

**The Self stepping into the shoes of the Other:  
Understanding and developing self-perceptions of  
empathy among prospective physical education teachers  
through a special school placement**

MAHER, A.J. and MORLEY, David <<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4389-8573>>

Available from Sheffield Hallam University Research Archive (SHURA) at:

<http://shura.shu.ac.uk/25838/>

---

This document is the author deposited version. You are advised to consult the publisher's version if you wish to cite from it.

**Published version**

MAHER, A.J. and MORLEY, David (2019). The Self stepping into the shoes of the Other: Understanding and developing self-perceptions of empathy among prospective physical education teachers through a special school placement. *European Physical Education Review*, 1356336X1989036-1356336X1989036.

---

**Copyright and re-use policy**

See <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/information.html>

1 **Authors**

2 Anthony J. Maher is Senior Lecturer in Physical Education and Youth Sport. He also leads  
3 the Pedagogy, Professional Development and Politics in Physical Education and Sport  
4 Research Group, Edge Hill University, UK.

5 David Morley is Professor of Children’s Sport, Physical Activity and Physical Education at  
6 Sheffield Hallam University, UK.

7

8 **The Self stepping into the shoes of the Other: understanding and**  
9 **developing self-perceptions of empathy among prospective physical**  
10 **education teachers through a special school placement**

11

12 **Abstract**

13 Teachers who demonstrate a high degree of empathy are said to have more positive attitudes  
14 towards pupils with disabilities. Therefore, this article sought to explore the influence of a  
15 special school placement on prospective teachers’ self-perceptions of empathy. Thirty-two  
16 final year undergraduate students participated in focus group interviews and were selected  
17 because they aspired to be a physical education teacher and had attended a placement in a  
18 special school. Interview transcripts were analysed and the following themes constructed:  
19 *Stepping into the shoes of the Other*; *Frustrated ‘for’ not ‘with’ pupils with disabilities*;  
20 *Empathy for planning inclusive lessons and ‘reading’ pupil body language*, and (4) *Knowing*  
21 *when not to show empathy*. Most prospective teachers felt that: (1) they could empathise with  
22 pupils with disabilities; (2) situated learning experiences within the placement enabled them  
23 to reflect on the ways in which their empathy influences their teaching now and could  
24 continue to do so in the future; and (3) it was important that teachers demonstrated empathy.  
25 Thus, it is recommended that all prospective teachers gain some experience teaching in  
26 special schools. Our research also warns against teachers claiming the last, conclusive word,  
27 about who children with disabilities are, what they think, how they feel and what they want,  
28 in myriad contexts and situations.

29

30 **Key words**

31 Empathy; pupils with disabilities; school-based placements; teacher education

32

33 **Introduction**

34 The concept of empathy has been explored by philosophers, psychologists, sociologists and  
35 neurobiologists (see Coplan and Goldie, 2011). These disciplines have approached the  
36 analysis of empathy using different, often conflicting, ontologies, epistemologies and  
37 methodologies, resulting in little consensus *vis-à-vis* a working definition of the concept.  
38 Often, empathy is reduced to the notion of a person (e.g. a prospective teacher) understanding  
39 the world from the perspective of another (e.g. a pupil with disabilities) (Singer, 2006). This  
40 viewpoint is closely linked to research in social psychology, developmental psychology and  
41 neuro-science, which has attempted to shed light on the human capacity to develop a theory  
42 of mind (ToM), which allows us to make attributions about the ideologies and actions of the

43 Other (Baron-Cohen et al., 2000). While ToM and empathy are undoubtedly bound together,  
44 ToM is said to involve ‘understanding’ the mental state of the Other, whereas empathy is a  
45 social cognitive skill that entails matching the emotional state of the Other, once it is  
46 ‘understood’ (Goldstein and Winner, 2012). However, this only scratches the surface of what  
47 is a complex and often elusive concept.

48 Empathy has both cognitive and affective dimensions. While an investigation of a  
49 physical education (PE) teacher’s cognitive empathy would focus on their knowledge and  
50 understanding of the beliefs and actions of pupils with disabilities, affective empathy relates  
51 to the extent to which the PE teacher can *feel* what the pupil feels; that the teacher  
52 experiences the same emotions as the pupil in any given situation (Cooper, 2011). It is this  
53 affective component of empathy that is often neglected by researchers, which is problematic  
54 because it is said to be crucial for forming social bonds between people (Singer, 2006), such  
55 as teachers and pupils. This is especially critical when working with pupils with disabilities  
56 because, as Morley et al. (2005) intimated, teachers who are empathetic are more likely to  
57 have positive attitudes towards pupils with disabilities in PE. This increases in significance if  
58 we accept claims made by Maher et al. (2019) who found that those teachers who spent time  
59 developing strong relationships with pupils in a special school were more confident,  
60 competent and inclusive practitioners. Here, the importance of exploring ways in which  
61 empathy can be developed among pre- and in-service teachers becomes obvious given its  
62 potential to improve attitudes towards, and increase competence and confidence when  
63 teaching, pupils with disabilities. However, it is important to note, as Coplan (2011: 10) did,  
64 that we often assume that there is a ‘greater similarity between Self and Other than typically  
65 exists, especially when we attempt to imagine how the other is feeling or what the other is  
66 thinking; we are naturally subject to ego-centric bias’.

67 Much of the research relating to the teaching of pupils with disabilities suggests that  
68 many pre- and in-service PE teachers lack the knowledge, skills, experiences and confidence  
69 to plan and teach inclusive lessons (e.g. Maher, 2016; Vickerman and Coates, 2009). When  
70 attention turns to exploring empathy and its development during teacher education, it is often  
71 tied to multi- and cross-culturalism where the focus is on sensitising teachers to issues  
72 associated with cultural diversity among pupils (e.g. Cruz and Patterson, 2009). Broomhead  
73 (2013) is one of a few researchers who has explored the empathy of aspiring teachers in  
74 relation to pupils with disabilities. In her study, data were gathered from the parents of pupils  
75 with disabilities. Accordingly, parents suggested that teachers could not empathise with them  
76 because they did not have children with disabilities themselves. This assumes that empathy is  
77 developed through lived and embodied experiences, something which parents claim teachers  
78 had not experienced. In this respect, Thomas (2007) claims that disability is simultaneously  
79 biological, material and social in character and, thus, the experiences of children with  
80 disabilities are embodied. Employing this perspective, Sparkes et al. (2019) used a variety of  
81 strategies and equipment as a way of trying to get prospective PE teachers to simulate this  
82 embodiment. This approach achieved some success in increasing student teachers’ awareness  
83 of disabilities and developed more positive attitudes to inclusive PE.

84 It has been claimed that pupils’ perceptions of the empathy displayed by their teachers  
85 positively influences academic motivation (Branwhite, 1988) and the development of  
86 empathy in the pupils themselves (Hoffman, 2000). This has led Barr (2010) to argue that  
87 teacher education programmes need to help aspiring teachers to recognise, develop and  
88 exercise their empathetic capacities. Cooper (2011) places so much emphasis on the  
89 importance of empathy that she calls for teacher educators to actively seek prospective  
90 teachers that have profound empathy and can develop this in their pupils.

91 To our knowledge, none of the research currently available has explored the role of  
92 empathy in the school-based placement experiences of prospective teachers despite it being  
93 an important disposition for educators to possess in order to facilitate positive relationships  
94 among pupils (Tettegah and Anderson, 2007). While Vickerman (2007) shed light on the  
95 professional socialisation of PE teachers in relation to disability and inclusion, this research is  
96 from the perspective of teacher education providers and, therefore, does not analyse what  
97 Lave and Wenger (1991) term the situated learning experiences of prospective teachers.  
98 Similarly, Haegele et al. (2018) examined the impact of a two-day professional development  
99 workshop on the attitudes of Brazilian PE teachers toward the inclusion of pupils with  
100 disabilities. However, the teachers in this study did not get the opportunity to work ‘hands-  
101 on’ with such pupils, something Coates (2012) has said is crucial for ensuring that they enter  
102 teaching with the necessary skills to confidently teach inclusive PE lessons. In this respect,  
103 Lave and Wenger (1991) remind us that learning is contextual and situational. Therefore, it is  
104 important that learning experiences occur within the contexts and situations that prospective  
105 teachers will find themselves when teaching pupils with disabilities. A study by Maher et al.  
106 (2019), which used part of the same data set as this study, is one of very few to explore a  
107 special school-based placement as part of the professional development of prospective PE  
108 teachers. Here, the focus was on the experiences within a special school that shaped self-  
109 perceptions of confidence and competence.

110 It is because of the significance attributed to the concept of empathy and the potential  
111 of situated experiences to contribute to learning about empathy that we explore the influence  
112 of a special school-based placement on the empathy of prospective PE teachers. Specifically,  
113 we aim to answer the following research questions: (1) how do prospective PE teachers  
114 conceptualise empathy? (2) How does the empathy of prospective PE teachers influence what  
115 they do on placement? and (3) how important is empathy, according to prospective PE  
116 teachers, for teaching children with disabilities? The next section explores, albeit briefly, our  
117 conceptualisation of situated learning theory as this was used to help us make sense of the  
118 learning and experiences of our students on placement.

119

## 120 **Situated learning theory**

121 Situated learning theory was constructed to challenge the hegemony of theoretical paradigms  
122 in educational research that placed the mind and mental processes at the centre of our  
123 understandings of learning (see Bruner, 2006). We agree with Lave and Wenger (1991) who  
124 postulate that learning is a collective social activity, the outcome of which is the construction  
125 of knowledge by actors in specific contexts and situations. Indeed, one of Lave and Wenger’s  
126 (1991) most significant scholarly contributions was to emphasise the ‘practice’ element of the  
127 theory-practice dichotomy by considering thinking and learning as something that is  
128 experienced through, for example, becoming a member of a community of practice in  
129 schools. For us, it is the social practices and interactions that happen in the special schools  
130 during placement that are the subject of our inquiry because it is these that will shape our  
131 students’ learning about, and displays of, empathy. Here, the significance of our study is  
132 further evident given that, according to Korthagen (2010), much of the research that uses  
133 situated learning theory to explore teacher education focuses on the development of  
134 pedagogical content knowledge and attitudes and beliefs, rather than a social cognitive skill  
135 such as empathy.

136

## 137 **Philosophical position**

138 Philosophical alignment was essential for increasing research quality (Tracy, 2010). An  
139 interpretivist ontology underpinned the research in that qualitative data were gathered to get a  
140 better sense of the socially constructed realities of prospective PE teachers. We embraced the  
141 notion that there are multiple realities (Maxwell, 2012) that are dynamic, in flux, and  
142 therefore subject to change over time and across space. So, even though the prospective  
143 teachers may have attended the same special school on placement, and been placed with the  
144 same group of pupils in a PE context, their interpretations of situated learning experiences  
145 (Lave and Wenger, 1991) may differ because each individual has their own ideologies, values  
146 and lived experiences, all of which can shape experiential interpretation and meaning  
147 construction. Similarly, we, as researchers, hold a set of beliefs that will inevitably spill into  
148 the research process. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), this is the axiological  
149 assumption that characterises qualitative research. This is indicative of the subjective  
150 epistemology that we ascribe to, thus making it essential that we explore our positionality.

### 151 **Positionality**

152 We are both white men who, because of previous lived and embodied experiences, would  
153 claim to be working-class even though our current economic, cultural and social capital may  
154 suggest otherwise. More crucially given the focus of our research, we do not have disabilities.  
155 Our interests here related to our personal and professional commitments, which are enviably  
156 political and value-laden, to ensuring that prospective PE teachers (1) are fully exposed to the  
157 'realities' of working with children with disabilities, and (2) have the commensurate skills,  
158 knowledge and experiences to allow them to support the learning of those children. Thus, our  
159 positionality must be understood in relation to belonging to multiple social groupings that  
160 intersect and enable and constrain our ability to develop relationships with, and gain insights  
161 about, participants (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Grimaldi et al. (2015) encourage  
162 researchers to move beyond such fixed, categorical understandings of positionality by  
163 reflexively considering the contextually situated relationships and interactions between  
164 researchers and participants. This acknowledgement is crucial given the inherent power  
165 (in)balance between us, our students, and the children taught and supported by our students  
166 during placement. Indeed, the reflexive consideration of the connections between the  
167 research, symbolic violence and wider relations of exploitation and domination (Apple et al.,  
168 2010) was key for ensuring that our methodological decisions and procedures were ethical  
169 and appropriate. Moreover, by exploring our positionality and engaging in reflexivity, we  
170 ensured transparency, honesty and criticality, which are hallmarks of quality in qualitative  
171 research (Tracy, 2010).

172

### 173 **Method**

174 Given that we were interested in moving beyond mere descriptions by exploring what  
175 hermeneutic inquiry refers to as the 'essence of meaning' (Lopez and Willis, 2004: 728)  
176 embedded in the situated learning experiences of our students, focus groups were used. Focus  
177 groups enabled us to capture meanings of prospective teachers, some of which they may be  
178 unaware of (Solomon, 1987), that were generated, maintained, challenged and changed (or  
179 not) through social participation (Silverman, 2018) in situated learning experiences in special  
180 schools. Therefore, recreating this social environment allowed the initial interactions to  
181 permeate the more formally constructed interview setting. Moreover, the focus groups  
182 provided a space for participants to reflect on the cognitive and emotional elements of their  
183 empathic imaginings while locating themselves and each other in teacher education and  
184 special school landscapes. It is through the stories that prospective teachers told and

185 discussed that multiple meanings and the richness of social worlds were constructed  
186 (Silverman, 2018). Here, the collective voice was just as important as the individual one  
187 (Gibbs, 2012). Hence, the role of the facilitator was crucial because individual voices can be  
188 suppressed by group dynamics if conformity and/or silencing pervades. The facilitator  
189 endeavoured to nurture conversation, creating a culture of respect for individual views, and  
190 encouraged involvement of all participants through, when necessary, direct questioning  
191 (Silverman, 2018). Nonetheless, it was important for the prospective teachers to lead the  
192 discussion and explore issues relevant to their experiences of placement. However, an  
193 interview guide was developed to ensure that the data generated were in keeping with the aim  
194 and purpose of the research (Marshall and Rossman, 2016), particularly in relation to the  
195 identification and exploration of the situated learning experiences relating to empathy.  
196 Questions were open, and probe, clarifying and expansion questions were added by the  
197 facilitator in order to generate, what Sparkes and Smith (2014) describe as, thick descriptions  
198 of experiences. This approach is in keeping with Tracy's (2010) ideas about increasing the  
199 rigour of qualitative research. Below is a sample of guide questions:

- 200 • What is your understanding of the term 'empathy'?
- 201 • Tell me about situations/incidents/experiences when you demonstrated empathy.
- 202 • How, if at all, did the special school placement influence your empathy? (Probe:  
203 specific situations/incidents/experiences)
- 204 • How important is it that teachers of pupils with disabilities are empathetic?

205

## 206 **Participants and recruitment**

207 The prospective teachers identified for recruitment were those studying a final year module,  
208 entitled *special educational needs and disability (SEND) in physical education*, as part of a  
209 three-year BA (Hons) Physical Education course. Lectures, seminars and practical activities  
210 were used to prepare the students for six half-day placement opportunities over a consecutive  
211 six-week period at a special school in Yorkshire. Special schools varied *vis-a-vis* their  
212 organisational structure and operational mechanisms. Moreover, the specific needs and  
213 capabilities of the pupils who attended the special schools were diverse but generally  
214 included pupils who had learning needs stemming from physical, cognitive, communicative  
215 and/or behavioural difficulties (DfE/DoH, 2015). Some of the schools had many pupils with  
216 Profound Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD), whilst others had specialist support for  
217 children with visual and hearing impairments. Typically, classes included between six and 12  
218 children and were supported by one teacher and up to four teaching assistants. Prospective  
219 teachers observed, planned, supported delivery and then taught PE lessons to individuals  
220 and/or small groups. Here, transition between the varying roles, such as from supporting to  
221 leading PE lessons, was negotiated with the class teacher.

222 Thirty-two prospective teachers participated in eight focus groups, each of which had  
223 3-5 participants. Participants were selected on the basis that they: (1) were studying the  
224 SEND in PE module; (2) were predominantly prospective PE teachers (i.e. intended to apply  
225 to train to become a teacher once their undergraduate studies were complete); and (3) had  
226 attended a special school for six half days over a six-week placement. A lecture was used to  
227 distribute an information letter, explain the aim and purpose of the research to all students  
228 studying the SEND in PE module (n=78), and to ask for their involvement. While no attempt  
229 was made to gain an even gender split because of disagreement about whether there is a  
230 gendered dimension to empathy (Klein and Hodges, 2001; Morley et al., 2005), 17 females  
231 and 15 males participated in focus groups.

232 Focus groups lasted between 50 and 60 minutes and took place in classrooms at the  
233 university to recreate the typical learning environment that the students had experienced  
234 throughout the module. All members of each separate focus group had attended the same  
235 school during placement, which meant they could attempt to make sense of shared situated  
236 learning experiences through negotiating meaning (Silverman, 2018). The other option would  
237 have been to mix students from across the placements and, in doing so, seek to stimulate  
238 discussion based on perhaps more varied situated learning experiences. However, given the  
239 broad spectrum of experiences gained because of the wide-ranging needs of pupils at  
240 different schools, the prospective teachers may have struggled to come to terms with the  
241 nuances of different placements and may therefore have spent a great deal of time trying to  
242 understand the contextual diversity rather than exploring their empathy.

243 Following guidance offered by Creswell and Poth (2018), ethical approval was gained  
244 through a university's Research Ethics Committee, and The British Educational Research  
245 Association's (2018) ethical guidelines were followed. Before the start of each focus group,  
246 participants were given a consent form. They were reminded that participation was voluntary,  
247 confidential, that they could withdraw from the interview for any or no reason with all data  
248 generated from them being destroyed, and that withdrawal would have no adverse impact on  
249 their subsequent studies (BERA, 2018). This was crucial given the obvious power  
250 relationship between the prospective teachers and the facilitator of the focus group in that the  
251 latter were taught by the former. To address this issue, all participants were clearly informed  
252 that anything they did or said during the focus group interview would have no adverse effect  
253 on their future studies or grading of work. Here, we drew on the work of Tracy (2010) by  
254 engaging in dynamic and relational ethics, which is a hallmark of rigour in qualitative  
255 research. It is noteworthy that focus groups posed additional ethical challenges in that other  
256 members were privy to what had been said. Therefore, participants were encouraged not to  
257 share what had been said beyond the focus group, and that this nuanced point was clearly  
258 explained in the information letter and consent form (Gibbs, 2012).

259 The access to, and sharing of, data was confined to the research team and managed in  
260 accordance with the Data Protection Act (Stationary Office, 2018). All focus group  
261 interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim by a third party. Transcripts were  
262 anonymised using pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality.

263

## 264 **Data analysis**

265 Qualitative coding was used to help us to make sense, through interpretation, of the essence  
266 of meanings constructed by, and situated learning of, prospective teachers during special  
267 school placements. Both researchers coded all the transcripts independently. Before doing so,  
268 we met to discuss and agree on a strategy to ensure a degree of consistency across the  
269 analysis. Coding involved giving labels to aspects of data to distil it and to give us a handle  
270 for comparison purposes (Charmaz, 2014). The first step involved us manually giving labels  
271 to sections of the text identified as being significant to the social realities of prospective  
272 teachers (Saldana, 2015). These were the participant narratives that would be used to explore  
273 the essence of meaning (Lopez and Willis, 2004) based on situated experiences in special  
274 schools. Next, axial coding was undertaken by both researchers to identify relationships  
275 between open codes. All axial codes were then sent to the lead researcher, who selectively  
276 removed duplicates before collating the remaining codes. Consideration was then given to  
277 similarities, differences, connections and patterns within and between the codes offered by  
278 each researcher. This was akin to a process of constant comparison (Bryman, 2015). Given

279 that we, the researchers, have differing lived experiences, academic knowledge and observe  
280 the social world through different theoretical lenses, this was done to gain multiple and  
281 alternative explanations and interpretations of the data so that the analysis was not based  
282 entirely on the ideologies and assumptions of any one researcher. However, it should be  
283 noted that there was a clear power dimension here in that it was the lead researcher who had  
284 final say over the codes that were grouped together to form themes (Campbell et al., 2013).

285

## 286 **Findings and discussion**

287 The themes constructed during data analysis were entitled: (1) *Stepping into the shoes of the*  
288 *Other*, (2) *Frustrated 'for' not 'with' pupils with disabilities*, (3) *Empathy for planning*  
289 *inclusive lessons and 'reading' pupil body language*, and (4) *Knowing when not to show*  
290 *empathy*. These have been used to structure the findings and discussion provided below.

291

### 292 *Stepping into the shoes of the Other*

293 We aimed to explore how prospective PE teachers conceptualise empathy and how a special  
294 school-based placement, as a situated learning experience, influenced self-perceptions of  
295 empathy. Despite Goldman's (2011:31) assertion that 'the term empathy does not mean the  
296 same thing in every mouth. Nor does there seem to be a single, unified phenomenon that  
297 uniquely deserves the label', it was interesting that prospective teachers expressed similar  
298 sentiments, time and again, when endeavouring to conceptualise empathy. Notwithstanding  
299 Goldman's (2011) claim, this was surprising to us given that no definition(s) of empathy had  
300 been given throughout the module, or any prior attempt made to discuss its conceptualisation.  
301 Cameron (FG2), for example, described empathy as 'being able to put yourself in someone  
302 else's shoes. You know, walking in someone else's shoes. Just trying to imagine what it is  
303 like to be them'. Likewise, Dianne (FG4) claimed that an empathetic teacher is 'someone  
304 who is able to put themselves in the shoes of others. All teachers were children once. They all  
305 went to school. They should be able to remember what it was like in school'. Rhona and Alex  
306 (FG3), Karen (FG5), Sarah (FG7), and Isla and James (FG8), also uttered words to that  
307 affect. Whilst these explanations are perhaps somewhat vague and superficial when compared  
308 to academic constructs of empathy, the ability of participants to see life from the perspective  
309 of 'others' is a consistent feature of participants' views.

310 The focus group extracts noted above are also significant in that they hint at the  
311 'Othering' and imaginative dimension of empathy. That is, according to Coplan (2011:6), 'to  
312 say that empathy is 'imaginative' is to say that it involves the representation of a person's  
313 states that are activated by, but not directly accessible through, the observer's perception'. In  
314 other words, empathy was found to involve the prospective teachers endeavouring to  
315 understand the world from the perspective of pupils with disabilities. This purview aligns  
316 with ToM (Baron-Cohen et al., 2000) and can be achieved, according to Coplan (2011),  
317 through simulation whereby the prospective teachers attempt to mentally reconstruct the  
318 pupils' ideologies and experiences, while maintaining a clear sense of differentiation between  
319 the Self and the Other. The teacher imagines they are the pupil, in the situation of the pupil,  
320 but acknowledges that they are not the pupil in that situation. This process is akin to what  
321 psychologists refer to as cognitive empathy (Singer, 2006) where the focus is understanding  
322 the beliefs, values, attitudes and actions of pupils with disabilities.



323 Prospective teachers made attempts to extend conceptualisations of empathy by  
324 exploring what Cooper (2011) calls its affective dimension. Adele (FG1), for instance,  
325 suggested that it was:

326 ...important to understand what the pupils were feeling. It is about the emotions.  
327 Sometimes children feel scared. Sometimes they are shy. Others seem really  
328 confident, and teachers need to be able to know how the kids are feeling.

329 In the same vein, Katherine (FG6) argued that empathy related to:

330 ... how teachers understand and act on somebody else's feelings. That is really  
331 important for me. Teachers need to be able to understand how the kids feel and do  
332 something about it. That is good teaching for me, changing the lesson based on  
333 feelings.

334 In this instance, the 'act on' perspective Katherine (FG6) alluded to related to teachers  
335 empathising with pupils in order to more appropriately support and teach them. For Katherine  
336 (FG6), therefore, her self-perception of empathy had the potential to have a positive effect in  
337 the way that it could directly impact on how she supported and taught each child in the  
338 special school. Here, it is noteworthy that the prospective teachers identify a cognitive  
339 process (understanding) when discussing an affective process (emotions). It is, unfortunately,  
340 beyond the scope of this article to explore whether cognitive empathy can be used to  
341 appreciate emotions. What we can say is that cognitive and affective empathy are tightly  
342 bound and not easy to separate (Coplan, 2011). Therefore, following Coplan's (2011) line of  
343 thought, prospective teachers in our study suggested that in order to make sense of how a  
344 pupil feels in a given situation they will cognitively simulate an experience, which could, in  
345 theory, result in either reactive emotions or affective matching. Feeling sympathy for the  
346 pupils is a reactive emotion rather than an example of teachers being empathetic because,  
347 again, reactive emotions 'are not sufficiently accurate representations of a target's situated  
348 psychological states. They misrepresent the type of emotion experienced by the target'  
349 (Coplan, 2011:7). Affective matching, on the other hand, is said to occur only when the  
350 prospective teacher's affective states are the same as, if not identical to, the pupil's.

351 Hugh (FG7), perhaps unknowingly, was the only person who acknowledged affective  
352 matching when he said:

353 Empathy is me feeling the same emotions as the pupils. Some children feel isolated in  
354 PE. Some may feel lonely. I was really good at PE because I was really involved, but  
355 I can imagine what it is like not to be. There were kids like that in my class at school'.

356 Whether one person can ever experience the same emotions, to the same degree, for the same  
357 duration, and for the same reasons is open to debate. This becomes even more complex and  
358 perhaps contentious when comparing an adult teacher without disabilities to a child with  
359 disabilities. Nonetheless, PE teachers often feel unable to adequately respond to the needs of  
360 children with disabilities (see Morley et al., 2005). Thus, it seems appropriate to accentuate  
361 the usefulness of empathy for prospective teachers to effectively support children with  
362 disabilities.

363

364 *Frustrated 'for' not 'with' pupils with disabilities*

365 We commence this theme with the words of Adele (FG1):

366 When it was Leo's turn, I thought, oh, he must be getting really frustrated if he sees  
367 that I'm constantly not catching the ball he is trying to throw. It's always going on the  
368 floor. So I bent down and he rolled the ball into my hand instead, so he was successful  
369 in that, and straight away, he was like, "yes!", when he did it. Just watching his  
370 expressions, I could sort of see where he was coming from and then change the way I  
371 acted to make sure he was getting successful.

372

373 The example provided by Adele (FG1) hints at the symbiotic relationship between cognitive  
374 and affective empathy. Here, Adele uses a cognitive process 'I thought' to make a judgement  
375 about the emotional state 'frustration' of Leo, the Other. Many of the prospective teachers  
376 (e.g. Georgia FG1, Rhona FG3, Jason FG4, Andy FG6, James FG8), like Adele (FG1),  
377 mentioned that they thought the pupils were experiencing frustration when they found it  
378 difficult to perform a task in PE. Erin (FG8) said:

379 Loads of the kids in the class looked really frustrated when we were doing rounders.  
380 They just could not hit the ball. We tried to change it but they really struggled. The  
381 teacher even found it hard to get them to hit the ball. Even when we used a big, bright  
382 ball. It was so frustrating for me, too. I really wanted them to hit the ball.

383 It is important to note that prospective teachers were often at pains to explain that they were  
384 frustrated *for* not *with* the pupils. For most prospective teachers, though, this form of  
385 affective empathy assumes that the pupil is feeling frustration in that situation, while  
386 performing that activity, at that specific time. In other words, prospective teachers self-  
387 referenced how they would feel in that situation in order to empathetically imagine what the  
388 children must be feeling, the outcome of which was a change to the learning activity. Adele  
389 (FG1) does, however, hint at the visual cues she used to gauge the emotions experienced by  
390 the pupil in that she mentioned how she observed the pupil's expressions during her  
391 unsuccessful attempts to catch the ball, and then the successful attempt once she  
392 differentiated the activity. This is perhaps expected given that symbolic exchange, both  
393 verbal and non-verbal, is core to human interaction and, thus, the development of social  
394 relationships (Blumer, 1992). Of perhaps greater interest is that Adele (FG1) claimed to have  
395 used her empathy to differentiate a learning activity so that it was more tailored to the needs  
396 and capabilities of the learner, something that should form an integral part of a teacher's  
397 inclusive pedagogies (Maher and Vickerman, 2018).

398 Many of the prospective teachers suggested that they experienced a variety of  
399 emotions throughout the special school placements. While the focus was very much cast  
400 towards self-perceptions of empathy, sympathy also came through strongly during focus  
401 group discussions (e.g. Tony FG1, Phil FG1, Jason FG4, Andy FG6, Deborah, FG7, James  
402 FG8). Andy (FG6), for instance, said:

403 I think you feel a bit for the kids sometimes. At times, I felt really sorry for them.  
404 There was an incident where a child with ESBD [emotional, social and behavioural  
405 difficulties] got told off for just going underneath the parachute [during a PE activity]  
406 and he wasn't causing a problem to anyone.

407 Similarly, Deborah (FG7) explained:

408 I felt really sorry for the kids. They were trying so hard. They were working really  
409 hard, and did look like they were having fun, but they struggled to do what other kids

410 their age would consider very basic skills. You know, fundamental stuff like hopping,  
411 throwing and catching. I know you shouldn't say it but I did feel sorry for them.

412 It is not uncommon for empathy and sympathy to be considered synonymous and thus be  
413 used interchangeably (Singer, 2006). However, as Singer (2006) suggests, it is important to  
414 remember that empathy is feeling *with* someone whereas sympathy is feeling *for* someone. It  
415 would have been interesting to know if Andy (FG6) would have sympathy for a pupil with  
416 disabilities if they exhibited the same behaviour in a mainstream school PE lesson given that  
417 school staff in that setting have expressed concern that pupils with behavioural difficulties  
418 had a negative impact on the learning of other pupils (see Morley et al., 2005; Maher 2018).  
419 Nonetheless, whilst some of the participants' self-perceptions in this study seem to fall short  
420 of reaching Coplan's (2011) construct of empathy in that they do not feel the same emotions  
421 as the pupils (affective matching), it remains that their self-perceptions are akin to cognitive  
422 processes relating to empathy in that they try to understand what the children are feeling. So,  
423 it could be suggested that a situated learning experience in a special school provides an  
424 opportunity to trigger a cognitive process (thought) that leads to an affective process  
425 (recognising that a pupil is becoming frustrated), potentially resulting in differentiated  
426 practice. The ability of a teacher to use empathy to recognise when to differentiate a learning  
427 activity effectively aligns with teaching and curricular notions of inclusive practice,  
428 particularly in relation to responding to children's diverse needs and setting suitable learning  
429 challenges, both of which are emphasised in the Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2013) and  
430 National Curriculum Statutory Inclusion Statement (DfE, 2014). In short, empathy among  
431 prospective teachers may help them to gain qualified teacher status (QTS) and fulfil their  
432 statutory duties once they are teaching in schools.

#### 433 *Empathy for planning inclusive lessons and 'reading' pupil body language*

434 There was a general consensus among the participants that being empathetic was an  
435 important part of teaching, particularly when it comes to including pupils with disabilities.  
436 Alex encapsulates the views held by many of the prospective teachers:

437 Empathy's key for when you're planning and delivering sessions with any form of  
438 pupil. You've got to think, if I plan this session and then you get to know your  
439 students and you deliver it, the first few minutes and they're all staring at you like,  
440 what are you on about, there's not a chance I'm going to be able to do this session. So  
441 I think understanding your students' capabilities, understanding from their  
442 perspective... to give them time, to be patient with them, to give them simple drills to  
443 start with and then, if they're showing signs of improvement, then build it up that  
444 way. So I think empathy's really key for planning, for all students (Alex, FG3).

445 Alex (FG3), as well as others, argued that an empathetic teacher would have a better  
446 'understanding' of the needs and capabilities of the pupils, because they would be able to  
447 appreciate some of the challenges associated with trying to perform learning tasks in PE.  
448 While we did not probe what Alex (FG3) meant by 'understanding' pupil needs, Vickerman  
449 and Maher (2018) discuss the importance of pre- and in-service PE teachers having  
450 knowledge of the contextual and situational learning needs and capabilities of their pupils for  
451 planning and teaching inclusive, appropriately challenging, and meaningful learning  
452 experiences. However, it is important to note that 'knowing' and 'understanding' the needs  
453 and capabilities of those with disabilities can be difficult given that disabilities and learning  
454 needs can be dynamic, multi-layered, contextual and subject to change over time (Morley et  
455 al., 2017). There is a juxtaposition potentially at play here between the knowing of the  
456 capabilities of the child and the interface between the changing policy drivers used to dictate

457 the educational context in which children and teachers find themselves. Arguably, the  
458 empathetic imaginings of PE teachers would have to keep pace with and reflect not only the  
459 shifting and multidimensional nature of pupil needs and capabilities but also the ever-  
460 changing ways that SEND is conceptualised, the preferred means and context for educating  
461 children with disabilities, as well as the pedagogical skills deemed necessary for teaching  
462 those children, if teachers were ever to appropriately ‘understand’ their learners.

463 While the importance of empathy for planning PE lessons was often the focus, some  
464 prospective teachers mentioned being able to modify and adapt the lesson while it was being  
465 taught. Caleb (FG3), for instance, suggested:

466 I think empathy is key towards the lesson. It is important that you can see from the  
467 pupil’s perspective how the lesson’s panning out. Unless you can see that, what’s  
468 going wrong, and you can see why it’s going wrong, then you cannot change it for the  
469 better.

470 Here, Caleb (FG3) claims to use his empathy to cognitively transport himself into the  
471 position of a pupil. Once there, Caleb (FG3) suggests that he can make judgements about the  
472 PE lesson from the perspective of the pupil. This cognitive process is, according to Caleb  
473 (FG3), useful because it allows him to identify aspects of the lesson that may need to be  
474 changed. In this instance, it is perhaps encouraging to see Caleb (FG3) place so much  
475 emphasis on the pupils’ interpretation of, and experiences within, PE lessons. However, this  
476 point assumes that there will be alignment between Caleb’s (FG3) and the pupils’ views  
477 about the purpose of the lesson, what is being learnt, the appropriateness of the learning  
478 activities, how success in the lesson is conceptualised and measured, and the emotions  
479 experienced throughout the lesson. In short, again, Caleb (FG3) assumes he and other  
480 teachers can achieve cognitive and affective alignment (Coplan, 2011) when, in fact, he and  
481 the pupils may be viewing the same picture through different prisms.

482 Being able to ‘read’ body language and react to overt displays of emotion was again  
483 identified as important, particularly in relation to using them as cues to modify learning  
484 activities to make them more appropriate. Karen (FG5) was one prospective teacher who  
485 argued that:

486 you need to be able to observe how the pupils react during the lesson. You can see if  
487 they are having fun. You can see if they are finding a task too easy or difficult. You  
488 can see if they are getting frustrated.

489 While it is indeed crucial for teachers to use their empathetic imaginings to identify when  
490 activities are inappropriate and to respond to the individual learning needs of the pupils as  
491 purported in the National Curriculum (DfE, 2014) and Teachers’ Standards (DfE, 2013),  
492 teachers also need to have the pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987) required to  
493 make appropriate modifications.

494

#### 495 *Knowing when not to show empathy*

496 Whilst all the prospective teachers agreed that being empathetic was an important part of  
497 teaching, some had reservations about when and where empathy should be demonstrated.  
498 Tony (FG1), for example, articulated a view held by others (Georgia FG1, Rhona FG3,  
499 Richard FG4, Isla FG8, Joseph FG8) when he claimed that:

500 I think it's important to kind of find a balance with your empathy, as well. So, yes,  
501 you've got to be a bit more like lenient as to what sort of things you're doing and your  
502 expectations have got to be kind of a little bit lower than mainstream schools, but I  
503 think it's also important not to be too empathetic in the fact that you do have to push  
504 the children sometimes to actually do the activity because they are capable of doing it,  
505 but sometimes they just won't do it. So I think if you're too empathetic, it does hinder  
506 the learning, as well.

507

508 Interestingly, Tony (FG1) equates empathetic teaching with having low(er) expectations of,  
509 and providing less challenging learning experiences for, pupils with disabilities. This way of  
510 thinking is, arguably, akin to a deficit model of disability (see Oliver, 2013) in that children  
511 with disabilities are seen as the problem, cast as inferior to those without disabilities, and  
512 their ability is compared to normative, ableist ideals. However, given that empathy relates to  
513 a teacher's ability to understand propositional attitudes and experience the emotions (if that is  
514 even possible) of pupils (Baron-Cohen et al., 2000), it is not necessarily the case that an  
515 empathetic teacher would need to lower their expectations, nor would they be required to  
516 develop or teach learning activities that are less demanding. Instead, an empathetic teacher  
517 would be more able to identify when their expectations are *too* low or high and when their  
518 lesson is *too* easy or challenging. This is indicative of 'good practice' and should be  
519 considered when teaching all pupils in all subject areas.

520 On a similar note, other prospective teachers seemed to imply that they could only be  
521 empathetic, or perhaps only needed to demonstrate empathy, when the pupils were struggling  
522 with a learning activity. When the challenge was low *vis-à-vis* the capabilities of the pupils,  
523 some prospective teachers said they found it difficult to demonstrate empathy. Joseph (FG8),  
524 for instance, explained:

525

526 With the group of pupils playing snooker, they were all quite able to perform the fine  
527 motor skills, which, before going in, I didn't think they would be able to and they  
528 were all fully engaged. They were all fully able to understand the rules and the  
529 scoring systems to different extents, so empathy for me in snooker and pool didn't  
530 play a part, at all.

531

532 Similarly, Isla (FG8) suggested:

533

534 I really would say that I struggled to be empathetic just because of the fact that the  
535 lesson was exactly the same every week. And they've been doing this since  
536 September; there wasn't anything new. It would take the pupils ages to get the idea,  
537 but when they got it nothing changed.

538

539 In relation to Isla's (FG8) comments, it is noteworthy that she was supporting pupils with  
540 autism spectrum conditions (ASC). Therefore, it is likely that the teacher had endeavoured to  
541 provide more structure, rigidity and familiarity to a learning environment, given how  
542 dynamic and fluid PE activities and spaces can be (Maher, 2016), because some pupils with  
543 ASC prefer structured, repetitive, and patterned activities and environments (Baron-Cohen,  
544 2008). Moreover, it appears that Isla's (FG8) notion of pupil progression is shaped by  
545 normative ideals about what should be learned and performed, and how quickly. This is  
546 where, perhaps, a higher degree of both cognitive and affective empathy would have enabled  
547 Isla (FG8) to appreciate the actions of the teacher and the experiences of the pupils.  
548 Nonetheless, it was interesting that both Joseph's (FG8) and Isla's (FG8) perceptions on the  
549 utility of empathy were rooted in the notion that it is only required when pupils are

550 experiencing difficulty, particularly as it relates to learning activities. Again, this is perhaps  
551 more akin to sympathy and therefore falls some way short of an empathetic approach that has  
552 the potential to trigger actions that will make a considerable difference to the educational  
553 experiences of pupils with disabilities through the adoption of more differentiated practice.

554

### 555 **Concluding thoughts: Problematizing empathy**

556

557 We sought to explore the influence of a special school placement on prospective teachers’  
558 self-perceptions of empathy. Although participants did not explicitly use the term, the  
559 cognitive dimension of empathy was emphasised. Focus was cast on prospective teachers  
560 endeavouring to use simulation and imagination to understand PE from the perspective of  
561 pupils with disabilities. Attention was also given to the affective dimension of empathy  
562 wherein prospective teachers attempted to *feel* what pupils with disabilities felt in order to  
563 connect emotionally. Empathy was, overwhelmingly, considered important by the  
564 participants for teaching pupils with disabilities, especially when normative standards of  
565 attainment were not achieved. An empathetic teacher had, according to participants, a better  
566 understanding and knowledge of the needs and capabilities of pupils with disabilities, and  
567 would be more able to plan, teach and modify PE lessons to ensure that they were  
568 appropriately challenging. To summarise, all prospective teachers were convinced that: (1)  
569 they could empathise with pupils with disabilities; (2) that situated learning experiences  
570 within the placement enabled them to reflect on the ways in which their empathy influences  
571 their teaching now and could continue to do so in the future; and (3) it was important that  
572 they, as future PE teachers, demonstrated empathy when teaching. Therefore, it is  
573 recommended that all undergraduate PE and teacher education programmes embed SEND,  
574 inclusion and a special school placement into their curriculums. Here, there should be a  
575 specific focus on how prospective teachers can reflect on the ways that their empathy can  
576 make them more inclusive educators.

577 Self-orientated – as opposed to Other-orientated – perspective-taking, led some of our  
578 prospective teachers to claim to ‘understand’ and ‘know’ the experiences of pupils with  
579 disabilities. In this regard, Smith (2008) draws attention to two notable problems with  
580 attempts to locate ourselves in the Other’s shoes using empathetic imagination: the body and  
581 the concept of otherness. The argument goes that knowledge and experience is embodied;  
582 that is, the bodies of pupils with disabilities form the biological and social (Thomas, 2007)  
583 basis of their experiences within PE specifically, and the world generally. Therefore, there are  
584 limits to the extent to which the prospective teachers in this research could ever empathise  
585 with pupils with disabilities, especially at an affective level, because they have never lived in  
586 a ‘disabled’ body. Arguably, from the data provided in this article and elsewhere (e.g. Smith,  
587 2008), it is possible for prospective teachers to become sensitised to some of the challenges  
588 experienced by pupils with disabilities (in PE) through a special school placement, but they  
589 may never know what it *feels* like to have a disability because it is embodied by the Other.

590 We are not suggesting that attempting to develop empathy among teachers is a  
591 fruitless endeavour. Rather, we are highlighting some of the limitations of teachers claiming  
592 to empathise with pupils with disabilities. Here, we want to avoid situations where teachers  
593 ‘finalise’ (Bakhtin, 1984) pupils with disabilities by claiming the last, conclusive word, about  
594 who they are, what they think, how they feel and what they want, in myriad contexts and  
595 situations. This will go some way to ensuring that those without disabilities avoid  
596 perpetuating what may be considered a form of symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1991) by  
597 legitimising the talking about the Other without the Other. Thus, teacher educators need to  
598 allow prospective teachers to engage in critical reflexivity to increase awareness of the  
599 potential of such acts of symbolic violence. This should be coupled with the development of a

600 social model world-view among prospective teachers during their teacher education, where  
601 the focus is on the environmental, structural and attitudinal factors that ‘disable’ children  
602 (Oliver, 2013). To end, it should be remembered that pre- and in-service teachers are  
603 confronted by myriad expectations related to their acquisition of personal and professional  
604 attributes to enable them to teach effective lessons and improve the learning of all children.  
605 Whilst an understanding of differentiation practices, an improved elicitation of the pupils’  
606 voices and a teacher’s ability to teach meaningful learning experiences for all children are  
607 elements of an effective lesson, our research highlights the crucial role that empathy could  
608 play in making a difference to the educational experiences of pupils with disabilities.

609

### 610 **Acknowledgements**

611 We would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for what were the most insightful,  
612 thought-provoking, inspiring and supportive comments we have ever received.

613

### 614 **References**

615 Apple M, Ball S and Gandin L (2010) Mapping the sociology of education: social context,  
616 power and knowledge: In Apple M, Ball S and Gandin L (eds) *Routledge international*  
617 *handbook of the sociology of education*. London: Routledge.

618

619 Arnseth H-C (2008) Activity theory and situated learning theory: contrasting views of  
620 educational practice, *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*, 16(3): 289-302.

621

622 Bakhtin M (1984) *Problems of Dostoevsky’s poetics*, translated and edited by C. Emerson.  
623 Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

624

625 Baron-Cohen S (2008) *Autism and Asperger’s syndrome*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

626

627 Baron-Cohen S, Tager-Flusberg H and Cohen J (2000) *Understanding other minds:*  
628 *perspectives from developmental cognitive neuroscience* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Oxford: Oxford University  
629 Press.

630

631 Barr J (2010) The relationship between teachers’ empathy and perceptions of school culture,  
632 *Educational Studies*, 37(3): 365-369.

633

634 Blumer H (1992) *Symbolic interactionism: perspective and method*. Oakland, CA: University  
635 of California.

636

637 Bourdieu P (1991) *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University  
638 Press.

639

640 Bourdieu P and Wacquant L (1992) *An invitation to reflexive sociology*.  
641 Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.  
642

643 Branwhite T (1988) The PASS survey: School- based preferences of 500+ adolescent  
644 consumers, *Educational Studies*, 14:165-176.  
645

646 British Educational Research Association (BERA) (2018) *Ethical guidelines for educational*  
647 *research* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). London: British Educational Research Association.  
648

649 Broomhead K (2013) ‘You cannot learn this from a book’; pre-service teachers developing  
650 empathy towards parents of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) via parent  
651 stories, *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 28(2): 173-186.  
652

653 Bruner J (2006) *In search of pedagogy*. London: Routledge.  
654

655 Bryman A (2015) *Social research methods* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.  
656

657 Campbell J, Quincy C, Osserman J and Pedersen O (2013) Coding in-depth semi-structured  
658 interviews: Problems of unitization and inter-coder reliability and agreement, *Sociological*  
659 *Methods and Research*, 42: 294-320.  
660

661 Charmaz K (2014) *Constructing grounded theory: a practical guide through qualitative*  
662 *analysis*. London, Sage.  
663

664 Coates J (2012) Teaching inclusively: are secondary physical education student teachers  
665 sufficiently prepared to teach in inclusive environments? *Physical Education and Sport*  
666 *Pedagogy* 17(4): 349-365.  
667

668 Cooper B (2011) *Empathy in education: engagement, values and achievement*. London:  
669 Continuum International Publishing Group.  
670

671 Coplan A (2011) Understanding empathy: its features and effects. In: Coplan A and Goldie P  
672 (eds) *Empathy: Philosophical and psychological perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University  
673 Press.  
674

675 Coplan A and Goldie P (eds) *Empathy: Philosophical and psychological perspectives*.  
676 Oxford: Oxford University Press.



677

678 Creswell J and Poth C (2018) *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five*  
679 *approaches* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). London: Sage.

680

681 Cruz B and Patterson J (2009) Cross-cultural simulations in teacher education:  
682 developing empathy and understanding, *Multicultural Perspectives*, 7(2): 40-47.

683

684 Department for Education (DfE) (2013) *Teachers' standards*. London: DfE.

685

686 Department for Education (DfE) (2014) *The national curriculum in England: Key stages 3*  
687 *and 4 framework document*. London: DfE.

688

689 Department for Education (DfE)/Department of Health (DoH) (2015) *Special educational*  
690 *needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years*. London, DfE/DoH.

691

692 Gibbs A (2012) Focus groups and group interviews. In: Arthur J, Waring M, Coe R and  
693 Hedges L (eds) *Research methods and methodologies in education*. London: Sage.

694

695 Goldman A (2011) Two routes to empathy: insights from cognitive neuroscience. In: Coplan  
696 A and Goldie P (eds) *Empathy: philosophical and psychological perspectives*. Oxford:  
697 Oxford University Press.

698

699 Goldstein T and Winner E (2012) Enhancing empathy and theory of mind, *Journal of*  
700 *Cognition and Development*, 13(1): 19-37.

701

702 Grimaldi E, Serpieri R, and Spanò E (2015) Positionality, symbolic violence and reflexivity.  
703 Researching the educational strategies of marginalised groups. In: Bhopal K and Deuchar R  
704 (eds) *Researching marginalized groups*. Routledge: London, 134-148.

705

706 Haegele J, Hodge S, Barbosa Gutierrez Filho P and Goncalves de Rezende A (2018)  
707 Brazilian physical education teachers' attitudes toward inclusion before and after  
708 participation in a professional development workshop, *European Physical Education Review*,  
709 24(1): 21-38.

710

711 Hoffman M (2000) *Empathy and moral development: implications for caring and justice*.  
712 Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

713

714 Hughes B and Paterson K (1997) The social model of disability and the disappearing body:  
715 Toward a sociology of impairment, *Disability & Society*, 12 (3): 325-40.  
716

717 Lave J and Wenger E (1991) *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. New  
718 York, NY: Cambridge University Press.  
719

720 Lopez K and Willis G (2004) Descriptive versus interpretive phenomenology: Their  
721 contributions to nursing knowledge, *Qualitative Health Research*, 14 (5): 726-735.  
722

723 Maher A (2016) ‘We’ve got a few who don’t go to PE’: Learning support assistant and  
724 special educational needs coordinator views on inclusion in physical education in England,  
725 *European Physical Education Review*, 23(2): 257-270.  
726

727 Maher A (2018) ‘Disable them all’: SENCO and LSA conceptualisations of inclusion in  
728 physical education, *Sport, Education and Society*, 23(2): 149-161.  
729

730 Maher A, Morley D, Fimusanmi J and Ogilvie P (2019) University student experiences of a  
731 special school physical education placement, *European Physical Education Review*,  
732 25(2):474-490.  
733

734 Marshall C and Rossman G (2016) *Designing qualitative research* (6<sup>th</sup> ed). London: Sage.  
735

736 Maxwell, J. (2012) *A realist approach for qualitative inquiry*. London: Sage.  
737

738 Morley D, Bailey R, Tan J and Cooke B (2005) Inclusive physical education: teachers’ views  
739 of including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in physical education,  
740 *European Physical Education Review*, 11(1): 84-107.  
741

742

743 Morley D, Maher A, Walsh B, Dinning T, Lloyd D and Pratt A (2017) Making reasonable  
744 adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities: pre-service teachers'  
745 perceptions of an online support resource, *British Journal of Special Education*, 44(2): 203-  
746 219.  
747

748 Oliver M (2013) The social model of disability: thirty years on, *Disability and Society*, 28(7):  
749 1024-1026.  
750

751 Saldana J (2015) *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). London: Sage.

752

753 Shulman L (1987) Knowledge and teaching: foundations of the new reform, *Harvard*  
754 *Educational Review*, 57(1): 1-22.

755

756 Silverman D (2018) *Doing qualitative research: a practical handbook* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). London:  
757 Sage.

758

759 Singer T (2006) The neuronal basis and ontogeny of empathy and mind reading: review of  
760 literature and implications for future research, *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*,  
761 30(6): 855-863.

762

763 Smith B (2008) Imagining being disabled through playing sport: the body and alterity as  
764 limits to imagining others' lives, *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*, 2(2): 142-157.

765

766 Solomon J (1987) *From Hegel to existentialism*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

767

768 Sparkes A, Martos-Garcia D and Maher A (2019) Me, Imperfect Osteogenesis and my  
769 classmates in physical education lessons: A case study of embodied pedagogy in action,  
770 *Sport, Education and Society*, 24(4):338-348.

771

772 Sparkes, A and Smith B (2014) *Qualitative research methods in sport, exercise and health:*  
773 *From process to product*. New York, NY: Routledge.

774

775 Stationary Office (2018) *The data protection act*. London: Stationary Office.

776

777 Tettegah S and Anderson C (2007) Pre- service teachers' empathy and cognitions: statistical  
778 analysis of text data by graphical models, *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 32: 48-82.

779

780 Thomas C (2007) *Sociologies of disability and illness*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

781

782 Tracy S (2010) Qualitative quality: Eight "Big-Tent" criteria for excellent qualitative  
783 research, *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16:837-851.

784

785 Vickerman P (2007) Training physical education teachers to include children with special  
786 educational needs: Perspectives from physical education teacher training providers, *European*  
787 *Physical Education Review*, 18(3): 285-402.

788

789 Vickerman P and Coates J (2009) Trainee and recently qualified physical education teachers'  
790 perspectives on including children with special educational needs, *Physical Education and*  
791 *Sport Pedagogy*, 14 (2): 137-153.

792

793 Vickerman P and Maher A (2018) *Teaching physical education to children with special*  
794 *educational needs and disabilities* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London: Routledge.

795