying that these accounts can influence the normative discourses that suggest that teachers need to be told what works and does not work in the classroom. Their accounts can publically show that teachers are able to develop a deeper critical consciousness and be critically reflective which can lead to dynamic transformational practices grounded in the idea that they can contribute to the knowledge base of teaching.

By speaking with my own voice, which is directly attributable to this research, I am going to disseminate the idea that others can do the same thing whether they are students, teachers or academics. Those of my colleagues who do not see a synergy between teaching and the world of research and the Academy may be influenced to see differently when they see how it is possible to be a teacher-researcher, a teacher-educator and a teacher-academic which is how I see myself now. I hope they see as I do that it is essential that teachers are researchers and academics because this will re-enforce the idea that we should have a say in what determines policy and practice at the highest level. As I go on to publish my work I hope to become part of this changing discourse through my influence.

This Chapter has explored the significance of this action enquiry. It is now my responsibility to build on what I have learnt to continue to be a better teacher. The final chapter of this thesis considers what might come next.

Chapter 8. What next?

This final chapter will describe how I am beginning to transform the words on the page into actions on the ground with special reference to the significance of the findings of this research. It will describe what I am doing to create opportunities for influence within my context and the chapter will conclude by setting out some of my vision for the future.

This final chapter is in many ways describing the beginning of a whole new period of research as I continue to seek influence which is an important aim of this research. Any significance of my findings will lie in how much influence my claims will have in the coming months and I describe some of the ways that I am hoping to exert that influence.

Many of the ongoing changes in schools and teacher education have been written about throughout this thesis. Some of the signs are that the situation with regards to teacher voice and teacher agency is getting worse not better. This means it is increasingly necessary for teachers to engage with the discourses that determine what they do and how they are perceived. Two examples from my recent past highlight this need. The first is an example of the impact that moving teacher training in to schools can have on the way student teachers see their role in school.

I deliver M level modules to student teachers who are being trained exclusively in primary and secondary schools through a consortium. Every time they arrive at the place where the M level modules are delivered they say that they find it difficult to stop being anxious about what they have left in their base schools. As I listen to them engage in conversation at the start of the day it is all about the pressure to be ready for lesson observations and the external structures of accountability. The opportunity to engage with colleagues about what seems to be less pressing matters seems to be an unwelcome interruption. I suggest they increasingly see their role as the deliverer of the curriculum and the implementer of the structures and they are increasingly oppressed by those in power as they deposit the knowledge in their students (Freire 1970).

This is a current example of the same circumstances I reflect on in Chapter 2 and 3. These student teachers are kept so busy implementing and mediating (Skrla and Scheurich 2004) that they do not have time to go beyond the day to day task driven practices they are engaged in. The acquisition of skills rather than dispositions is important because that is how they will be measured. I have been told anecdotally that schools feel reluctant to facilitate the student's attendance at the M level sessions because they are so busy that it would be better if they stayed in school and marked and planned. Value for money becomes an issue and worth is judged using technical rational standards.

The second example also shows what can happen when it is accepted that teaching is a technical activity underpinned by the idea that the knowledge of how to teach can be passed over like a package. As students pay more for their education in the university their voice becomes louder and sometimes some of them do not want to engage in thinking and the hard work that comes with what is worthwhile. I had a conversation with one of the current cohort (2012) of Year 4 students who pointed out to me that what he wants to know is how to teach, as quickly and easily as possible. He actually said that as students pay more they are going to expect things to be done in this way and they will want value for money which may mean they want to know how to tick the right boxes and get a job.

I believe these examples and others make my ideas even more necessary or we face the possibility of schools being filled in the future with teachers who are so unquestioning and so compliant that there is every possibility that extremist and destructive ideologies could take root in our society which is a very frightening thought. Anyone who works in teaching can attest to the fact that it is an ever-changing environment which is vulnerable to the changes that come with new governments and successive Secretaries of State for Education. Current Government policy in the last years has seen the introduction of Free schools, Academies and a new Ofsted framework for the inspection of schools. The press bombards the public with stories of children who leave school unable to read, deteriorating behaviour amongst children and the ways that teachers subvert the systems in order to put themselves in a good light. The Government voice in decision making is

louder and stronger than ever and I see even more reason to be concerned about the way that teachers are held to account for what they are doing.

So it is as important now as it was in 2007 that I take responsibility for what I do so as to provide an alternative discourse. I am committed to the idea that the findings of this research have a number of strengths which will only have a lasting impact if I work to disseminate them. This is an ongoing focus and it is working itself out as I write. In fact I feel a little like Wallace and Grommit in 'Wrong Trousers', laying the tracks as I go along them.

This research shows that it is possible for the teacher to be a researcher and to generate their own theories of practice. In so doing they can engage in the discourses discussed in previous chapters. It is my intention to use the platform that this research has given me to support the validation of modules that will enable teachers to engage in research into their practices and to make the reports public through higher accreditation at Masters level and doctoral level. As the co-ordinator of the Pedagogy and Professional Values in Practice M level programme I have supported students through their M level dissertations and because the students are teaching in schools they have grounded their research in the classroom. They have all spoken about the impact this has had on the way they are perceived by colleagues. A significant number of them have led inset to share their findings which has led to discussion and debate. Without this M level research these teachers may not have taken a lead role in change.

In the near future I will be asked by my institution to supervise doctoral students and I am already meeting with two teachers to work on their ideas for research. I am currently engaging in supervisor training to facilitate this process. It is my hope that some of the teachers who are currently doing masters work will become doctoral students. As a direct result of my doctoral research I am in a position to apply for a post managing research within the School of Education which has potential to raise the profile of teacher research within the Academy. Part of the role is to liaise with

colleagues across the Institution. In an earlier chapter I have written about the perception within the Academy that teachers are not able or willing to research their practices. Hargreaves (1996) alluded to this and I see very little change in that position. Indeed it is still unusual for teachers in Higher Education settings to research into their own practices. The fact that I am currently part of a group of teacher educators engaged in self study action enquiries is still worthy of note. It is not a matter of routine that colleagues ask 'How can I improve what I am doing? through my own self-study action enquiries. I see engagement with the role of Programme Director for Research as an opportunity to influence others to look to be accountable for what they do by understanding it better. I can only do this if I am 'out there' sharing my accounts in a position that allows me to have a voice in the wider context.

One of the possible limitations of this research is in the difficulty of establishing the legitimacy of my claims. McNiff and Whitehead (2006) suggest that legitimacy is enhanced when you establish that what you say is worth listening to. There is little doubt that having one's research confirmed as being worthy of a PhD can be seen as confirmation that it is worth listening to the claims. However if they remain at the level of words on a page then they will have limited value. Speaking out across the institution counteracts this possibility.

My findings are significant because they confirm the link between my actions and learning. Knowing this gives me enhanced confidence in my abilities as a teacher and I intend to use my enhanced understandings to support my application to become a National Teaching Fellow. This research allows me to show that I am committed to ongoing professional development and that I am able to review and enhance my own practice. I can show that I have contributed to the students' learning experience. This award can increase my influence and voice across my institution and others.

The strength of my claims is that I am able to contribute to Boyer's idea of a scholarship of teaching. Boyer (1997) has put forward the idea that the definition of

scholarship should be re-defined to include a scholarship of teaching and learning which would include the possibility of dissemination and the opportunity for others to use and evaluate the outcomes. To this end it is my intention to continue to submit abstracts for national and international conferences and I have identified two for this year (2013). One of the conferences is called 'Values and Virtues' and its focus is on influencing policy through enhancing professionalism. Being engaged in educational accountability as I theorise it is a powerful way of enhancing professionalism and opening up the possibility of influencing policy. Attendance at conferences will continue to be a part of the way I seek validation for my claims but it must also be an opportunity to look for a wider influence.

As a result of this research I have been identified as an early career researcher for the purposes of the 2014 Research Excellence Framework and I will be submitting a monograph and looking to publish another paper. The need for me to continue to be research active and publishing is more imperative now than it has ever been. The students who have been participants in this research have agreed to continue to be participants in my research as I follow them into school where they are all Newly Qualified Teachers. They spoke eloquently about a connection with their values as they engaged in our sessions and I am going to ask how resilient those values are and investigate any tensions between their values and the prevailing discourses of accountability. I want to gather data to look for evidence to support or otherwise my claim that anti-educational accountability does not lead to transformational learning (Mezirow 1981). If I can add the voices of other teachers to mine then it has the potential to have more impact.

In addition to this opportunity to disseminate my findings I am adding others continuously. I have written a chapter for a book which has as it's focus well being and teaching. My chapter explores the importance of dialogue in teaching as a means of supporting learners to connect and re-connect with their own learning thereby enhancing a sense of well being and connectedness with themselves. The ideas I am

exploring are developing the ideas in this thesis and I am once again drawing on Bakhtin, Freire and Palmer to inform my writing. In the chapter I say

> *This engagement with others through dialogue is now an essential part of my pedagogy. As I sought to improve my practice through self-study action research, dialogue as a way of being, to help me make and re-make my reality (Freire 1987), became essential as a map to help me navigate through the isolation that can be part of doctoral study. As Hopkins (2011) suggests dialogue can help the learner find their way into a situation, which was how I was beginning to understand it.*
> (Renowden, 2012 unpublished book chapter)

Without my doctoral research I would be unable to write this and my understandings would be less well informed.

So as I complete this thesis and offer it up for examination I feel as I did when I finished my Masters dissertation. The learning it demonstrates feels incomplete and in many ways it has served to show how much more I have to do. However, what I have learnt has made me feel more optimistic than I might have been before it. It is possible that the new Academies may become places where researching teachers inform their practices and contribute to policy. It is possible that as teacher educators work more and more in schools they will be able to model research as a practitioner led activity and universities will facilitate the publication of high quality practitioner research. It is both necessary and possible that professional doctorates offer teachers the chance to gain recognition for their theories and that more and more self study action enquiries begin to influence the discourses in which we live and work. This research is my pebble in the pool of that vision. What I want to do next is contribute to a personalised profession as described by Goodson and Hargreaves (1996, p.21).

> 'A personalised profession based upon a self-directed search for *continuous learning* related to one's own expertise and standards of practice, rather than compliance with the enervating obligations of *endless change* demanded by others.'

How I feel as I finish this thesis is summed up by Freire (1997, p.75).

> 'I must not leave for a random tomorrow something that is part of my task as a progressive educator right now: a critical reading of the world, alongside a critical reading of the word'.

That is what my 'next' will be working towards!

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Appendix A. PowerPoint slides for introductory session with Year 1 students

Slide 1 Yr 1 PS first session

Jane Renowden

Slide 2 QTS Standards

http://www.tda.gov.uk/teachers/professionalstandards

Slide 3 www.smuc.ac.uk

Slide 4 Assignment

- Title: Drawing on pre-college school experience and background reading outline what you see as the key aspects of the role of the teacher.
- This assignment will consist of an essay of 1500 words. This assignment will be handed in during week the Professional Studies session in Week 8. It will be marked by your personal tutor and returned to you in week 10 when you will receive a tutorial. During this tutorial opportunities for improvement will be discussed.

Slide 5 Assessment criteria

- Ability to draw upon relevant school experience
- An introduction that clearly states which aspects of the role of the teacher the assignment is considering and why
- Ability to formulate a coherent and logical argument
- A conclusion that draws together the main points, arriving at an informed position
- Appropriate referencing throughout

▪A well presented piece that is grammatically correct, with correct spelling and punctuation throughout

Appendix B. PowerPoint slides for session on planning

Slide 1 Level 1 planning

Jane Renowden

Slide 2 Why plan lessons?

Ask yourself the following:

What do you want the children to learn?

What do the children know already?

What links are there between the LO, planned activities and the children's attainment?

How does the content relate to the NC etc?

How will the lesson be organised?

What ?'s will be asked?

What resources will be used?

How are the adults used?

How will you use ICT?

Slide 3 LESSON PLAN

It will need to cover:

- Date and time of the lesson
- Title of the lesson
- Previous assessment material

- LO's
- Vocabulary/resources/ICT
- Organisation
- Differentiation /assessment

Slide 4 Short term planning

- Is a weekly breakdown of what you will be teaching
- It includes daily lesson plans and weekly overviews
- Gives detail about the content of the lesson

Is completed by teachers on a weekly basis

Slide 5 Medium term planning

- <u>PARTICIPANTS</u>

Class teachers supported by subject co-ordinators

<u>PURPOSES</u>

To develop the long term plan into a detailed subject specific units

To use nationally agreed documents ie. Primary Strategy, QCA schemes of work

<u>OUTCOMES</u>

A detailed plan setting out such things as tasks, activities, resources, cross-curricular links, groupings etc.

Slide 6 LONG TERM PLANNING

PARTICIPANTS

Head, all staff and governors

PURPOSES

To ensure coverage of the NC

To ensure balance and progression

To ensure continuity

OUTCOMES

A framework which reflects the schools curricular aims.

Slide 7 Questions

- Closed questions.

These questions do not allow for the development of thinking skills. They have a limited place in the classroom.

- Open questions

These questions develop children's thinking skills.

Appendix C. Notes taken during an observation of a Year 3 student in school

Tutor /Mentor comments	Issues to be addressed
Using behaviour management strategies – pace dropping. What are the doing? Some children just doing what they want (talking, moving). Why is a child sitting on the table? Used praise – good 9.28 still on this activity – is it worth the time? Where is this on your plan? Referred to previous work – develop this. At no time do you set this up as being exciting, worth doing – value childrens' responses. Why are they restless? bored? 9.40 Children restless and beginning to play up. What is it you are trying to achieve? It lacks impact because it is dull. Listen when a child is giving you an answer. 9.45 to tables – rather chaotic. Children shouting across the class. Need to set high expectations – noise level? How could you structure their responses? Children are not focused and little work being done 10.05 Children re noisy, off task and mobile. 2 children complaining of not feeling well. Why? 6 children have done nothing so far.	Don't talk over them Keep tighter control Words lost in chat Don't say well done when some children are still talking One child has talked constantly Don't ask the same child twice Have picture of Michael. Bring him to life Don't say fantastic when it isn't

Appendix D. PowerPoint slides for session on 'Pupil Participation'

Slide 1 The Code of Practice

Pupil Participation

Jane Renowden

It emphasises the importance of finding out the ascertainable wishes and feelings of children

It recognises that there is ‘a fine balance between giving the child a voice and encouraging them to make informed decisions, and overburdening them with decision making procedures where they have insufficient experience and knowledge to make appropriate judgements without additional support.’

Children Act Guidance 1989 Guidance and Regulations, Vol 6. Children with Disabilities (1991), HMSO

Slide 2 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

■Articles 12 and 13 state

‘Children who are capable of forming views, have a right to receive and make known information, to express an opinion, and to have that opinion taken into account in any matters affecting them. The views of the child should be given due weight according to age, maturity and capability of the child.’

Slide 3 To Participate in decision making:

■Children need to understand the importance of information

- They should be able to express their feelings
- They need to be able to participate in discussions
- They need to indicate their choices

Slide 4 To Participate in decision making:

- Adults need to give information and support
- Provide an appropriate environment
- Learn how to listen to children

Slide 5 What should they participate in?

- Setting learning targets and contributing to IEP,s
- Discussions about choice of schools
- Contributing to the assessment of their needs
- Contributing to the annual review
- Being involved in transition planning

Slide 6 Principles of Pupil Participation

- Everyone must commit themselves to the challenge
- The legitimate interests of all parties must be recognised
- There must be a commitment to the long term involvement of pupils
- Pupils need training and encouragement
- Teachers and parents need to know how to involve pupils
- There needs to be determination on all sides
- There needs to be a whole school ethos (warm, welcoming and open)

Appendix E. Transcript of first link tutor meeting with Student C

Student: C

Lesson: Literacy

Year Group: 5

Words in red are being read to the student.

JR	Let's look at your lesson plan and tell me how you think it went.
C	I think the introduction led on from the last lesson and I think I really emphasised which was the compound and which was the complex.
JR	I thought that was a real strength. I thought that was really clear.
C	I think I kept going until they actually did get it, the complex one.
JR	But you didn't drop the pace either.
C	No. that was good.
JR	Yes, because it would be very easy to dwell on things without actually keeping things rolling but I think you kept the pace just about right.
C	I could have to keep on longer with the complex but I thought, 'No, I am going to stop them and let them do it and just go round to the

ones who I didn’t think were dong so well to just check they have got it.'

JR Yes. How many do you think? Do you think most of the children got that or you said in the end you were going to do it again, which I think was really sensible. But I still got a sense at the end that most of them really had it.

C Yes they did get it. I just didn’t think they are very confident.

JR Well. Practice makes perfect. That’s absolutely right. Let me show you what I have written down and we can talk it through. What I do is a stream of consciousness. I write things down as I am seeing them.

So…

’lovely calm manner and that is one of the things that is a real strength with you.’

You have got this lovely calm manner but your voice is varied and at no time do I think you were not absolutely in control. Even though you are quite quiet and calm about it.

‘You referred to the last lesson and your tone of voice is excellent. You sounded enthusiastic and interested, a light tone of voice. You checked the features of a sentence. You set high expectations and fed back to the children at all times saying 'well done' and 'good' '

so they've got that instant feedback. And they were all very engaged because actually that could be a really dull lesson.

C Yes, it can be. It's hard to plan for it.

JR Yes, you constantly challenged them to achieve and think what they were doing which was good.

'Well done with the boys',
they are not getting away with anything. I can see given half a chance they would be off task.
Good self-assessment'
You asked them how they were doing and then you gave them the tasks. I've put here, and it's the only thing,
'You need to model better handwriting.'
I know you were low down.

C Yes

JR But sometimes it is important if some children have poor handwriting to model the cursive.

C It is very hard to write on the interactive whiteboard.

JR You were almost on your knees!

C Yes

JR 'Then you had a well organised transition. You supported children's understanding and they were all engaged. Then you stopped work. You had your plenary.'
I thought that was a challenging lesson that really moved them on.

C Yes

JR I really saw some of them go from not really being very sure to being able to talk about it which was good. Your subject knowledge was absolutely excellent because at no time did you appear to have to stop and think. You really were secure in that complex subject

knowledge. You were able to work through sentences given to you by the children.

C Yes that was hard

JR It really takes a real level of understanding of the concepts you are teaching. It helped you address the misconceptions really well. That was a real strength. I've put here,

'High level of subject knowledge. High standard set for behaviour. All the time you just quietly kept re-enforcing what they should be doing and your critical reflection is a real strength as well.'

Just areas for development,

'Consider how you would/could plan for other adults.'

I know you don't always have them but when you have your own class you may well have, so just keep thinking 'If I had another adult what might I want them to do?' in your mind.

'Support children to reflect on their learning.'

I put that-you may well be doing that but it is something else for you to think about.

'Seek out a chance to use stats data'

Whilst you are here see how they use the stats to support the needs of the children.

C Do you mean the SENco?

JR Yes. That was a pass with good features. Well done, your hard work is obvious.

C Thankyou

JR Is there anything you want to say about that lesson, any comments?

C	Ummm...I think it went quite well. When you said here..this bit about talking about the children's sentences, that was really hard to do but I think that was important and if I keep doing it, it will come naturally to me.
JR	I think it will. I got a sense in that lesson that not only were you challenging them but you were challenging yourself.
C	Mmm yes because it is very hard to apply your knowledge sometimes and I ask the children to do that as well.
JR	Yes I think it is. That lesson would have been an absolute nightmare if you hadn't been really sure what you were doing.
C	Yes definitely
JR	So well done. When you reflect on that now is there anything coming out of that lesson that you might say 'I wouldn't do that quite like that? Or is that a lesson you would repeat again?
C	I definitely like the use of the cards. That really, for me personally, when I was younger, writing sentences or writing paragraphs, when you are in Year 6 writing persuasive writings, letters, to have it blocked out like that. So here's your introduction, here's your middle, here's your end-it's really easy to write in those bits.
JR	I thought that was a really good idea because in fact it helped me! (Laughter)

I thought, 'Do I remember what a complex sentence is or a compound sentence?' When you actually saw it up on the board like that it suddenly became so much more clear. You were bringing in your visual learners.

C Yes

JR That's one of the hard things about grammar. It is often very auditory. It's not always made very kinaesthetic. You did the both which was good.

C I think the 3 Little Pigs task really stretched the high ability and I find it really hard to sometimes find them tasks to do to really stretch them. That's the first time they've done something really hard.

JR Do you remember when we did Bloom's Taxonomy

C Yes

JR Don't forget it. What you were asking them to do was synthesise what they had learnt. You asked them to take one format and change it to another. So don't forget Bloom's Taxonomy because it is those last three points of Bloom's Taxonomy that will help you to think analysis, synthesis etc. That might help you to shift them onto that higher plane. I used to use that all the time with my brighter children. This putting ourselves in someone else's position and re-writing it in a different way is a really good skill to do. That might be a bit of help for you. Let me show you what I have written.

C Can I ask you something?

JR Of course

C When you say it will help children to reflect on their learning what do you mean? Does it mean self-assessment?

JR Well it's that but it is also meta-cognition. It's reflection on how they are going about learning. So for example at the end of that session today you might have said to them, 'How many of you now think you know what a complex sentence is?' You might have got some self-assessment and then you could ask them, 'What helped you to learn today?' You want them to say it was really helpful having it explained to us again or it was really helpful when I stood up and wrote on the board because I understood it better. The key think is that as learners we are actually in tune with our own learning. So, your learning has improved and you know how to learn and why? So it is beginning that process of helping children to understand what it is that supports them to be better learners. You wouldn't do it every time perhaps but just asking that question, 'How did you come to know that? What helped you to learn today? What was good about today's lesson? If you are telling me you have learnt something in this lesson what was good and helped you to do that?' and then lets make sure we do more of that next time. Somebody might say it is really good to have quiet working.

C That's a really good point because sometimes when a child has got something I don't think about how they think.

JR Well it's an important thing helping children to know themselves as learners so that when they begin to have more independence with their learning- when they are at secondary school, at your level of

learning, they can actually say how they know and put themselves into positions where they are better and learn more efficiently. It just enriches things. Instead of looking out at this body of knowledge they are learning it's actually helping them to look inwards and if some of them haven't learnt it it's a good question too. What made it so you didn't learn so well today.

C Mmmm

JR Maybe some of them need to say, 'Well actually I didn't understand it because I wasn't listening properly or because I need to go over it again. It doesn't always have to be a negative thing. That sense of themselves is really quite important especially at this level.

C Yes

JR Does that explain it?

C Yes

JR Is there anything else?

C No I think that's fine

JR OK, what have we got here? I kept it at the same levels as K (the classteacher) because you still have plenty of time to go above that. 'C has set a very high standard for herself. She is professional and very competent. She has high expectations and she reflects on her practice. Continue to consider your own professional development.' For me, I just want to say more of the same. Keep up the good work.

'Excellent subject knowledge shown in the observed lesson. A range of strategies used and teaches with confidence. Continue to develop strategies to include all children.'

And that's not because you are not doing it but just continue to do it. L for example...keep thinking about the wider picture.

'Environment established, behaviour was good-challenge so potential was reached. You kept challenging. Use the school's planning format to plan like you classteacher mentor.'

What I want to say to you today is I want you to stop planning using St Mary's planning format. Stop planning in that much detail and I want you now to start planning in the same kind of way that K does.

C Brilliant, I am so happy!

JR Well you are ready to do that. You are using the planning really well. You have got the principles. You are applying them. You are assessing and all of those things so now you need to start working like teachers do. Drop back off it. Keep remembering the principles, inclusion and all of those things, but let's take some pressure off you in terms of the paperwork. The key thing is keep up the evaluation. Keep those up in the same way. Now start to plan and asses in the same way as the colleagues you are working with. Start from now.

'Feedback you give the children is positive and helps them understand their misconceptions. Helps the children reflect on what they are learning.'

As we've just talked about. That's not a criticism it's a suggestion. I am aware that I don't know you class like you do. You might think that's not really as I would do it. So, well done

C Thank you very much

JR	Pleasure. Take Ns (headteacher) advice and don't burn yourself out. I have spoken to N and K so they know about the planning. So, I'll see you next week.
C	I am very happy here.

Appendix F. PowerPoint slides for session on 'Reflective Practice'

Slide 1 How to be a reflective teacher

Jane Renowden

Slide 2 Aims of the session

- To understand what it means to be a reflective teacher
- To understand the link between being reflective and competence

Slide 3 TEACHING

It concerns;

Values

Aims

Attitudes

It concerns;

Skills

Knowledge

Consequences

Pollard and Tann,1993

Slide 4 REFLECTIVE TEACHING

Dewey (1933) said there is ‘routine action ‘ and ‘reflective action’

Routine action is guided by tradition, habit, authority and institutional definitions.

Reflective action is flexible, socially aware and engaged in self-appraisal.

Slide 5 Reflective teaching

Characteristics;

- Implies a concern with aims and consequences
- Is applied in a cyclical and spiralling process
- Needs competency
- Needs attitudes of open mindedness
- It is based on teacher judgement
- Is enhanced through dialogue with colleagues

Slide 5 Process of reflective teaching.

REFLECT
PLAN
MAKE PROVISION
ACT
COLLECT DATA
ANALYSE DATA
EVALUATE DATA

Slide 6 Knowing ourselves as teachers

- We have a self-image and an ideal self-image (self esteem is the difference between the two)
- Is influenced by our social, cultural and educational background.
- Influenced by other people's expectations

Slide 7 ANALYSING OURSELVES

We need to develop self knowledge.

- Our public display: aspects we recognise and others see.
- Our blind spots: aspects other see and we do not.
- Our dreamer spots: aspects we know or would like to be there but others are unaware of.
- Our unknown potential of which we are unaware. Easen (1985)

Slide 8 TASK

Think of a your experience in school, particularly something you were centrally involved in. What does it reveal about you, using Easen's model. AIM: to replace blind spots with insights,tap potential and realise aspirations.

Slide 9 What are we like as teachers?

- How do we interact with the children?
- How do we interact with the adults in our room?
- How do we interact with the adults in school?
- How do we interact with parents?

Slide 10 TASK

Identify and consider the demands that you think teaching will make on you as an individual.

Divide a page into two columns. In the left hand column list the aims you have for yourself as a teacher. In the right hand column make a list of your personal qualities, skills, knowledge and competencies needed to implement the aims. Which are easy and which need developing?

Appendix G. Notes taken at a validation meeting on 20/9/2010

Key question: Is there evidence in this presentation that JR is holding herself to account for what she is doing in a way that is leading to her learning to do things differently with the intention of improving practice?

Present JR MJ

JR set out the values she thinks are negated in her practices.

- relational ways of teaching
- educational practices such as dialogue and critical reflection
- emancipatory and democratic education

JR showed the situation as it was at the start of the research
MJ agreed with JR assessment of the situation i.e that it is didactic, prescribed, does not start with the learner but with Standards to be used to assess them. There is some evidence of chances to reflect but very teacher led. There is no sense of freedom or freedom to think. The examples are of a non-relational type of pedagogy.

JR the presented her changes practices to see if MJ could see evidence of:

- the possibility of the development of relationships with JR and each other
- opportunities for dialogue and more critical reflection
- a more democratic and open student led session with JR taking the role of guide

Presented session plan showed a complete change from the session above. No PowerPoint and JR able to sit with the students, some open ended questions and aims but no more than that so there is the possibility they what the students can lead the session.

MJ comments:

Agree the changes are more dialogical thus opening up the possibility they may be able to offer up their own theories of practice.

MJ agreed that JR had held herself to account and that this had helped to ground her practice in her values. There is evidence of personal accountability in the presented account.

Suggestions for the next step

Gather data to see the impact of these changes on learning