

# Sheffield Hallam University

*The life histories of teacher mothers: exploring a special situation*

QUICKFALL, Aimee

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

<http://shura.shu.ac.uk/28482/>

## A Sheffield Hallam University thesis

This thesis is protected by copyright which belongs to the author.

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author.

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given.

Please visit <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/28482/> and <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/information.html> for further details about copyright and re-use permissions.

**The life histories of teacher mothers: exploring a  
special situation**

Aimee Frances Quickfall

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of  
Sheffield Hallam University  
for the degree of Doctor of Education

July 2020

## Candidate Declaration

---

I hereby declare that:

1. I have not been enrolled for another award of the University, or other academic or professional organisation, whilst undertaking my research degree.
2. None of the material contained in the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.
3. I am aware of and understand the University's policy on plagiarism and certify that this thesis is my own work. The use of all published or other sources of material consulted have been properly and fully acknowledged.
4. The work undertaken towards the thesis has been conducted in accordance with the SHU Principles of Integrity in Research and the SHU Research Ethics Policy.
5. The word count of the thesis is 60,000.

Name	<i>Aimee Frances Quickfall</i>
Date	<i>2020</i>
Award	<i>EdD</i>
Faculty	<i>Social Sciences and Humanities</i>
Director(s) of Studies	<i>Dr Caron Carter</i>

## Dedication

---

Firstly, I could not have completed this research without the help, support and guidance of some amazing women. Huge thanks to my participants, who showed such patience, wisdom and generosity in sharing their stories and trusting me to represent them. My supervisors; Caron and Ning, have been my research heroes, advisors and tireless supporters – they always understood me, always encouraged me. And my Mum, who raised me to be feminist and supported me throughout this doctorate with time, child care and cake!

Many thanks also to the research communities who have made such a difference to this experience; Cohort 9 of the EdD at Sheffield Hallam, and my research friends at Bishop Grosseteste University; especially Emma, Shaun and Phil.

# Abstract

---

This thesis, 'The life histories of teacher mothers: exploring a special situation' concerns a personally motivated study on the experiences and influences on Primary and Early Years teachers who are also mothers. The study involved unstructured life-history interviews with five teacher-mothers and took a postmodern feminist approach, in that it aimed to tell the stories of women, for women, whilst acknowledging and centring the individual's experience as unique. Ethical dilemmas were a key part of the study and thesis, including negotiating insider research relationships and maintaining participant voice in the data.

It asks three questions:

- 1. What do the life history stories of teacher mothers suggest about this special circumstance?**
- 2. To what extent does analysis of 'ecological systems' and discourses illuminate the life of a teacher mother?**
- 3. What are the points of coalescence and convergence that groups of teacher mothers may relate to, that could be potential sites of new policy and activism?**

Analysis of interview data involved use of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, combined with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model to create a new model of discourse analysis: ecological systems discourse analysis (ESDA) that considers teacher-mothers' individual worlds, as well as giving opportunities to map shared themes and positions towards the discourses of teacher-motherhood. This may have future applications for other areas of narrative research.

This thesis argues that the special circumstance of being a teacher-mother, whilst unique for every individual, has some points of coalescence of experience. These include the conflicting pressures of work and gender performativity, normalization of overwork, barriers to part-time work, guilt at being 'good enough' and a reluctance to identify school leaders as people in a position to change the discourse locally. It concludes that teacher-mothers' stories are complex and that any local, regional or national policymaking, activism and supportive measures need to acknowledge this. Claims to knowledge include additions to the understanding of teacher-motherhood from coalescences of experience, flexible interview methods for hard to reach groups, the defence of teacher-motherhood as a special circumstance and a new model for discourse analysis.

# Contents

---

Candidate Declaration.....	i
Dedication .....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
List of Figures .....	viii
List of Tables.....	x
Abbreviations .....	xi
1: Introduction .....	12
1.1: Research aims and questions .....	12
1.2: Context .....	15
1.3: Next Steps.....	24
2: Literature Review .....	28
2.1: Aims and Approach of the Literature Review .....	28
2.2: Chronosystem – recent history of teacher motherhood .....	29
2.3: Macrosystem - Discourses in Society and Media .....	35
2.4: Exosystem – Government Policy .....	40
2.5: Microsystem & Mesosystem – School and Home.....	48
2.6: Theoretical Underpinnings .....	57
2.7: Conclusion .....	66
3: Methodology, Methods and my Participants .....	68

3.1: Introduction.....	68
3.2: Research Design.....	69
3.3: The Formative Study.....	84
3.4 Fieldwork .....	93
3.5 Ethics and Reflexivity.....	105
3.6 Data Analysis.....	117
3.7: Conclusion .....	131
4: Findings .....	132
4.1: Introduction to the stories .....	132
4.2: Participant sections .....	133
<b>Sian</b> .....	136
Thumbnail Sketch .....	136
Interview Map .....	136
Sian’s Story .....	137
<b>Sian by Aimee</b> .....	142
Identified Discourses of Teacher/Mother .....	144
<b>Anna</b> .....	148
Thumbnail Sketch: Anna.....	148
Interview Map: Anna .....	148
Anna’s Story.....	149
<b>Anna by Aimee</b> .....	153

Identified Discourses of Teacher/Mother .....	154
<b>Charlie</b> .....	159
Thumbnail Sketch: Charlie .....	159
Interview Map: Charlie .....	160
Charlie's Story .....	160
<b>Charlie by Aimee</b> .....	166
Identified Discourses of Teacher/Mother .....	166
<b>Bell</b> .....	169
Thumbnail Sketch: Bell .....	169
Interview Map: Bell .....	169
Bell's Story .....	170
<b>Bell by Aimee</b> .....	174
Identified Discourses of Teacher/Mother .....	174
<b>Aliyah</b> .....	178
Thumbnail Sketch: Aliyah .....	178
Interview Map: Aliyah .....	178
Aliyah's Story .....	179
<b>Aliyah by Aimee</b> .....	183
Identified Discourses of Teacher/Mother .....	183
Analysis of Aliyah's Interview Transcript .....	184
Chapter 5: Synthesis .....	188

5.1: Introduction.....	188
5.2: Collective Analysis of Discourses.....	190
5.3: Chronosystem & Macrosystem:.....	192
Gender performativity, work performativity and the perfect storm.....	192
5.4: Exosystem: Part-time work as panacea.....	203
5.5: Mesosystem: The strange situation of school leaders.....	207
5.6: Microsystem: The Guilt of the ‘Good Enough’ Mother.....	212
5.7: Individual System: Intersectionality.....	215
5.8: Conclusion.....	219
6: Conclusion.....	221
6.1: Introduction.....	221
6.2: Answers to the research questions.....	221
6.3: Significance and implications of findings.....	224
6.4: Contribution to knowledge.....	226
6.5: Limitations of the study.....	232
6.6: Future research.....	236
References.....	238
Appendices.....	271

## List of Figures

---

Figure 1: The moment my headship ambition left my body. ....	19
Figure 2: Workload as an issue (NASUWT, 2019) .....	37
Figure 3: Workload as a problem (DfE, 2019) .....	38
Figure 4: Barriers to part-time work (DfE, 2017b) .....	42
Figure 5: Out of hours working (DfE, 2017c).....	44
Figure 6: Teacher perceptions of value by management (NASUWT, 2019).....	47
Figure 7: Reported causes of disempowerment (NASUWT, 2019).....	47
Figure 8: The epistemological position of the study.....	63
Figure 9: Basic foundations of the research design. ....	71
Figure 10: Example of an interview map. ....	102
Figure 11: Commonly used representation of Bronfenbrenner's theory (1979). ....	123
Figure 12: Complete bioecological systems theory model.....	124
Figure 13: Ecological systems as they may be organised for a teacher-mother. ....	127
Figure 14: Exploring Willig's process with Bronfenbrenner's model (1979). ....	129
Figure 15: Sian's interview map. ....	136
Figure 16: Anna's interview map. ....	148
Figure 17: Charlie's interview map. ....	160
Figure 18: Bell's interview map.....	169
Figure 19: Aliyah's interview map.....	178
Figure 20: Discourses discussed in this chapter.....	188
Figure 21: How discourses from ecological systems feed into the overarching issues of work and gender performativity.....	189
Figure 22: Collective ecological systems discourse analysis.....	191
Figure 23: Competing performativities for teacher-mothers.....	193

Figure 24: Demand for part-time work (NFER, Worth & van der Brande, 2019). .....203

## List of Tables

---

Table 1: Considerations identified in the formative study .....	88
Table 2: Participant information .....	98
Table 3: Willig's Model of FDA (2008).....	121
Table 4: Ecological Systems Discourse Analysis Process.....	130

## Abbreviations

---

BERA	British Education Research Association
DfE	Department for Education
ESDA	Ecological Systems Discourse Analysis
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
FDA	Foucauldian Discourse Analysis
ITT/ITE	Initial Teacher Training/Initial Teacher Education
KS	Key Stage
MTPT	Maternity Teacher Paternity Teacher Project
NASUWT	National Association of Schoolmasters and Women Teachers
NUT	National Union of Teachers
NEU	National Education Union
ONS	Office for National Statistics
SAHM	'Stay at home' mother

# 1: Introduction

---

In this thesis, I will describe my doctoral research with five extraordinary teacher-mothers. In this introductory chapter, I will:

- Describe the research aims and questions
- Explore the context of the study
- Share my positionality as researcher and teacher-mother

## 1.1: Research aims and questions

### Research Aims

In this study, I explore how women describe their experiences of being mothers and practitioners and ultimately, what their stories tell us about their lives and the influences upon them. Motherhood and teaching were once seen as compatible (Kell, 2016) but a troubling reflexivity is recognised in being a mother and a teacher (Thomson & Kehily, 2011). This has not been interrogated thoroughly in recent times (Valiquette-Tessier, Vandette & Gosselin, 2016).

I want my research to make a difference to women who identify with the mothers in my formative study and subsequent main study, but as a postmodern feminist, I believe in the 'unique experience of every individual' (Frost & Elichaooff, 2014, p.42). I do not seek to reconstruct 'oppressive views of reality' (Allen & Baber, 1992, p.3), but the research has to mean something, to do something in the world.

## Research questions

### **1. What do the life history stories of teacher mothers suggest about this special circumstance?**

In this chapter (section 1.3) I will explain what is meant by the 'special circumstance' of being a teacher mother, in terms of the roles and what can be generalized across this group of diverse women. Exploring the stories of teacher mothers and their 'special circumstance' of being in a caring role for most, if not all of their waking and sleeping hours (Thomson and Kehily, 2011) in sufficient depth to appreciate the unique story of each woman, required a qualitative approach. Allowing the women to tell their stories in their own ways would not have been possible by quantitative methods (Hammersley, 1992). Taking a postmodern feminist view to uncover the power at play in the stories of teacher mothers, analysis of how the women positioned themselves in the stories was required.

### **2. To what extent does analysis of 'ecological systems' and discourses illuminate the life of a teacher mother?**

My strong feeling from personal experience and the literature in this research area was that to gain the sufficient depth of analysis to do justice to these stories, I needed to look at how the stories women tell relate to their home, work, community and wider social and political lives. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model (1979, 1988, 1995) was used to help organize these worlds.

The analysis of data for this study involved using a new combination of techniques and theories, which I have named 'ecological system discourse analysis' (see section 3.6.iv for a diagram and description). This question required an evaluation of the method of analysis in terms of how useful it was in interpreting teacher mother stories.

**3. What (if any) are the points of coalescence and convergence that groups of teacher mothers may relate to, that could be potential sites of new policy and activism?**

This question relates to how the postmodernist turn towards deconstruction and destabilization of knowledge can be squared with the requirement of activism and action from the feminist research perspective. As discussed in the literature chapter (see 2.6), postmodern feminism allows for the stories of women being considered unique, but does not necessarily rule out the idea that different women's stories could have points of coalescence and convergence at different times and in varied situations (Allen & Baber, 1992, p.13). There could be facets of the 'special situation' that apply to groups of women at different times and in different places, giving opportunities for localised resistance (Jenkins & Finneman, 2018). This question requires that cross-analysis of the participant's stories is possible, to find these points of coalescence and convergence.

This may seem like an obvious point, but in considering the postmodern stance of rejecting grand narratives and homogeneous experience, it may not be necessary to collect stories in similar ways, or even with women living in the same historical period. As Young (1997) points out, in research 'there are constraints on the process leading to justifiable interpretations' (p.503). Young is writing about international comparative research in a postmodern paradigm, and addressing the difficulties of analysis across cultures, but acknowledges that the 'poignancy of misunderstanding, of never

completely understanding, is not something confined to intercultural settings. It is a constant of the human condition' (Young, 1997, p.504).

## 1.2: Context

### 1.2.i: Primary Teachers

A question often asked about my study is why I limited it to primary and EYFS teachers. Issues of workload and well-being, retention and recruitment as highlighted in large-scale survey data are arguably just as severe in secondary and further education (DfE, 2019b, 2019c; NEU, 2019a; NASUWT, 2019). Recent studies looking at secondary mothers and parents would suggest that there are individual issues coming out of qualitative research to be addressed for these teachers, too (Kell, 2017; Smith, 2007, 2011).

Teachers, particularly mothers working with the youngest children in schools have a special set of circumstances affecting their career, which colleagues working in other key stages may not encounter. Page (2013) suggests that for women working with the youngest children in school, there is an extra burden of guilt; providing the love and care that children need to develop in their educational setting is emotionally draining (Page, 2013), and a reminder to the practitioner that they are not fulfilling the enduring socially acceptable role (Orgad, 2016a, 2016b; Wall, 2013) of the stay at home mother. Thirty-three percent of respondents to the British Attitudes Survey said that mothers of young children should be at home (Phillips, Curtice, Phillips & Perry, 2018), suggesting that whilst attitudes are changing to gender roles in parenting, many still view a mother as the main carer and nurturer.

When the burden of care is considered, and the many parallels drawn between having young children of one's own, together with responsibility for the young children of others, I feel there is a strong case for a focus on teachers in the EYFS and primary phases.

### 1.2.ii: Parents or Mothers

With a young family, and despite working part-time, I have come to realise that a job in education is not conducive to family life. (NEU, 2019b, para. 6)

This quote from a teaching union survey response could be from a mother or father, reflecting the quantitative data collected in the same survey when 56% of respondents said that their work-life balance had worsened or become much worse in the last year (NEU, 2019b). My study focuses on mothers who are primary and early years teachers and a common question I am asked when presenting my research is why I have not included fathers.

Currently, 27% of teachers who leave the profession are women between the ages of 30 and 39 (Simons, 2016). Whilst there will be a unique story for each of these women, and the data collected in the 2016 survey is not sufficiently detailed to support the assertion, it seems likely that a major contributing factor is motherhood and caring responsibilities; this is supported by tentative initial results of a national survey by the Maternity Teacher Paternity Teacher Project (MTPT, 2019). Additionally, further studies have shown that 57% of teachers who leave the profession because of a caring responsibility (at any age) do not return to teaching (Simons, 2016) and that male career trajectories are independent of parenthood (Abele and Spurk, 2011).

In England around 133,000 more mothers whose youngest child is a toddler are working full-time (65.1%), compared with 1997 (55.8%) (ONS, 2017). The burden of care tends to fall on mothers in the UK; the responsibility for the majority of the caring work of the family is with women (Gilligan, 2014; Hauver-James, 2010; O'Brien Hallstein & O'Reilly, 2012; O'Connor, 2008; Ross, 2016; Thomson and Kehily, 2011). Women are also much more likely to be 'sandwich carers', with young children and elderly relatives to care for (Carers UK, 2019). Despite a trend suggesting that mother/father childcare is equalising over time, fathers spend a reported 23.47 minutes for every hour of childcare undertaken by mothers in UK homes (Fatherhood Institute, 2016). As Conley and Jenkins (2011) point out, "When the impact on total work-life balance is considered, women with primary care responsibilities suffer a double whammy." (p. 500).

In research on expectation states in recruitment and promotion, fatherhood is often reported as an advantage in terms of career, with employers and colleagues perceiving fathers to be more committed (Correll, Benard & Paik, 2007), reliable and professional (Moreau, Osgood & Halsall, 2005). The perception of motherhood is a significant disadvantage; mother-workers trade perceived competence as non-mothers, for incompetence (Cuddy, Fiske & Glick, 2004). Motherhood may also be a more salient issue than gender, because of the conflict perceived between non-paid care work and paid employment (Berggren and Lauster, 2014). Although work on expectation states is often based on 'professionals' (Young, 2016; Cuddy et al, 2004) rather than a specific career, there is evidence that teaching is affected (Page, 2013). Whilst this area of

research, mainly based in psychology, is not my focus, I feel that it demonstrates how the experiences of teacher-mothers are likely to differ from the experiences of fathers. Sikes (1998) looked at parents rather than mothers, acknowledging that fathers also have different experiences to other men working in schools. However, she did still identify gendered discourses around motherhood and the assumed increase in empathy and caring that a teacher-mother would have for children in their class as an issue; with one head teacher participant reporting that female teachers improve after having children of their own (Sikes, 1998).

### 1.2.iii: The case for a 'special circumstance'

In sections 1.2.i and 1.2.ii, I have argued why primary and early years teaching present a 'special case', as well as why motherhood adds another unique set of challenges to a teaching role, and vice versa. Something I need to address here is what is meant by the 'special circumstance' of teacher-motherhood. In subsequent chapters (2.6, 3.2.i) I will argue for a postmodern approach to the study because the experiences of each woman are different, and women are not a homogenous group (Butler, 1990). How can each woman's experience be unique and changing over time, if it is possible to talk about a special circumstance that applies to all?

In short, I am arguing that postmodern feminism allows for the stories of women being considered unique, but does not necessarily rule out the idea that different women's stories could have points of coalescence and convergence at different times and in varied situations (Allen & Baber, 1992, p.13). If changes can be made to improve life for teacher-mothers, individually or on a wider scale, then these coalescences can be

the sites of activist work and generators of alternative discourses about what it is to be a teacher and a mother.

#### 1.2.iv: My Special Circumstance: Aimee by Aimee



*Figure 1: The moment my headship ambition left my body.*

The special circumstance of the teacher-mother was my life, I was a teacher mother until recently and am now a teacher educator and mother. My own son was born in 2013; a week after my maternity leave began from a full-time early years teaching post, and six months before I began an early years leadership post in another school. My life changed overnight, in that most clichéd and wonderful way – I found myself in such a lucky position of having a healthy baby.

In this section, I will explore my own positionality and explain some of the choices that I made about my research and this thesis in relation to my own circumstances. In the findings chapter (4), my participant's words are shared in the most 'unadulterated' way I could find, followed by my interpretation of their story. This section is called Aimee by Aimee, because of course other people in my life would tell this story in different ways.

First, I have wrestled with the need for objectivity in doctoral writing and I understand why we may need distance and calm reflection on our subject area. However, this subject is my life. To try to write as an observer feels like deception, as in reality I am deeply involved in the issues I raise. Narratives can be used effectively to explore positionality; Pinnegar, Dulude-Lay, Bigham and Delude (2005) described how sharing our stories helps us to “see our teaching and mothering roles in new ways” (p.55). Researchers bring to their investigations all of their experience, beliefs and views and having knowledge of this position in the world can bring benefits and challenges (Bourke, 2014). I hope to reflect on my motives for choosing this area of research, without resorting to a 'navel-gazing' account of my every thought, as some critics have suggested the process of reflexivity can become (Walford, 1998). Whilst some argue that reflexivity is a waste of time, indicative of academic privilege (Patai, 1994), interrogating my own position could be an effective way of legitimising and evaluating the validity of the research (Pillow, 2003).

The following is a brief history of how I got to this point, in terms of my research focus. For each stage of my life that I have described, I have explained why it is relevant to my research and in particular, what influences my positionality has on the research. Shamir and Eilam (2005) make the link between having a life story and a real understanding of self, and the importance in authentic leaders of “the self-relevant meanings the leader attaches to his or her life experiences...” (p.395). I believe considering my own life story and experiences will help to clarify my research.

I was the first member of my family to go to university, coming from a working-class background in the economically depressed east coast town of Grimsby. My childhood and teens in this area, where traditional gender roles were deeply embedded and class was not only a badge of honour but also a set of rules had, of course, a huge impact on my outlook. In analysing research literature and policy documents my first thoughts are generally about gender and class and how these are being reinforced, biased and addressed. A professional career was not the expectation and my family are traditionally tradespeople - my dad still owns a building firm in Grimsby, which his parents established after the Second World War. Knowing where I am from and the kind of community it was and is, explains a lot about my view of the world (Bourke, 2014).

I attended a self-proclaimed 'middle-class' university in the late 1990s to study Philosophy, feeling like an imposter throughout and fantasising about the sort of social engineering project that must be responsible for my academic success.

After graduation and a series of call-centre jobs, I enrolled on the pilot of the Graduate Teacher Programme when I was 25. I did not know anyone who was a teacher, or have any teaching experience, but a housemate had suggested that I apply after hearing me singing in the bath. This gives some indication of the seriousness of the career choice for me at the time! I enjoyed my placement schools and was paid to train; otherwise, it seems unlikely I would have considered teaching. I secured a teaching post in a village school where I stayed for six years, and then another post in an inner-city school, where I taught for 4 years. Throughout this time, I was devoted to my job, managing to maintain a social life but spending many hours in evenings and weekends on school work. I had aspirations of leadership and completed the NCSL Tomorrow's Heads

programme as part of their final cohort. I had a five-year plan for achieving headship, with ambitions to use what I had learnt to improve the lives of children and families.

In 2013, following a late miscarriage the previous year, I got pregnant with my first and only child. My partner and I were excited and terrified at the prospect of being parents and I think I felt a particular pressure on me as an early years teacher; I should know what to do because of my training in child development and experience of behaviour management. I was also afraid of suffering another miscarriage and took self-care much more seriously during the pregnancy. When our baby was born, healthy and of course, beautiful, the sense of relief was enormous but the realisation of just how little we knew about babies and this baby in particular rushed in to take the place of the pre-birth anxieties. Remarkably, my leadership ambitions (particularly in terms of headship) had evaporated as the epidural wore off and the burning desire to lead had subsided to something like a mild sense of it being something I probably ought to do at some point.

After six months of maternity leave, I returned to full-time teaching at the inner city primary, but had already secured an early years leadership post in another school whilst on leave. I was in this new post for two years, working full-time with a team of seven brilliant people. In the evenings and at weekends, I would take over baby care from my exhausted partner and mum; to begin with, breastfeeding through the night and then going to work with children and parents who were going through similar and diverse challenges at home. Towards the end of this period, I began my EdD, which I had wanted to do for many years. After the first assignment (on positionality!) it became clear that I had a choice to make; I could continue with full-time teaching, or

continue with my doctorate; part-time teaching was not an option with a full-time mortgage to pay. I made the shift to teacher education when my son was 3 years old, and am still working in this capacity now that he is six. The flexible nature of the work means that sometimes I can collect my son from school, or drop him off in the morning. Just typing this now makes me realise how much this seemingly small change to daily life meant to me, because as a teacher I would never have managed it. I still suffer from guilt over the times I feel I am not the 'perfect mother'; perhaps partly because we live in a community where many mothers do part-time work, or work in the home. As a feminist, I then feel angry about feeling guilty! Interestingly, I have been promoted to a leadership post quite quickly in my higher education career, with responsibility for a team of 26 and oversight of programmes catering for over 600 students; but this still does not feel as daunting as school, study and motherhood felt, just three years ago.

When I began this research, I was still a full-time primary teacher with a young child, and this certainly had an impact on not only the focus of the project, but also the way it was carried out and how data was analysed. My own experiences and assumptions have at times been helpful, and at others have been challenging and perhaps even discriminatory to groups and individuals who have not been represented because of my own view of the teacher-mother situation. There is a view that research shines "the value free light of truth" (Sikes, 2006, p.110), revealing pure knowledge; but I agree with Sikes here; even if that were possible, there is a responsibility as a researcher not to disadvantage groups or individuals with the outcomes of research, the truth being revealed is not the only consideration. My decision to approach this work from a postmodern perspective reflects the desire to treat every participant and story as

individual, in part to counter the biases I bring to this work from my own history. Many researchers 'chose to research their own cultural, sexualised and racialised communities.' (Pillow, 2003, p.182). It has been argued (Maynard & Purvis, 1994; Briggs, 2000), that a personally motivated study will end in a biased account, with participants used to push an individual's agenda (also Sands & Krumer-Nevo, 2006). However, another perspective on the 'passionate researcher' is that an invested inquirer is determined and dedicated (Braithwaite, Cockwill, O'Neill and Rebane, 2007; Saidin and Jaacob, 2016).

### 1.3: Next Steps

The thesis has been organised so that chapters have coherence with the research design and theoretical framework, using Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model (1979) as a basis for the literature review and synthesis chapters. Conducting the study has been life changing in quite dramatic ways; writing and organising the thesis has also had an impact on me as a researcher in terms of finding a coherent narrative and ways to communicate this to an audience, which is vital to dissemination of the valuable stories I have been trusted with.

Following chapters will cover:

#### Literature review

In chapter 2, structured to reflect Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979) as described in the theoretical underpinning of this study (see section 3.6iii), a review of literature for teacher-motherhood begins with a consideration of the recent history for teacher-mothers. UK education policy is summarised and was used to give context to the life-histories of the participants as part of the early analysis of findings (see

appendix 4). Following this, discourses of teacher mothers are drawn out from the recent literature on teachers in the UK and Europe.

Gaps in the research literature are identified, including a general lack of qualitative research on primary and early years teacher mothers specifically, qualitative research on well-being and workload of teachers more generally and research into how government policy is implemented in primary and early years settings, particularly workforce related policies. In broad terms, much of the literature relates to large-scale surveys of teachers and individual stories are not shared, with some notable exceptions, which focus on specific groups of teacher parents and mothers (Guihen, 2018; Kell, 2016; Page, 2013; Sikes, 1998; Smith, 2007; Thomson and Kehily, 2011).

### Methodology

In Chapter 3, the research design of the study is explained and defended, including the choice to use life-history, unstructured interviews. The formative study is also explored in terms of valuable lessons learnt, which included reflections on design and ethical implications. The fieldwork is described next and fieldwork journal entries are included throughout the chapter. Major ethical considerations are explored (3.5), drawing on the formative study and main study fieldwork. Finally, the process for data analysis is described, explaining how the ecological system discourse analysis model evolved from the formative study analysis process and consultation of literature on Foucauldian discourse analysis.

### Findings

In the findings chapter, an introduction explains the component parts of each participant section, including thumbnail sketches, interview maps and analysis of

individual transcripts. The findings chapter is then broken down by participant, so each teacher-mother has her own section, including unique themes that came out of the discourse analysis of her transcript. For each teacher-mother, sections of the actual transcript were used, with the intention of allowing the participant's voice to be as clear as possible to the reader. Each participant section has a coloured border to help make these sections unique and distinct, as the women themselves are.

### Synthesis

In the synthesis chapter, coalescences in the discourse analysis were teased out of a collective ESDA model and then discussed. This ran the risk of some repetition from the individual discourse analysis in the individual findings sections, but it was felt that the unique nature of participants was important to preserve in the findings chapter. The identified and selected discourses in this chapter are again organised as an ecological system, working out from the Individual to the macrosystem, and participant positions towards these discourses are explored; there are varied interpretations and orientations to the discourses. Discourses chosen to appear in this chapter are: the guilt of the good enough mother, the strange situation of school leadership, part-time work as a panacea and normalising overwork. Overarching systemic issues are discussed; education system performativity and accountability and gender expectations. I have also included a section representing the Individual in Bronfenbrenner's model, using Aliyah's story to highlight how intersectionality is vital to bring into the collective analysis and discussion.

## Conclusion

In the conclusion, sections cover: answers to the research questions, significance and implications of the study, contributions to knowledge, limitations and recommendations for future research.

## 2: Literature Review

---

### 2.1: Aims and Approach of the Literature Review

My objectives for this literature review were:

1. To develop a sense of where my research fits in the current literature in the field and justify the need for this inquiry
2. To identify gaps in the current literature
3. To explain the theoretical underpinnings of the study

The literature review process was a narrative review (Cronin, Ryan and Coughlan, 2008). Searches were carried out using keywords, then using citation searches to find further work in the field (see appendix 3 for details of search terms and key sources). In this review, I have deliberately avoided using the meta-analysis technique, for two reasons. Firstly, the number of research papers and articles that focus on my topic are few (see appendices 2 & 3), and a meta-analysis would require a number of highly relevant studies, with varied methods (Stanley, 2001). Secondly, a narrative review can make an equally valuable contribution to knowledge (Green, Johnson & Adams, 2006).

There is a tension throughout this literature review, because whilst the theoretical underpinnings of the study (see section 2.6) are interpretivist, supporting data that is wholly qualitative in nature, much of the literature discussed here is quantitative or mixed-methods. This is partly because much of the data generated by key stakeholders in education for England and Wales (e.g. the Department for Education, the National Education Union) produce large-scale, quantitative data on teacher recruitment, retention and well-being. This data is useful to gaining the bigger picture about teachers, and helps to justify the focus for the study on female primary and early years

educators. Also, part of the rationale and motivator for this study was to explore the stories that are hidden within that large-scale data.

The literature review has been structured to reflect the ecological systems theorised by Bronfenbrenner (1979) in his theoretical model for exploring the lives and understanding of young children; further explanation of this theory and its relevance to this study can be found in Section 3.6.iii and iv.

## 2.2: Chronosystem – recent history of teacher motherhood

### 2.2.i: From a Marriage Bar to a Motherhood Bar

In the UK over the past 20 years, mothers as a demographic group have experienced the largest increase in employment rates. There were 4.9 million mothers in employment in April to June 2018, which equates to 74% of all mothers. In comparison, 3.7 million mothers were in employment in 1996, which was 61.9% of mothers (ONS, 2018). With many more women entering the workforce, teaching has generally been considered a ‘woman friendly’ career choice. The equal opportunities policies of local authorities, strong union presence and shared school holidays for parents and their children are often cited. Historically, teaching has been ahead of other professions when equal rights and women’s rights are considered. For example, the ‘marriage bar’, preventing married women from working was lifted for teachers in 1944 in the UK, 15 years before the marriage bar was lifted for the civil service (Conley and Jenkins, 2011). Equal pay for female teachers was granted in 1953, long before the Equal Pay Act of 1970. As previously discussed, the profession is predominantly female, and in Early Years and Primary, the majority of head teachers are also female (McNamara, Howson, Gunter & Fryers, 2010), so it could be argued that it is a career

with good prospects for ambitious women. The unions have been heavily involved with the shaping of teacher's pay and conditions (as they currently stand in Local Authority schools) and the 'Burgundy Book' of standards enshrines the rights of pregnant teachers and those on maternity leave (Local Government Association, 2016).

However, a growing number of theorists are pointing out that teaching is no longer a good career choice for women (Blackmore, 2005, McNamara et al., 2010) and that women may find themselves 'trapped and constrained, both in their professional practice and in terms of their career development' (Sikes, 1998, p.88). Others have pointed to substantial motherhood penalties in many public sector professions (Berggren and Lauster, 2014). It seems that the marriage bar of the early 20th century may have been replaced by a motherhood bar in the early 21st.

#### 2.2.ii: 'Mum's Army' –professionalisation and neoliberalism

There have been trends in education policy, particularly over the last thirty years, which have affected women in teaching, as well as the profession as a whole. These factors have made balancing a career and a family increasingly challenging. Here the literature on neoliberalism and professionalisation in education over the last thirty years is considered, which has changed the experience of teaching during the careers of all of my participants.

Whilst a definition of neoliberalism has been contested and different interpretations are explored in the literature (Hall and Pulsford, 2019) it encompasses ideas of marketisation and the ultimate concern for the success of the market over the individual. Reforms such as parental right to choose a school, academisation, performance-based pay for teachers, use of assessment data to control curricula and teaching style, plus the view that education is purely a means to building a useful workforce are all examples of neoliberalism in the education system (Ball, 2008; Hall and Pulsford, 2019). What is not generally disputed is that neoliberalism and managerialism in education have done damage in varying levels and ways to different parts of the education sector (Piper and Sikes, 2015; Rudd and Goodson, 2017).

The managerialisation of education is evident in the Education Reform Act (1988) which created a huge workload for teachers (Burgess, 2008) as the pressures of being accountable for pupil progress caused a tidal wave of paperwork. This is representative of neo-liberalist policies, which shift responsibility to the individual and are enforced by the state. Competition has increased between schools, directly influenced by the publication of league tables which were introduced in the act. Parents were given new powers of choice and new measures to help them choose. Choice is part of marketization – or at least, the appearance of choice. The profession went from a collective, working in cooperation with the state pre-1970s, to being portrayed in an increasingly negative light in the 1990s (Bates, Lewis & Pickard, 2011).

It has long been argued that teaching is being de-professionalised over time (Frostenson, 2015). To give a particularly notorious example, in 1993 John Patten,

Secretary of State for Education at the time, suggested a controversial change to teaching. He put forward a plan and subsequently an unsuccessful blue paper (DfE, 1993 a,b) for a one year course of study to be introduced, for non-graduate, more mature candidates, who would be then placed in infant classrooms as teachers. This plan was referred to as the 'mum's army' as Patten felt that the experience of motherhood would be valuable in teaching young children. Parenthood can bring a sense of deepened understanding of the teacher role (Page, 2013), but it has been argued that the underlying driver was to deskill the teaching of infant classes, making these posts much cheaper and easier to fill, and reducing school budgets. Women were nurturing, maternal and cheap (Blackmore, 1999). Removing the need for higher-level qualifications would potentially drive down salaries and makes schools more cost effective to run; it also perhaps leads to a more compliant workforce.

However, there is a problem with such views of teaching as constantly being de-professionalised (Frostenson, 2015) and the reality is theorised as much more complex than policy driving down teacher professional status in an effort to save money. The neoliberal model of education brings about a culture of professionalisation; the mission to enhance the interests of a group – in this case, teachers (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996) for example, by introducing statutory standards and performance measures and rigorous standardised training frameworks, such as the Core Content Framework for ITT (DfE, 2019e). Teachers and teacher educators themselves have reported this project of professionalisation as diminishing and undermining the very 'concepts of professionalism to which they adhered' (Hall and Schulz, 2003, p.370).

Certainly, expectations are that individual teachers must be supremely professional and some argue that this has made the business of being a teacher less authentic (Dillabough, 1999) and that well-being and teacher identity are impacted by increased professionalisation (Skinner, Leavey & Rothi, 2019). Research suggests (Hutchings, 2015) that increased accountability, as part of a move towards increased professionalisation, has a 'substantial impact on teachers' (p.5) and teachers report a negative effect on their relationships with children. For a returning mother on maternity leave, or parents attempting to juggle work, home and childcare, the idea of getting back onto or maintaining a pace on the standards treadmill may be a particularly daunting prospect.

### 2.2.iii: The Teacher Well-being Crisis

With 18% of teachers reporting their intent to leave in the next two years and 40% of teachers expressing their intent to leave within the next five years (National Education Union, 2019b), retention of the teaching workforce is a priority for the UK and other nations (Geiger and Pivovarova, 2018). Many teachers who do leave cite the intensification and extensification of teacher workload, the stressful nature of the profession, poor work life balance and prioritising caring commitments within their family as the main reasons for leaving (Worth & Van den Brande, 2019; NEU, 2019a, 2019b).

Teacher well-being and workload issues have also been linked to mental health problems (DfE, 2017; Education Support Partnership, 2017). In a study commissioned by the Department for Education, over half of teachers surveyed said had considered

leaving in past two years due to pressures on health and 45% felt did not achieve the right balance between home and work lives (DfE, 2017b). Two years later, after a high profile workload reduction initiative had been launched by the DfE (DfE, 2018c; Green, 2017, 2018), two fifths of respondents to a teaching union survey said they would no longer be working in education by 2024, and one fifth of respondents said they would be gone within two years (NEU, 2019). Although the link between pay and job satisfaction has not been consistently reflected in the statistics, 48% of teachers surveyed reported not having received their entitlement to an annual pay progression (NASUWT, 2019) and 73% of surveyed teachers said they would not recommend teaching as a career.

A discourse of teachers taking ownership of their well-being to thrive, rather than survive, persists (Margolis, Hodge & Alexandrou, 2014). There seems little appetite at present, or in recent decades, to tackle systemic and cultural issues affecting well-being in the sector (Naylor, 2001; Perryman and Calvert, 2019). Research on what *may promote* teacher well-being is particularly scarce (Roffey, 2012), and what research exists has tended to focus on individuals and their survival characteristics (Margolis et al., 2014). This leads to questions about whether policies which ‘promote individual resilience’ (Margolis et al., 2014, p.223) in an education system where burnout and poor mental health are relatively common (Rumschlag, 2017; Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2010) are ethical. This is pertinent to the situation of teacher-mothers, who are already tasked with ownership of the well-being of family members and children, as well as pupils in their class. Their opportunities for taking ownership of their own well-

being may be scarce or non-existent. Who cares for the carers – the expectation may be that they care for themselves.

## 2.3: Macrosystem - Discourses in Society and Media

### Expectations of Teachers and Performativity

With the vast majority putting in endless hours to achieve ever-harder targets, there is a greater certainty of burn-out than reward. The current mismatch between teachers' aspirations, interests, strengths and knowledge and the job they are expected to do is so demotivating that it leads to an annual exodus.(Williams, 2017, para 4.)

Quantitative research is showing a trend for teachers to work very long hours (NASUWT, 2019; NEU, 2019b; Richardson, Goodman, Flight & Richards, 2018; Sellen, 2016; Hardy, 2016) and that teachers are risking 'burn out' (Sellen, 2016).

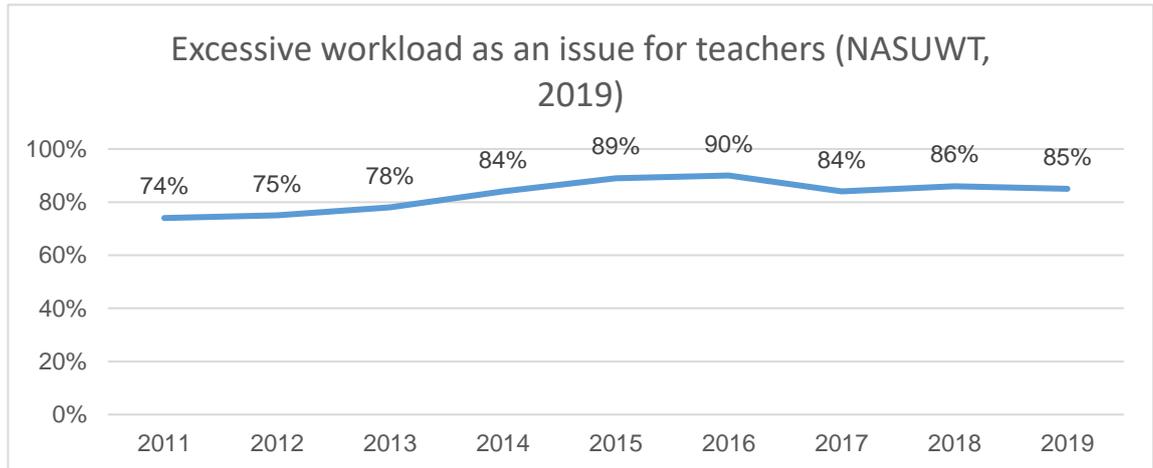
Government policies from the 1990s onwards (e.g. DfES, 1998; DfES, 2003; DfES, 2005) have changed the educational landscape (Faulkner and Coates, 2013; Burgess, 2008) and made the teacher role broader in terms of what tasks it encompasses. Over the same period, responsibility has been devolved to individuals and schools; unsurprisingly, accountability and performativity of workload are cited as unexpected issues for new teachers (Perryman and Calvert, 2019).

Performativity at work is different to Butler's gender performativity (1999) as discussed in section 2.6, although they have their roots in the same theory, posited by Lyotard in 1984. Performativity in education, as in other systems, prizes efficiency over all other considerations. It is 'data rich, numbers-driven and results-oriented' (Guihen, 2018, p.48).

Whilst performativity relies on data as evidence of efficiency, it also bring with it a need for surveillance, inspection and regular assessment of progress. It requires 'individual practitioners to organize themselves as a response to targets, indicators and evaluations. To set aside personal beliefs and commitments and live an existence of calculation' (Ball, 2003, p.215). Performativity in education has resulted in the role of the teacher becoming a confusing site of conflict between two outcomes; 'an increasing individualization, including the destruction of solidarities based upon a common professional identity and Trade Union affiliation, as against the construction of new forms of institutional affiliation and 'community', based upon corporate culture' (Ball, 2003, p.219).

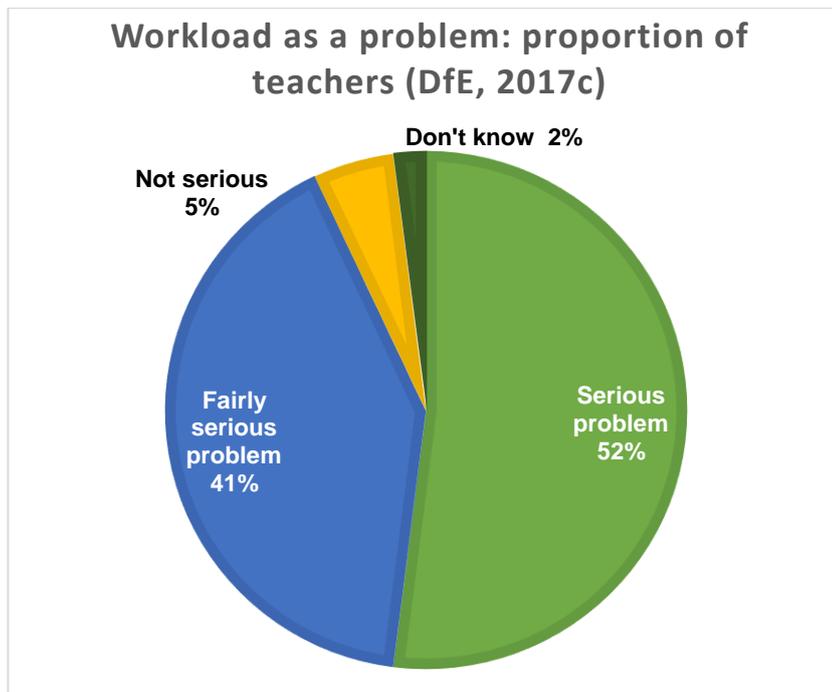
Performativity can be seen in the increasing workloads of teachers, although government policy and advisory guidance have been made to reduce specific aspects of workload, such as planning and assessment (DfE, 2018c). Despite initiatives to mitigate the widening role of the teacher, such as the Pathfinder project that identified tasks that teachers should not be expected to carry out (Butt and Lance, 2005; Wood, 2019), teachers are still reporting long hours and unreasonable expectations (NASUWT, 2019; NEU, 2019a, 2019b). Despite an excessive workload, teachers are willing to 'contribute far more than what might be deemed reasonable' (Wood, 2019, p.86). Teachers consistently report workload as a significant issue, see graph (figure 2)

which charts this issue from 2011 (NASUWT, 2019).



*Figure 2: Workload as an issue (NASUWT, 2019)*

Following the Teacher Workload Survey in 2016 (DfE, 2017c) when 93% of teachers responded that workload was a problem, the DfE have issued guidance on workload reduction to schools, teacher training providers and teachers (DfE, 2014; 2018c; 2018a) acknowledging that workload is a growing issue for recruitment and retention of teachers. In a review of the guidance issued in 2014 and 2017, carried out with school leaders, nearly half (47 per cent) of all respondents said they had not used any of the listed methods for reducing workload, and of those who had implemented the methods suggested, more than half (57 per cent) said that it had no impact on the hours they worked.



Participant number: 3,186

*Figure 3: Workload as a problem (DfE, 2017c)*

In the 2019 workload survey (DfE, 2019c), the impact of the workload reduction scheme was reported to have increased positively, with more school senior leaders reporting use of the strategies, and more teachers reporting a reduction in hours worked per week and hours spent working outside school (DfE, 2019b, 2019c).

Recommendations of Green (2017, 2018) and others about reducing assessment and planning activities had been taken on board by many schools, colleges and teacher training providers, reflecting the DfE call for everyone working in education to take responsibility for reducing teacher workload (DfE, 2018c), with some involved in the workload reforms stating that teacher workload is not just a problem to be tackled by government (Green, 2018). This throws the responsibility for changes to normalisation of overwork and undermining of well-being back to individual teachers and school leaders, rather than addressing issues in the system (Margolis et al., 2014).

As some have pointed out, considerations of 'clock time' alone as a measure of reducing workload are not satisfactory (Wood, 2019); it is the 'nature rather than quantity of workload' that is important (Perryman and Calvert, 2019, p.3).

Intensification of teacher work means that teachers are doubling up on workload (for example, marking books during their lunch break) and reductions to onerous marking, planning and data policies may just result in teachers spending the time on other tasks (Wood, 2019). How teachers can be expected to shift the expectations of their role without government intervention is difficult to imagine;

no amount of tinkering with toolkits can solve a problem with roots in an education system with unhealthy levels of accountability, high-stakes testing and stress, without addressing the more fundamental causes of high workload. (NEU, 2019a, para. 1)

Although teacher workload has become a popular focus for research in education of late (for example, Perryman and Calvert, 2019; Wood, 2019), more detailed, qualitative research on how overwork becomes normalised and accepted is scarce and particularly for specific sectors of education. The literature on gender differences in paid and unpaid workload also tend to be large-scale quantitative studies, which signpost that women are still working longer and with a greater proportion of unpaid work (Craig, 2006; DfE, 2016a, 2019b; Hauver-James, 2010; O'Brien Hallstein et al., 2012; Thomson and Kehily, 2011).

The gap in the literature for this area is the detailed exploration of how this normalisation persists, together with the specific elements of workload that fall upon working mothers, and perhaps teacher-mothers, particularly. There is also a gap in

how performativity and the normalisation of overwork impacts on those who can no longer dedicate hundreds of unpaid hours per year on teaching workload, and what effects this may have on their confidence in their efficacy as a professional.

## 2.4: Exosystem – Government Policy

Nicky Morgan, Justine Greening and the New Teaching Mum

Whilst government policy in recent decades has supported women in joining, returning to the workplace, taking maternity leave (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2010) and accessing flexible working (DfE, 2019a); issues remain in recruiting and retaining teachers and successive education secretaries have attempted to address this.

Nicky Morgan (2015) and Justine Greening (2017) unveiled policy pledges to support women teachers, particularly with part-time and flexible working, which have been described as key elements in retaining women teachers. Greening points out:

Progress on more flexible working is great for schools who can keep their valued teachers and great for teachers who can stay in the profession. This is already happening in many other sectors – it's vital we ensure it is happening in our schools too so we continue to attract the best and brightest into teaching. And, given this disproportionality affects women, it's a smart way to help close the gender pay gap. (Greening, 2017, para. 5)

In terms of global education priorities, the gender pay gap and power gap in the UK is a concern and the leadership of schools do not reflect the diversity of the workforce.

Potentially, the professionals who work in teaching are not represented by the people who have political power and influence. Morgan and Greening sought to reduce this gap by providing support for flexible working and networks of women advocates. This intention has been met with some criticism – Patel (2016) dismissed the

announcement as “inappropriate and patronising” in the face of wave after wave of new government policy and initiatives which continue to drive a long hours culture in education.

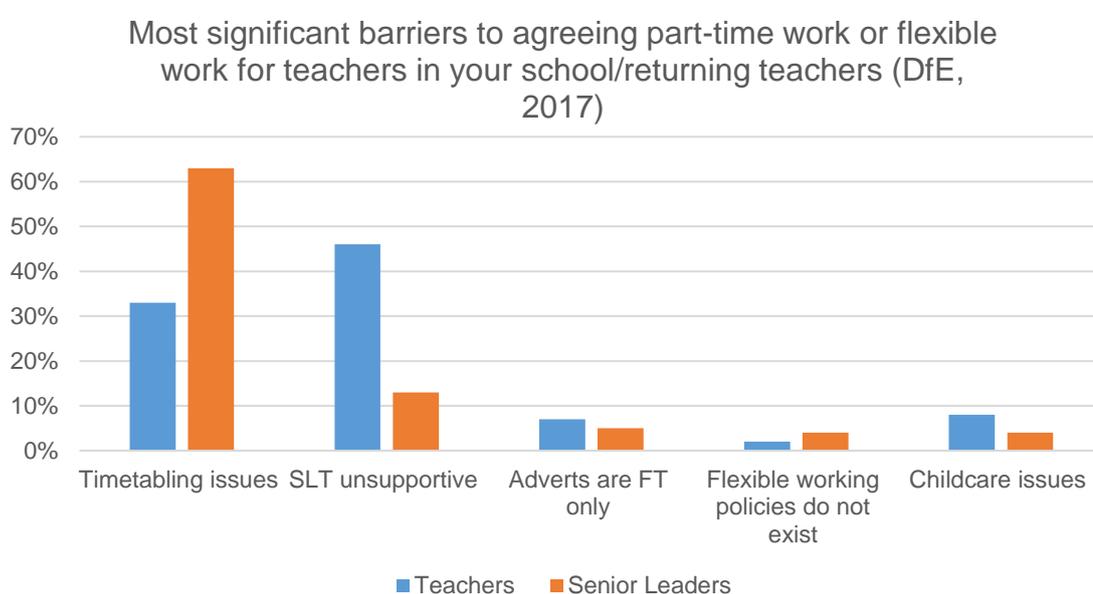
Pledges made by Greening in 2017 built on those made by Morgan (2015) and included:

- a pilot programme to look at how schools are already supporting part-time teachers and to share ‘best-practice’.
- a pilot to reinforce Women Leading in Education coaching
- updates to existing guidance on flexible working.

Women Leading in Education was unveiled by Morgan in 2015, and amounts to women leaders in schools managing, providing and arranging mentoring for others with no additional support from government in terms of time or resources. One head teacher mentor commented that the DfE were ‘not interested in being involved in the operations and logistics, just in the tokenistic tick-box exercise of doing something for equality’ (Wilson, 2016). The government failed to hit the target of 1000 mentors paired with 1000 mentees in 2018 (Robertson, 2018) and in recent years the scheme appears to have been superseded by organisations such as WomenEd who offer leadership mentoring.

Despite government policy requiring that employers consider requests fairly and in accordance with the ACAS Code of Practice on Handling in a Reasonable Manner Request to Work Flexibly (ACAS, 2014), these requests do not need to be granted, and the criteria for turning down such requests cover a multitude of reasons, such as part time work not being compatible with the institution. Updated guidance on flexible and part-time working in schools (DfE, 2016b, 2017a) suggests that flexible working is not

working for many teachers, as school leaders are not offering flexible roles due to increased costs, timetabling issues and parental expectations. In a nationwide survey, a third of teachers who had requested flexible working had been refused (NASUWT, 2017) and this disproportionately affects women, with 90% of flexible working requests coming from female staff (NASUWT, 2017). The DfE frame these issues as 'perceptions' which they are working to change (DfE, 2017a). Twenty-five percent of requests for flexible working cited childcare specifically as a reason for reducing hours, and 75% included reasons of age, health and work/life balance (NASUWT, 2017).



Participant number: 1955

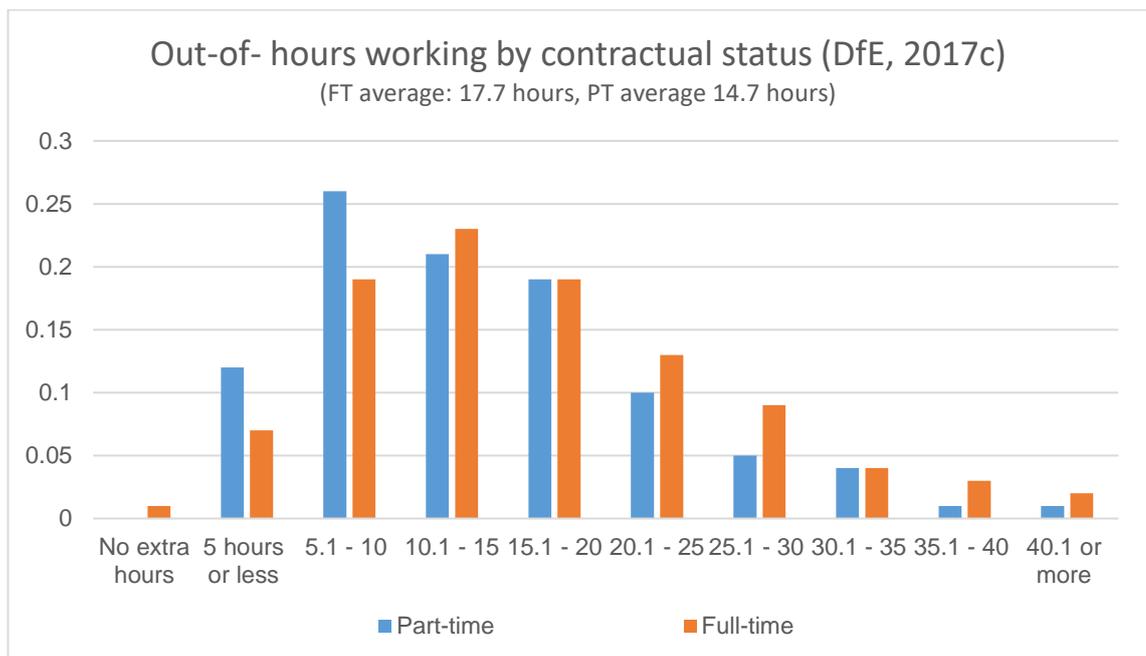
*Figure 4: Barriers to part-time work (DfE, 2017b)*

Flexible working can also be a barrier to career and promotion, as leadership posts are rarely advertised as flexible (DfE, 2017a). Part time work also comes at a price for many teachers, as 'part time' can sometimes denote financial recompense, rather than hours, with teachers reporting that for a cut in pay, the only benefit is that they have got time to catch up with school work on their 'days off' (DfE, 2018a; The Secret

Teacher, 2016). In research commissioned by the National Union of Teachers (Galton, MacBeath, Page & Steward, 2002) many women were choosing to return to teaching after maternity leave only if they could have part time hours, which they frame as being an improvement for women in schools. They note that some women were not seeking flexible working due to the impact on their future career. Conley and Jenkins (2011) point out that head teachers do not value part time workers, and they now have increasing powers to discriminate against them.

There is a lack of literature exploring how government policy, particularly policies affecting teacher mothers, such as part-time teaching are implemented and experienced in schools (Brown, 2019). The expectations around overwork and long hours, combined with motherhood and requests for a reduction in hours may complicate the employer/employee relationship and influence how employers view mothers in their staff team (Dick, 2010). Union and DfE surveys suggest that there are issues in how policies are disseminated, implemented and discussed in schools (DfE, 2019c, 2019d; NASUWT, 2019; NEU, 2019b).

For teachers who do manage to secure a part-time contract, workload may not change significantly. In the Department for Education workload survey in 2016, very little difference was reported between part-time and full-time teachers in terms of hours spent outside school on their work (for example, working at home in evenings, weekends and holidays) (DfE, 2017c). Although time spent outside school on work had dropped slightly in the 2019 workload survey (DfE, 2019c), part-time teachers still reported working an average week of 39.8 hours.



Participant number: 3,186

*Figure 5: Out of hours working (DfE, 2017c)*

Managing part-time teachers was reported as creating additional workload by senior leaders (DfE, 2018a) but also reported as enabling them to retain talented staff. In the same survey (DfE, 2018a), teachers and senior leaders were asked to identify their own strategies for managing workload (despite the average working week for this group being 18 hours beyond contracted hours). All part-time teachers that were surveyed reported having reduced their hours specifically to manage workload, and that they used their non-contracted weekdays as additional time to do school work.

In research by O’Brien (2018), participants described their part-time teacher status as an experience of choosing between family life and their teaching career. One participant, ‘Karen’, was frustrated with her partner’s assumption that part-time work

meant that Karen should be full-time carer of their children, and that his career is more important. Part-time participants in the study reported being perceived differently to full-time teachers and receiving different treatment in terms of professional development (O'Brien, 2018). O'Brien makes an important and relatively unheard argument about part-time teaching, particularly for mothers; in that she asserts that it is crucial to 'avoid subscribing to the doxa that mothers should work part-time' (O'Brien, 2018, p.147). Referencing Smith (2016) she discusses the issue of disempowering teacher mothers by reinforcing the expectation that mothers should find ways to 'have it all', and that supporting flexible and part-time working means that teacher mothers just have to find ways to cope rather than thriving at work.

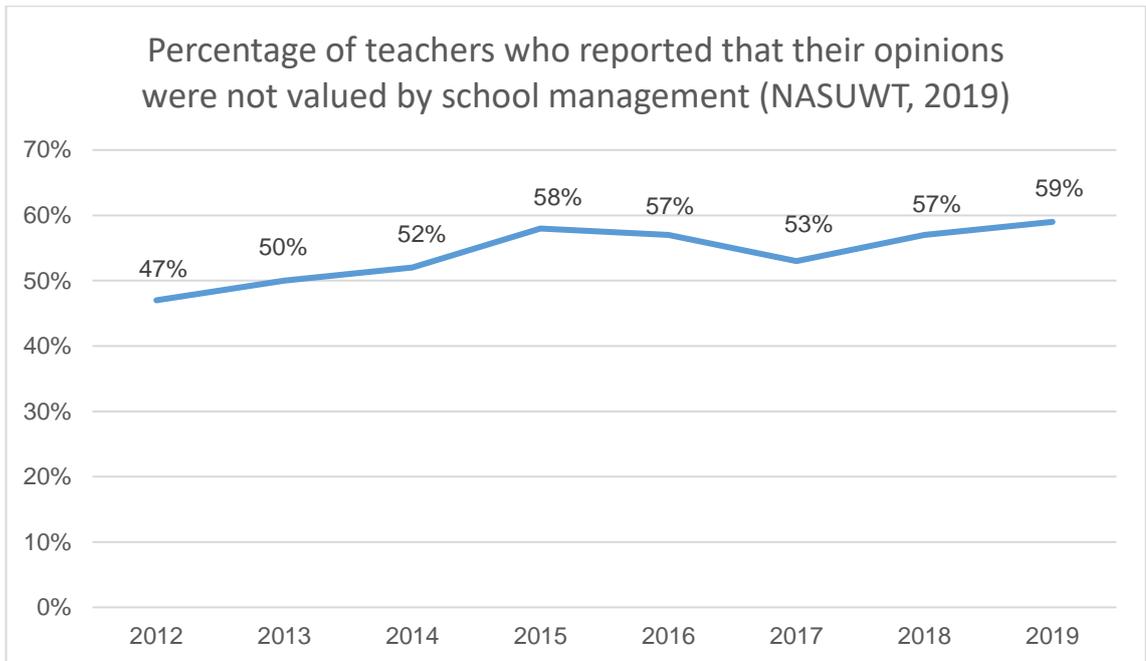
The assumption is still that the mother will care for children as well as staying afloat at work, whilst there is no such assumption around fathers and support through flexible working. This constitutes a gap in the literature, as the policy direction of recent years selects part-time and flexible working as a 'cure all' for women and parents in teaching, but does not consider the de-professionalising discourses around part-time posts, or seek to challenge the system that perpetuates this discourse.

### [School Leadership](#)

Much of the literature considered so far in terms of expectations of teachers (section 2.3), government policy to support working mothers (2.4) and issues of teacher well-being (2.3.iii) has hinted at challenges in how policies are interpreted in schools and 'translated' for teachers (Foucault, 1988; Ball, Maguire, Braun & Hoskins, 2011).

Translators are the people who communicate wider policy (such as Department for Education briefings, new codes, new frameworks) to a local community, for example, a single school team (Ball et al., 2011). Teachers themselves are also translators of national policy, as they work out what these policies mean for their practice. School leaders are perceived as problematic for teacher-mothers and others who seek flexible and part-time working. In a DfE report (2018a) just over half of teachers felt workload pressures were driven by Senior Leadership Team expectations and teachers recognised that this was often driven by external forces, such as Ofsted. Teachers reported 'mixed messages' in terms of their understanding of external requirements and that of their senior leaders, perhaps suggesting that the translation of these policies was designed to affect certain behaviours and conduct that was not intended in the original. Disconnections between school-based and wider political policies have been reported elsewhere, and particularly in relation to part-time work, and 'a lack of transparency in procedure and policy in school contributed to this disconnection' (Brown, 2019, p.1).

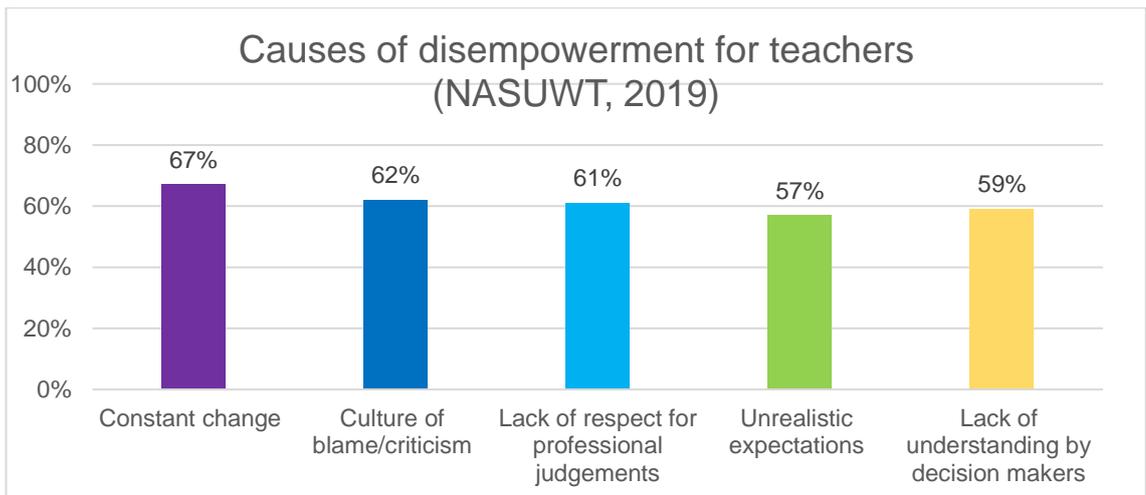
Whilst anecdotally many school leaders and leadership teams are supportive and approachable people, who value their staff, the percentage of teachers who reported their opinions not being valued in a teaching union survey stand at 59% (NASUWT, 2019). In figure 6 you can see how this trend has developed over the last ten years.



Participant number: 5,500

*Figure 6: Teacher perceptions of value by management (NASUWT, 2019).*

In the same survey, teachers reported causes for this perceived disempowerment, including a culture of blame, lack of respect for their judgments, unrealistic expectations and lack of understanding from decision makers (see figure 7).



Participant number: 5,500

*Figure 7: Reported causes of disempowerment (NASUWT, 2019).*

The literature around school leadership is vast and there are thousands of articles and books on leadership styles, impact, structure and outcomes (Gumus, Bellibas, Esen & Gumus, 2018). However, as with other areas of education research explored here, there is a gap to be filled in terms of how school leaders can become ‘invisible power’ in a school, and what their impact on teacher-mothers on their staff team is. Whilst survey data suggests that teachers do not feel respected or listened to by the leadership of the school in many instances, and a culture of blame is a major reason that teachers cite for their feelings of disempowerment (NASUWT, 2019), research on individual teacher’s responses to leadership decisions is scant in recent years, and research on specific groups (such as teacher-mothers and leadership) is almost non-existent.

## 2.5: Microsystem & Mesosystem – School and Home

### Teacher Motherhood: Second, third, fourth shift?

In the immediacy of our close family and home (the microsystem in Bronfenbrenner’s 1979 model), the ‘second shift’ of work is performed (Hochschild and Machung, 2003), interacting with other aspects of the microsystem, such as school, workplaces and close community. The second shift describes the experience of a working woman, completing her first shift in her paid employment, then coming home to begin her ‘second shift’ of unpaid childcare and housework. It has alternative names, such as the double workload (Adkins, 2002), the ‘motherload’ (O’Brien Hallstein and O’Reilly, 2012), and the ‘third shift’ (Blackmore, 1999) when the extra work of other unpaid care is also taken into account. Clearly, this is not the experience of all working women and Hochschild and Machung describe some of their participants as having equality

with their partner in childcare and housework, or alternative provision (such as cleaning and childcare staff).

Guihen's doctoral study (2018) collected the experiences of twelve women deputy headteachers. Seven of the deputy heads that Guihen interviewed were mothers and they all shared their experiences of needing to 'consciously strike a balance between the multiple and competing responsibilities of motherhood, and an upward career path in education' (p.153). In Guihen's findings, themes of managing constraint, motivating forces and perceptions of the future and headship were identified. Guihen discusses the differentiated roles for men and women in the family and the expectation that women will 'take responsibility for unpaid (and often undervalued) care within the home, regardless of work commitments or personal preference, and that men will adopt the role of the breadwinner who works within a full – time, uninterrupted and hierarchical model of employment' (Guihen, 2018, p.25).

Whilst all the mothers in the study discussed motherhood as a factor in their career, how they negotiated and tackled the demands of their parental and work status varied (Guihen, 2018). Some were sharing childcare and household tasks with partners, or had a partner who was doing the majority of the childcare during working hours; some were trying to do the majority of the paid and unpaid work of the family. Given Guihen's sample of just deputy headteachers, it seems likely that these women are amongst the most career ambitious in the schools where they work, and/or are seen as the most capable. How other families balance paid and unpaid work, where the mother is not the main wage-earner, may be less fair.

In a longitudinal study by Aveling (2002) young, highly educated women were interviewed at the beginning of their careers and ten years later. Despite believing that 'battles had been fought and won' (p.266) for gender equality, and their lives would be unaffected by gender differences, ten years later, many of these women were living with similar life patterns as their mothers and grandmothers had experienced. In broader studies with women from varied age groups, mothers often surrender the activities they enjoy or would benefit from to care for home and children (Horne & Breitzkreuz, 2016).

Murphy and Cloutier-Fisher (2002) dispute the idea that young graduate women really believe they can 'have it all' – merely that the ideology of the working mother is perpetuated, but no one believes it is possible. Many of the women who had become mothers in Aveling's study (2002) had put their careers 'on hold', with their partner's career becoming the priority career in the household, both in terms of salary and for decision-making (for example, when a geographical move was considered). The same effect was seen in quantitative data on women and career progression (McNamara et al., 2010) where participants were asked whether their career took precedence in the household. 42% of male teachers but only 28% of female teachers said that their careers took precedence.

In a doctoral research project, Kell (2016) focused on parents, and her participants represented the gender proportions of the teaching workforce. Her focus was on secondary education and used a mixed methods approach, focus groups,

questionnaires and 'netnography'- an analysis of blogs and online teacher forums. Kell's participant group ranged from five in a focus group, to over a thousand in the questionnaire group, with participants from across the UK and different sectors of education. Kell set out to find what influence parenthood has on teacher identity, effectiveness and well-being, as well as career aspirations. Her findings and conclusions were broadly positive – despite many teachers in her focus groups reporting feelings of guilt and stress about home and work at high levels. 71% of participants reported regular feelings of guilt about their home-life and 63% reported regularly feeling overwhelmed by their work/life balance. In her conclusion, the gender divide for her participants is clear and in her recommendations she points out that mothers are 'an area in need of urgent consideration' (p.164) and that future research could explore feminist perspectives on teacher parenting.

Kell's research highlights feeling of guilt among teacher parents, and she goes on to assert that teachers can be their own worst enemies and that often the pressure to work harder and longer are from within, rather than from the outer spheres of the ecological systems model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The idea of 'own worst enemy' is at odds with many theorists and researchers (Blackmore, 1999; Ross, 2000; Troman and Woods, 2000). Moreau et al. (2005) suggest that teachers' lives are now controlled by headteachers and governors, who may not have the same priorities, which means that they have little control over the factors that may be making them feel guilty.

A view of this 'own worst enemy' argument from comes from Troman and Wood's (2000) study of primary teachers who had taken a career break due to stress related

illness; they concluded that the psychological and physical demands of the job meant that teaching could not be considered a lifelong profession. Bailey (2000) chimes with Kell's (2016) suspicion that teachers may be partially to blame for the pressure they are under; she claims that mothers question almost every aspect of what they do, comparing themselves to a construct of the ideal mother-educator. There may be an element of teacher-parents being overly harsh with their 'gaze' as they assess their own performance against the normative rules, but these rules are not constructed by the teacher-parents, as Bates et al (2011) assert.

Intensive mothering is often discussed as part of the debate around the second shift (Wall, 2013; Ross, 2016; Graybill-Ellis, 2014). Hays (1996) suggests that one of the current prevalent discourses of motherhood is complete devotion and self-sacrifice. When combined with expectations of EYFS (Early Years and Foundation Stage) and primary schoolteachers (Page, 2011, 2013; Conley and Jenkins, 2011), which replicate the 'teacher as mother made conscious' role (Steedman, 1985), the intensity of the care burden can cause physical and emotional drain (Lynch, 2008). As Steedman, Urwin and Walkerdine (1987) put it, 'teachers and mothers were called upon to develop a quality of attentive watchfulness that rested upon an intense empathy with the child' (p.235). Thomson and Kehily (2011) interviewed three mothers who had returned to teaching when their children were still young, and found that there were stressful interplays between personal experience and professional practice – these teacher-mothers had expert knowledge on how children develop, which added pressure to their choices about their own children. They found that teacher-mothers were finding the classroom a 'suffocating prisonhouse' (Thomson and Kehily, 2011,

p.235, see also Steedman, 1985 who uses the same analogy), a place where demands of their emotional energy were made upon them.

Media coverage of mothers who undertake paid work conforms to a construction of the working mother (Page, 2013; Orgad, 2016; Wall, 2013). Research undertaken by Wall (2013) analysed articles on childcare in a leading Canadian parenting magazine. She found that employment for mothers was an expectation in recent years, and acknowledgement that women can't 'have it all' – articles about working mothers were underpinned by a sense of the 'good enough mother' (Winnicott, 1953). Children were described as needy and dependent, which Wall suggests is a side effect of neoliberal pressures towards self-responsibility and intensive mothering. Research suggests that teacher-mothers, in particular, construct images of what they perceive to be the expectations of society (Knowles, Nieuwenhuis & Smit, 2009).

Conversely, Orgad's research (2016b) has shown that in recent portrayals of middle-class stay at home mothers (SAHMs) in media coverage, only 18% framed these women as being negatively impacted; articles focussed on women's choices to leave work and the freedom they now enjoy. Orgad (2016a, 2016b) concludes that the representations of the media did not tally with the experiences of stay at home motherhood, suggesting that the disconnect between representation and mother's experiences may be silencing them. A Foucauldian interpretation links this with the idea of the socially constructed discourse on motherhood, being drawn upon to create the 'norm' of mothering behaviours – here the media could be considered creating knowledge about what good mothers do (Budds, Locke & Burr, 2013; Litosseliti, 2006).

The print and TV media seem to have no such agenda when it comes to the portrayal of fathers (Kuo and Ward, 2016; Wadsworth, 2015 and Evans, 2015) with father figures on television, (Kuo and Ward, 2016), print (Evans, 2015) and in family films (Wadsworth, 2015). In Kuo and Ward's study of 201 men and women in the United States, they concluded that TV content reinforced traditional gendered family role beliefs about mothers being more important to child development. Evans (2015) and Wadsworth (2015) found that fathers are portrayed more positively now than in the previous decade, with Evans concluding that the current trend in print media is towards the 'active dad'; leading his children in physical, fun activities. I carried out my own content analysis of Google news alerts to find out how the news media in the UK were reporting issues around maternity and motherhood, initially to assess whether women subscribing to this kind of alert would receive updates on work/life balance, (see Appendix 5). This gives an overview of what a working mother could expect to find in the news, regarding her work and family situation – fashion and celebrity are much higher on the news agenda than articles about employment, policy, women's experiences and well-being.

Sorensen (2017) analysed media texts about women with careers and children.

Sorensen noted that the very use of the notion of 'choice' in career and motherhood is performative, and that 'the vocabulary of choice performs structuring power' (Sorensen, 2017, p.297). She found that the media representations of women with career and children fell into three categories:

**The part-time working 'good' mother:** 'a frequently occurring story in the media is that of aspiring women option out of career ambitions to have children due to the

perceived impossibility of maintaining a work-life balance after having children'

(Sorensen, 2017, p.304)

**The exceptional career mother:** 'The media construes a perception of two conflicting scenarios – 'having it all' and 'opting out' – fuelled by the continuous evaluation of women's choices by the standard of 'balance'. (Sorensen, 2017, p.305).

**The failing (career) mother:** 'explicitly frames the 'having it all' scenario as unrealistic. Hence, the ideal of work-life balance is construed as irrelevant, and the facilitation of childcare is repositioned as a matter of producing equal opportunities. (Sorensen, 2017, p.307).

Sorensen noted that the norm of being a 'good mother', which equates to standards of intensive mothering, is more powerful than the norm of being a successful career woman. Even those seen as 'exceptional career mothers', managing motherhood and career, are easily susceptible to transformation into the failing subject position, and being seen as a bad mother means she is 'no longer worthy of admiration for her professional success' (Sorensen, 2017, p.309). Unlike men, who may have a powerful norm of success in work to mitigate any notion of 'bad fatherhood', women must meet the norm expectations of good motherhood first, and throughout their career to be seen as managing. Alternatively, they can relinquish career ambitions and become the part-time good mother – as part-time work is still regarded as easier, less serious and less committed, despite evidence to the contrary for teachers (DfE, 2019c).

A suggested solution to some of the issues around the second shift, including the exhaustion, guilt, burn out and pressures of an increasingly demanding and neo-liberal education system (Hutchings, 2015) is for women to access part-time working patterns

(section 2.4). Gash, Mertens and Gordo (2011) studied women teachers and hours, finding that a shift to part-time work had positive implications for work/life balance, however, as discussed, schools do not always value part time teachers (Conley and Jenkins, 2011). Offering part-time flexibility is not an adequate solution to the issues of the second shift in teaching and it could be considered to be a negative move; from paid/unpaid work, to paid school work, unpaid housework, unpaid care work (Blackmore, 1999) and *unpaid school work* - creating a 'fourth shift' (my own term).

In summary, it seems that the double burden of home and work is more likely to affect women (Hochschild, 2003; Park, Bryson, Clery, Curtice & Phillips 2013; The Fatherhood Institute, 2016) but would not seek to belittle the pressures felt by men working in the teaching profession; the teaching recruitment and retention crisis is not a new phenomenon and it does not just apply to women (Wiggins, 2016). However, It would seem that we have not yet seen a 'gender role revolution' (Esping-Andersen, 2009; Park et al, 2013), and I have found no evidence to suggest that the research on working mothers and portrayals of working mothers from this country (Gash, 2009; Park et al, 2013; Rees-Edwards, 2012) and further evidence from Europe and beyond (Horne and Breitzkreuz, 2016, Dow, 2016; Hochschild and Machung, 2003) would not also apply to teacher-mothers. It seems likely that the gendered expectations of caring, nurturing women in education roles (Page, 2011, 2013; Sikes, 1998) may exacerbate the situation, particularly in light of what is known about expectation states of gender in employers and decision making (see section 1.2.ii).

## 2.6: Theoretical Underpinnings

The theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of this study include postmodern feminism, Foucault's consideration of power and discourse (Foucault, 1977) and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model (1979). Reflecting the aims of the study, women's stories in their own words are the centre of the framework; the discourses and influences on their stories are mapped across the systems that make their understanding and experience of the world. The following section explores postmodern feminism and Foucauldian power, plus how these elements can work together. Bronfenbrenner's model is explored in detail in section 3.6iv.

### Postmodern Feminism

The constructionist paradigm suggests that we form jointly constructed explanations and ideas of the world, that become the basis for shared beliefs about reality (Elder-Vass, 2012). The hierarchical structures of positivist science are inappropriate for research questions that seek the life stories of women (Hammersley, 1992), **accepting the tension between life stories and the wider quantitative data as discussed in the introduction to this review (section 2.1)**. Accordingly, this study is feminist and aims to 'research *for* instead of *on* women.' (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1995, p.7, italics added), which is situated in experience:

Feminist epistemologists, in common with many other strands of contemporary epistemology, *no longer regard knowledge as a neutral transparent rejection of an independently existing reality*, with truth and falsity established by transcendent procedures of rational assessment. Rather, most accept that all *knowledge is situated knowledge*, rejecting the position of the knowledge producer at a certain historical moment in a given material and cultural context. (Lennon, 1997, p.37).

This research has been conducted through a lens of postmodern feminism, which has influenced the thesis from the outset, including the wording of the research questions. Constructionism and postmodernism influence the way I theorise 'truth' and ways of knowing. In this study, as well as not viewing teacher mothers as an homogeneous group, I also use as data their 'positionings' in relation to roles, relationships and situations in their stories, rather than the substance of the stories alone.

Postmodern feminists suggest that women are not a homogenous group (Butler, 1990; Henwood & Pidgeon, 1995; McNay, 1992); Butler (1990) asserts that women are not driven by the same ideals and influences. Foucault (1976) and Butler (1990) discuss gender as a construction of society, something that is performed, there is no one 'experience of women'. Butler's gender performativity theory suggest that gender is 'constituted (and reconstituted) through ritualised performances of gender norms.' (Jenkins & Finneman, 2018, p.157). According to Butler, gender is not a performance that can be switched; the costume cannot be taken off at the end of the play. There is no player behind the gender performance: we are constituted by and of the performance and it is 'performative in the sense that the essence or identity that they otherwise purport to express are fabrications manufactured and sustained through corporeal signs and other discursive means.' (Butler, 1990, p.173).

Viewing gender as a performance, rather than performative has led to some confusion over the theory (Butler, 2010) and what choices are available to women who wish to challenge the assumptions of their gender and what can be done to change the discourse. Women who 'do not 'do their gender right' are ostracised within the

culture, as the broader power structure prioritises the maintenance of gender polarity or binary' (Jenkins & Finneman, 2018, p.159), and norms of gender behaviour act on us before we can act ourselves. We reinforce these norms for others, 'perhaps in new or unexpected ways, but always in relation to the norms that precede us.' (Joy, Belk & Bhardwaj, 2015, P.1742).

The main critique of a postmodern view, which complicates the source of power and the subjugation of women, means abandoning hope of a drive to action because there is no target (Morris, 1988). There is no solidarity amongst women, all experiencing their subjective world and postmodern feminism risks becoming relativist (Allen & Baber, 1992; Bordo, 1990; Hawkesworth, 1989). Some theorists have gone as far as to suggest that postmodernism and feminism are a contradiction in terms (Gagnier, 1990; Henwood & Pidgeon, 1995) or that postmodern feminism is feminism for academics, with no activist agenda (Tong, 1989).

McLennan (1995) puts forward the idea that the arguments about the missing political agency in postmodern feminism are aimed at a system in which there is a strong dichotomy between modernism and postmodernism. She suggests that postmodern feminists still have a mission to politicise, even if they question the source of oppression and the objectivity of a female experience. Postmodern feminism allows us to conceive of group alliances not as identities but rather as affinities or coalitions that are characterised by fluidity - the ability to mobilise and disperse as necessary (Allen & Baber, 1992, p.13). Allen and Baber's description of affinities and coalitions feels more

real than the idea of a large group of women, unchanging in their solidarity and 'insiderness'.

For my study, activism is an essential part; it is what has motivated the study, and part of my ethical commitment to the participants, because 'a commitment to bring societal changes entails a commitment to the research participants' (Hussain and Zada, 2012, p.205). There are two issues here – whether postmodern feminism results in a retreat from activism (Alcoff, 1988; Tong, 1989); a loss of the political real (Curti, 1998), and the more serious weakness that postmodern feminism is relativist (Allen & Baber, 1992; Bordo, 1990; Hawkesworth, 1989) and a contradiction in terms (Gagnier, 1990; Henwood & Pidgeon, 1995). Postmodernism and feminism seem to lead to a 'damned if you do, damned if you don't scenario – with a series of discomforting effects' (Graham, 2005, p.5).

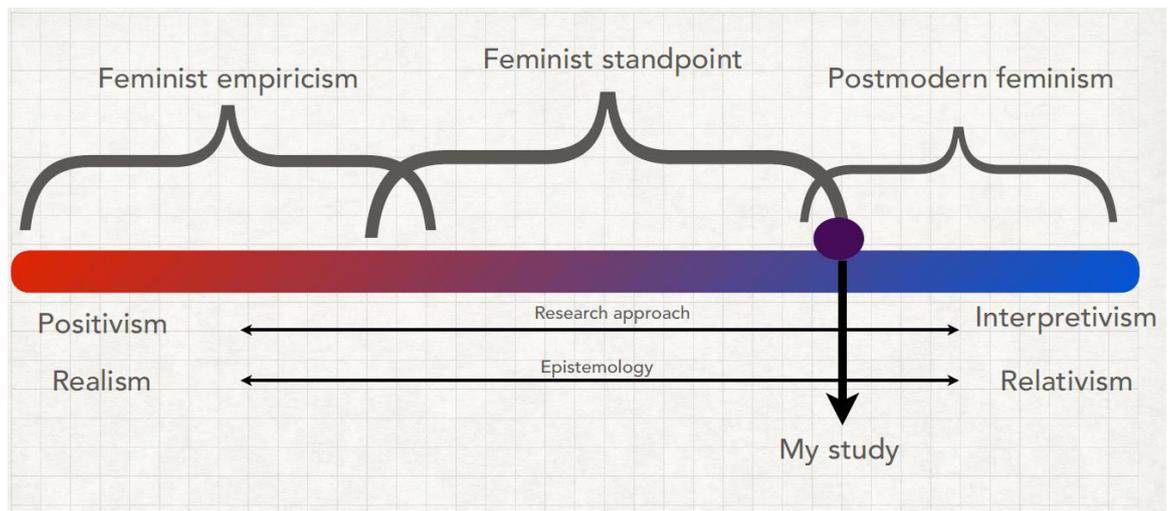
Firstly, postmodern feminism need not herald a retreat from activism. It does not have to be reduced to 'are you with us or against us?' (Gagnier, 1990, p.7). In analysing the data using Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA), as part of a postmodern research design, the idea that women are individuals does not mean that 'affinities and coalitions' (Allen & Baber, 1992, p.13) or solidarity (hooks, 1984) cannot be mobilised by the synthesis of the narrative into an analysis of discourses at work. Postmodern feminists may have difficulty explaining 'active agential subjects who manoeuvre and play with discourse and practice.' (Newton, 1998, p.428) but Foucauldian ideas of power and discourse do not discount the agency of individuals in shaping discourses, or using them to their advantage. McLennan (1995) argues that political agency is part

of the mission of postmodern feminists, because and not in spite of the fact that they question sources of oppression and the objectivity of female experience. It is possible to consider that feminism could be reinvigorated by postmodernism (Baxter, 2003; Miller, 2000). FDA does focus on localised 'disciplinary' power relations – perhaps excluding institutional power (Reed, 2000), but it does not necessarily reduce activism to the local level, as the discourse itself can be targeted. All feminist researchers can do is 'present alternative accounts – to question and challenge.' (Letherby, 2003, p.52).

Secondly, the 'relativist-risk' critique of postmodernism relies on an assumption that it must be objectivist or relativist, with no position possible between the extremes (McLennan, 1995). A discursive analysis approach allows that different communities, groups and individuals have different stories about the world, and it is futile to ascribe truth-value to these stories (Miller, 2000, p.317). If we accept this idea, what follows is that the stories of scientists, judges and politicians are 'only more sophisticated but no more valid, than the stories told by any other types of narrators.' (Dumont, 1998, p.218, see also Miller, 2000). This generates an argument that relativism leads to dangerous and immoral reductions – for example, viewing a crime victim's statement as a text, without taking a stand against the crime alleged within the text (Edwards, Ashmore & Potter, 1995). An alternative view is that by looking for the discursive constructions in the text, more can be uncovered about societal perceptions – without taking a moral stance in the analysis, which may facilitate emancipatory social change, where a realist approach might involve the rhetoric of 'being realistic' and 'recognising that you cannot implement change' (Sims-Schouten et al. 2007, p.104).

To move forward with this project, it is acknowledged that for some, the constructionist view that postmodern feminism is based on can be considered a radical ontology, in which 'reality is literally talked and texted into existence' (Reed, 2000). But this approach does not have to be viewed as an academic folly, if we deal with 'real' language in use, and how it reveals wider discourses in society. If the postmodern view is accepted, there is no point trying to 'construct a standpoint theory which will give us a better, fuller, more power neutral knowledge' (Millen, 1997, p.7) – because such a knowledge does not exist.

In figure 8, I have attempted to place this study on a spectrum. It sits in an overlap between standpoint and postmodern feminism, where potentially feminist research can explore what women have in common (for further discussion of feminist epistemologies, see section 3.2.i). 'Feminist knowledge encompasses movement between partial knowledges, limited experiences and specific social locations, and justifiable, accountable, reasonable knowledge of social interaction, experiences, meanings, relations and structures' (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002, p.102); certainly in many accounts of postmodernism, claiming knowledge in this fashion is not possible. As Ramazanoglu and Holland point out, feminist researchers need not play by these games. Postmodern research can focus on deconstructing how people tell stories and find connections, and identify where there may be points of coalescence across different women's stories, to allow coalitions to be formed (Allen & Baber, 1992, p.13).



*Figure 8: The epistemological position of the study.*

### Foucault and Power

Some feminists have moved towards a Foucauldian analysis concerning the complex nature of power and how a person can experience oppression, domination and privilege in different situations and times (Hill Collins, 2009). Foucault describes a system of power that is constantly in flux (Deleuze, 1988) by asking ‘how does power function in society?’ (Geciene, 2002) rather than who has the power. Foucault addresses societal norms, which has obvious connections with the aims of feminist research, which ‘is not about women but research for women to be used in changing their sexist society’ (Hussain & Zada, 2012).

Foucault describes the ‘discourse’ (Foucault, 1980a, 1980b) as an entity of signs and statements in conversation, which creates a set of expectations and rules about how a person should think and act. Power is like a chain, with endless links; power and knowledge, essentially connected (Cronin, 1996; Geciene, 2002) flow through the chain (Foucault, 1975). It is a ‘mole that only knows its way round its network of

tunnels' (Deleuze, 1988, p.82). There is no easily identified location of power, which raises criticism in that Foucault seems to be denying the place of activism in the system, there is no one to rally against (Sarup, 1988, Amigot & Pujal, 2009; McNay, 1992). Cronin describes Foucault's construct of power as so radical that it cannot identify a place to resist (Cronin, 1996), however, Schwan and Shapiro (2011) suggest that it is a narrow reading of Foucault that has led to this criticism, particularly amongst English speaking academics who focus on Foucault's use of a metaphor of Bentham's panopticon prison structure because it is familiar (Schwan & Shapiro, 2011, p.6). The panopticon metaphor of the unseen prison guards has created a perhaps misguided sense of Foucault's conception of power as something with no observable site.

In terms of my study, Foucault is relevant because of his work on institutions and discipline. Foucault began with an analysis of the power structures in a closed institutional system – a prison, but went on to generalise these constructs to other institutions. In my study, these institutions could be the place of work (school), family and community. The institutions span the systems previously described using Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model (1979). Discipline within these institutions is a type of power, linking institutions and making them function in specific ways (Deleuze, 1988; Foucault, 1975).

A view of discipline is suggested here that does not have the traditional component of a visible disciplinarian person or persons at the centre. Foucault theorises that it requires constant observation to mould people and their behaviour, drawing on ideas

of what a good and right person would do, from the discourse. The idea of an 'unequal gaze' (Foucault, 1975) of surveillance, which eventually leads to the internalisation of normative ways of behaving and thinking, would seem to have strong links with how teacher mothers experience feelings of guilt and compare themselves negatively to their concepts of good mothers (Paige, 2013). Foucault (1988) talked about technologies of the self, an understanding of the self that;

permits individuals to affect, by their own means, a certain number of operations on their own bodies, their own souls, their own thoughts, their own conduct, and this in a manner so as to transform themselves, modify themselves. (*Foucault, 1988, p.18*)

The discourses around motherhood and teaching are internalised and then enacted upon the self, modifying our thoughts and actions to meet the expectations of status. By using discourse analysis, these technologies of self can be identified and the motives for these modifications to thought and conduct can be analysed.

Foucault adds to the macrosystem of the theoretical framework by positing governmentality: how governments produce the citizens required to sustain their policies. For my study, the way maternity and flexible working policies have moulded teacher mothers' thinking about their careers would be an example of governmentality: perhaps encouraging mothers to see the caring responsibility as theirs (Blackmore, 1999) and their careers as less significant and suitable for part-time hours (Morgan, 2015). This notion of a disciplinary society, where we reproduce the rules in a shared discourse and carry out surveillance on each other and ourselves means that power 'escapes the consciousness and will of individual and collective social agents' (Yuval-Davis, 2011, p.5).

## 2.7: Conclusion

In this section, I will briefly review the aims of the literature review and suggest gaps in what is known about teacher-motherhood and potentially pertinent issues from literature in wider fields of teaching.

**Aim 1: To develop a sense of where my research fits in the current literature in the field and justify the need for this inquiry, and Aim 2: To identify gaps in the current literature.**

In this review a range of quantitative and qualitative work has been considered, and it is apparent that whilst large-scale studies by the government and teaching unions of general teacher attitudes, retention, well-being and workload are regular and broadly 'in-step' with each other (e.g. DfE, 2017c, 2019b; NASUWT, 2019; NEU, 2019b), qualitative research is scarcer, and paints a much more complex picture than the graphs of thousands of respondents (e.g. Aveling, 2002; Guihen, 2018; Page, 2013; Sikes, 1998; Thomson and Kehily, 2011).

Qualitative research on primary and early years teacher-mothers has been carried out by a dedicated few researchers over the last two decades, exploring individual stories to highlight wider issues. As discussed in section 2.3, there is a gap in the literature in terms of how normalisation of overwork effects on those who have multiple responsibilities for children in and out of work, particularly how unseen work of parents may not be accommodated in large-scale studies using surveys. In section 2.4, a gap was identified in the consideration of negative impacts of part-time working and

a lack of interrogation of the discourses that bring about negative attitudes towards those who seek part-time or flexible working in some schools. The issue of school leaders and their part in supporting teacher-mothers in their work is a further gap in current literature, with much of the published material in this area being guidance from the government on encouraging school leadership teams to encourage part-time work.

Finally, drawing upon my own experiences of teaching and motherhood (section 1.2.iv), another gap in the literature is more stories from women who are experiencing a multitude of different ways of being a teacher-mother. When I began my doctorate and found the work of researchers in this field, such as Jools Page, Joan Smith and Emma Kell, I found them not just useful for research purposes, but personally motivating and comforting, as well as inspiring in terms of a wish to be an activist for other women experiencing the fourth shift. More authentic voices of women are needed in the literature, both academic and professional, so that coalescences in experience and activism can develop around issues affecting teacher mothers.

### **Aim 3: To explain the theoretical framework of this study**

In section 2.7, the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings for the study are outlined and this will be considered in more depth in the next chapter.

## 3: Methodology, Methods and my Participants

---

### 3.1: Introduction

In this chapter the methodological considerations of the study will be outlined, beginning with the research questions and how the chosen methods contribute answers to these. Writing this chapter in a linear fashion has been challenging, as many of the themes, issues and considerations apply to different aspects of the research design; the following is a breakdown of the structure:

- 3.2: Research design including theory and literature of the chosen approach, methodology and methods;
- 3.3: The formative study and what I learnt from the process;
- 3.4: Fieldwork, participants and the specific issue of insider research;
- 3.5: Reflexivity and ethics;
- 3.6: Data analysis: theory and process.

Within this chapter are a number of extracts from my research journals. These extracts are demarcated by frames and titles prefixed with '4th shift story', referencing Hochschild and Machung's 'Second Shift' (2003). As a full-time lecturer, part-time student and mother of a young child, data collection for the study had to be done in a 'fourth shift' and my research journals have all had this title written hastily in permanent marker on the cover. My participants were also fitting the interview in between school, childcare, housework – so the fourth shift also applied to them. It is hoped that the inclusion of extracts will add context to the discussion around method and methodology. I also hope to contribute further to the reflective and reflexive

process by sharing experiences in a clearly demarcated fashion with the reader, particularly given the challenges that a postmodern feminist approach raises:

...the feminist call, to decenter the self while simultaneously seeking self reflexivity in order to fulfill the mandate of resistance postmodernism to transform society, do not necessarily sit comfortably with each other. The disjunctures that these two imperatives—that is, to de-center and to transform—may reveal, points to the need for the recognition of a form of essentialism that seeks to call the writer to assume responsibility for the text she writes. (Pillay, 2005, p.539).

The issues of reflexivity will also be discussed in further detail (3.5).

Consideration of how points of coalescence can be identified in analysis had to begin in the research design, particularly in recruitment of participants and protocols for data collection.

## 3.2: Research Design

In this section, I will discuss the methodology and method chosen for the study and evaluate the effectiveness of these, given the theoretical underpinnings already explored (section 2.7). The research questions steered the research design of the study, with the initial thoughts on methodology and method, as follows:

### **1. What do the life history stories of teacher mothers suggest about this special circumstance?**

Taking a postmodern feminist view, to uncover the power at play in the stories of teacher mothers, analysis of how the women positioned themselves in the stories was required. Life-history interviews allow the women to position themselves in terms of roles, thoughts, feelings and relationships, methods clearly needed to be as unstructured as possible.

**2. To what extent does analysis of 'ecological systems' and discourses illuminate the life of a teacher mother?**

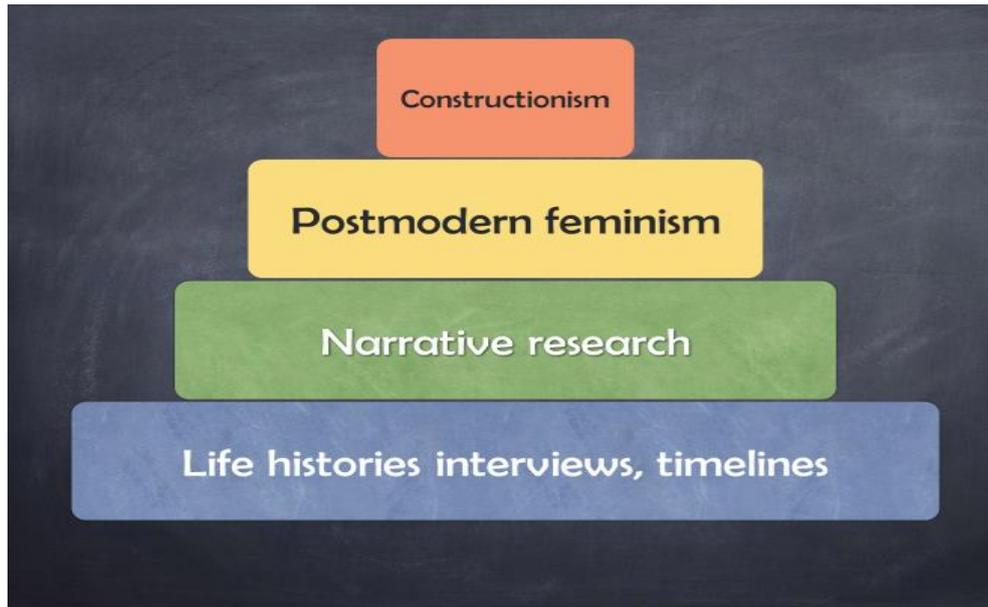
As discussed in the literature review, my strong feeling from personal experience and the literature in this research area was that to gain the sufficient depth of analysis to do justice to these stories, I needed to look at how the stories women tell relate to their home, work, community and wider social and political lives.

The analysis of data for this study involved using a new combination of techniques and theories, which I have named 'ecological system discourse analysis' (see section 3.6.iv for a diagram and description). This question requires an evaluation of the method of analysis in terms of how useful it was in interpreting teacher mother stories.

**3. What (if any) are the points of coalescence and convergence that groups of teacher mothers may relate to, that could be potential sites of new policy and activism?**

As discussed (section 2.7), postmodern feminism allows for the stories of women being considered unique, but does not necessarily rule out the idea that different women's stories could have points of coalescence and convergence at different times and in varied situations (Allen & Baber, 1992, p.13). This question requires that cross-analysis

of the participant's stories, to find these points of coalescence and convergence.



*Figure 9: Basic foundations of the research design.*

### 3.2.i: Feminist Epistemologies and Methodology

This study comes from a feminist perspective; by which I mean it tackles an issue that applies to women, with an aim to illuminate the individual stories of women. It also has the potential to improve the situations of other teacher-mothers through coalitions and coalescences. What follows constitutes a look back at the feminist epistemological options 'on offer'; to explore how knowledge claims can be made in answering the research questions. 'There can be grounds for local, regional or global knowledge, but not for a 'universalising discourse' (Ramatanoglu and Holland, 2002).

A challenge for feminist epistemologies is known as the 'greased pole' (Haraway, 1991). It is 'difficult for feminists wholly to abandon the pull of either relativism or reality, and so they tend to slip around, or feel forced to choose between them' (Ramazanoglu and Holland, 2002, p.61), to metaphorically try to hold on to both ends

of the pole at once; at one end is realism, reason and classic scientific method, which adds scientific weight and justification to claims of knowledge. On the other end is relativism; arguably providing no justification for action or change.

Feminist epistemologies have evolved over time, to become more nuanced and have significant overlaps in the literature and in use (Intemann, 2010). I have summarized the most commonly cited here, but do not claim to have captured them perfectly; the aim is to justify my approach in relation to the study. Three feminist epistemologies are identified in the literature (Harding, 1993, 2004; Hawkesworth, 1989):

- Feminist empiricism
- Feminist standpoint theory
- Postmodern feminism

Feminist empiricism covers a broad span of approaches, which overlap with other epistemologies. It generally holds that:

...empirical success is held to be a necessary condition for accepting scientific theories, models, or auxiliary hypotheses as justified. Theories must be empirically successful (or make reliable empirical predictions) when tested in conjunction with auxiliary hypotheses. (Intemann, 2010, p.780)

This general tenet of feminist empiricism ruled it out for this study, as it assumes that the work will begin with a hypothesis and there will be generalisability and reliability in the findings of the research: the realities I am exploring are individual, ephemeral and not replicable in order to give 'reliability'. I acknowledge the benefits that feminist empiricism has brought to mainstream science (Longino, 2002), in advocating diverse views in science.

Feminist standpoint theory was conceived as empowering women to create knowledge and be the subject of knowledge (Harding, 2004), which came from an assertion that the privileged knowledge produced by scientific method was not neutral, as it claimed to be, but biased towards masculine ways of thinking (Bordo, 1986; Cixous, 1976, Harding, 2004; Hartsock, 2003, 2004). Harding (2003) goes further than petitioning for equal status, suggesting that the feminist standpoint should be held in higher regard because of the history of subjugation of women (Allen & Baber, 1992; Harding, 2004; Crittenden, 2010). Standpoint feminists have been 'charged with reinforcing gender stereotypes and falsely assuming that all women or oppressed groups have some sort of universal shared experiences' (Intemann, 2010, p.784).

Standpoint is sometimes referred to as the modernist feminist approach (Henwood and Pidgeon, 1995), with epistemological implications arising from the need to explain each individual woman's experience as unique, and yet be able to generalise enough in order to privilege the 'feminist narrative'. This epistemological stance has become much more nuanced over the 17 years since Harding's charting of the territory (Intemann, 2010), but broadly, standpoint feminism assumes a level of objectivity, in that it requires that women have shared experiences and common oppressors. However, some standpoint feminists have moved away from claiming a single viewpoint for women, towards a Foucauldian analysis concerning the complex nature of power and how a person can experience oppression, domination and privilege in different situations and times (Hill Collins, 2009).

The same critique can be applied to both postmodern feminism and versions of standpoint feminism; that viewing power and the subjugation of women in this way means abandoning hope and a drive to action, because there is no target (Morris, 1988). The aim of feminist research falls flat when this line is followed; because there is no palpable 'object' that can be changed. Amigot and Pujal (2009) argue that using Foucauldian analysis is fruitful for feminist researchers and that using a concept such as 'state of domination' – whereby a person or group of people are in a state where only very limited courses of action are open to them, with limited transformational power (Foucault, 1984, 1994; Amigot and Pujal, 2009) is a possible method of exploration. This could offer a useful basis for investigating freedom, choice and potentially a transformation of that state of domination.

The debates within the feminist research community have provided a 'rich and dynamic discussion' (Maynard and Purvis, 1994, p.2) and I agree that from this discussion, there is no 'right way' of doing things and no clear consensus (Amigot and Pujal, 2009) on what feminist research might look and feel like.

### 3.2.ii: Narratives

Narrative is described as both the act of storytelling (Johnstone, 2001), the story or part of a story that helps to construct identity (Riessman, 2008; Souto-Manning, 2014), any collection of spoken or written statements (Polyani, 1985) or a story with very specific structure and elements (Labov & Waletzky, 1997). 'Discourse' is used to represent many different aspects of language in research:

- Meaning a psychological natural history (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011)
- The presentation of events in a narrative (Benveniste, 1966)
- A coherent collection of statements that include conversation (Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2001)
- A 'socially or institutionally endorsed way of knowing' (Davies & Harre, 1990, p.47)
- A shared social resource that constructs identities (Ainsworth & Hardy, 2004; Gergen, 2001)

There are many overlaps in definition of 'discourse' with those of 'narrative'. The definition of 'discourse' could even be expanded to include practices, as practices can systematically form objects (Parker, 1992, 1998). 'Discourse; as a term is in danger of becoming 'all things to all people' (Kendall & Wickham, 1999, p. 35).

For the purposes of this study, I define discourse as a **collection of statements (including conversation) that can form an endorsed way of knowing, and can construct identities**; which means that discourses can be seen as forming our social reality, but are also part of the construction of our own identities. As an example, a group of teacher mothers on social media may produce discourses that affect the way some others 'know' about teacher motherhood. However, other discourses will also be part of the construction of how they are seen as teacher mothers. An example of this is from Sian's interview, when she talks about pregnant teachers and chances of employment. This is a complex picture, as whilst Sian and I know counter-examples,

Sian is also informed by other people, a wider community and media discourses:

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: Positioning at a discourse**

Something really stood out in the interview, which I thought about on the drive home and has been 'poking me' ever since. Sian said a lot of things that surprised me, rang true with me. At one point, she said that as a pregnant teacher, there would be no point applying for other teaching posts, as no school or governing body would consider employing a pregnant teacher. We both know teachers who have secured new posts whilst pregnant. It seems that Sian is positioning herself in a particular way against a discourse of 'pregnancy is a liability'.

#### **3.2.iii: Narrative Methodology**

Many theorists assert (Letherby, 2003; Thomas, 2013) that there is no feminist methodology, postmodern methodology (May, 2001) or feminist postmodern methodology either (Hussain & Zada Asad, 2012). Here I will explore how narrative methodology can constitute a feminist approach.

Narrative methodology is hard to define, with many of its advocates stating that there is no clear definition (Creswell, 2013; Daiute, 2014) and no 'one cookbook recipe' (Lewis & Adeney, 2014, p.162). What is clear is that narrative methods value the experiences of participants, as a 'fundamental unit that accounts for human experience' (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, p.4), that supports our 'sense-making processes' (Bold, 2012). Goodson (2013, 2017 see also Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007), suggests a shift in the discourse of narrative types, from the 'grand narrative' of the Victorian age to a more personal, local narrative; the life story.

Grand narratives (or master narratives; see Sands & Krumer-Nevo, 2006) are reminiscent of the ideological discourse that feminist theorists have labelled as a feature of the masculine academy (Cixous, 1976; Butler, 1990); a widespread idea, discussed and used by the masses, like discourses that Foucault theorises as shaping our thoughts (Foucault, 1978). Goodson's (2013, 2017) narrative life stories are small in comparison, not generalizable and valuable in a different way (perhaps, as recognisable accounts, showing 'verisimilitude' (Bruner, 1990) rather than validity, relevance rather than typicality (Letherby, 2003). Letherby (2003) suggests that narrative methodology enables 'the discovering of the social experiences of 'silenced women' (p.89) and develops a participatory approach that chimes with the aims of feminist research (Bullough & Pinnegar, 2001).

'Narrative researchers are open to a view that there are alternative epistemologies or ways of knowing' (Lewis & Adeney, 2014, p.163). This appears to fit well with a postmodern feminist approach; no fixed version of truth is subscribed to and multiple truths are not problematic. Critics of narrative theory point out that this constitutes a 'retreat into fine, meaningless detail', as multiple epistemologies create a complex world of data to analyse and concepts like statistical significance are not considered or relevant (Merrill & West, 2009, p.21). Advocates of this approach defend it based on the fine, rich and meaningful detail that it can produce (Goodson & Sikes, 2001).

My approach to narrative is to view stories as a place to illuminate the socially constructed discourses at work (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007), as well as an opportunity to examine the rich tapestry of 'positionings' used in the telling of the story – the ways in which the woman placed herself within the story in relation to roles, relationships and

situations. Drawing a distinction between a narrative as a source of truth, and narratives as a story is important to the coherence of the research design; as part of using a narrative methodology is deciding 'that we are studying either lived experiences as storied phenomenon or the stories people tell us about their experiences' (Clandinin, 2007, p.14). Elbaz-Luwisch (2005, p.36) suggests that experience can be 'studied as a storied, lived phenomenon as well as studied in the stories that one tells about the living.'

Foucault (1978), suggests that people are not aware of the discourses reproduced in narratives, and that these discourses require analysis and identification to illuminate how power and knowledge are played through language. 'Narratives always emerge in contexts, saturated by power/knowledge relations that keep destabilising their meanings and characters' (Tamboukou, 2013, p.92), but as storytellers, we may not be aware of how we position ourselves within the narrative, or what this positioning may suggest about the worlds we live in. As a researcher, I felt the duty to 'historicise' (Merrill & West, 2009, p.21) the story, to interpret the 'interpersonal, political and social contexts in which narratives are collected.' (Merrill & West, 2009, p.21. This can be a problematic position for a feminist researcher, as accusations can be made about the researcher's right to retell or interpret the experiences of women (Smythe and Murray, 2000; Tamboukou, 2013; Willinsky, 1989). However, as Gorelick (1991), points out;

Confining research to induction-based methods ignores the limits to such research: Ideologies of oppression are often internalized, while the underlying structures of oppression are hidden. (Gorelick, 1991, p.459)

My role as researcher is to uncover the oppression that my participants may not recognise in their narratives.

Loots, Coppens and Semijn (2013), describe a culturally orientated postmodern view, accepting 'narrative as a performance, as a narrative in context' (p.109) The participant tells a story as a performer, reacting to the researcher as an audience, but the researcher is part of the performance. 'A narrative researcher does not collect narratives, but instead jointly participates in their construction and creation' (Loots, Coppens & Semijn, 2013, p.110), which is supportive of Marmon Silko's view; 'Viewers are as much a part of the landscape as the boulders they stand on.' (Marmon Silko, 1997, p.27). However, it is important to highlight the process narrative researchers go through and what the researcher brings to the work; 'how we describe people's lives is how they appear to, and in, the world through our writing' (Sikes, 2010, p.15).

#### 3.2.iv: Life Stories and Life Histories

This study used life-history, unstructured interviews as the main data collection method (two participants also chose to draw timelines to accompany their stories).

##### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: Charlie's timeline**

When Charlie was offered the chance to draw a timeline of her teacher mother experiences, she was very keen to do so and also to draw in a 'non'linear' style. The timeline was a meandering curved line, with wide loops and turns. Charlie explained that time was an important factor in her experiences, for example, having very young children of your own at the school where you are also teaching was a very different experience to having teenage children at different schools. The experience of being a teacher mother is not static – it changes over time.

I have been inspired by Joan Smith's (2007) thesis, in which she used life histories interviews to illuminate the stories of her participants against the backdrop of

government policy; I felt that this rich data could help me to approach some answers to my research questions. For the formative study, the arguably simpler method (Bold, 2012; Goodson, 2013) of life story interviewing was used (see section 3.3). My thoughts around adding tangible information to the stories of the women is explored in the following journal extract:

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: Value of a researcher**

As I listen to the stories of my participants, many times over, it strikes me that as a researcher I have added little to these brilliant accounts of life. But one thing that I feel I can add is the historical context, or at least some of it. This is complicated; policies change rapidly, local government and national government may have very different impacts in different areas; but something like maternity pay, or teaching union activism might be having a subtle influence on the story told. Certainly politics and policy seem to influence the way the women position themselves in the story, as told to a researcher.

The distinction between life stories and histories is cited as one of historical details; in life history research, participant narratives are underpinned by an exploration of the social and political issues that were at work, at the time the participant is describing. Life story interviews are unstructured, ask the participant to tell the story of their life, or a particular event or period (Cole & Knowles, 2001), as the pilot interview did. The analysis can vary widely, but the content of the life story is the source of the data and 'truth' for the study.

Life stories, then, are intimately connected to cultural locations, to social position and even social privilege as well as to historical periods, which provide different opportunities for 'the construction and expression of selfhood' (Goodson, 2013, p.25).

The life history begins in a similar way, with an unstructured interview, but then the 'chronosystem' (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) is added:

We have to move from the collection of individual life stories towards a method that investigates the social and historical context in which these stories are enmeshed. (Goodson, 2013, p.31)

Goodson (2013) suggests that the life history is a form of triangulation, between the original life story, documentary data, and historical context. Life stories become language games shaped by discourses and power systems about which the participants may not be conscious (Foucault, 1978; Merrill & West, 2009). This added dimension takes into account the complexity of an individual account (Stone-Mediatore, 2000; Wittgenstein, 1981). As a researcher, 'she or he will be listening through the person's story to hear the operation of broader social discourses shaping that person's story of their experience.' (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 55). This is the work of the researcher; to add historical and social context to the story. This is not a necessarily disrespectful move; the story is a valuable record, but it is the microsystem of the situation (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), the life history adds the macrosystem around the edges.

It is suggested that the addition of historical and social context in the life history does not combat the issue of reliability in qualitative study (Brinkmann, 2016; Dhunpath, 2000); common assumptions are that interviewing will provide 'truth' and be fun (Brinkmann, 2016). There are issues around researcher/participant relationships, the possibility that narrative could be falsified (Yuan, 2014), misinterpreted, misreported, either knowingly or because the researcher is insufficiently reflexive, the interviewer may work for their own advantage or that of an institution or group (Bourdieu, 1991;

Briggs, 2000). 'Interviews are wrought with problems and power issues that are never resolved or erased.' (Mallozzi, 2009, p.1046).

In short, my response is pragmatic: given the research questions, other methods would not give sufficient detail to answer the questions, nor would they give the participant the opportunity to tell their story, with their biases and choices of plot, rather than mine (Smith, 2007). Dhunpath (2000, p.544), sums up my position:

I want to suggest boldly, therefore, that the life history approach is probably the only authentic means of understanding how motives and practices reflect the intimate intersection of institutional and individual experience in the postmodern world. (Dhunpath, 2000, p.544).

### 3.2.v: Validity or Verisimilitude?

A major criticism of narrative research is the lack of rigour in such work (Cooper & Rogers, 2015; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), and the possibility of an objective view from the inside (Blythe, Wilkes, Jackson & Halcomb, 2013). Postmodern feminism suggests that personal experiences cannot be invalidated or nullified (Hussain & Zada Asad, 2012), which is problematic in terms of validating the findings of a study.

Validity is an 'objective measure', and therefore is considered an inappropriate term when working in a subjective paradigm (Lincoln & Guba, 1994); yet we need to achieve some level of credibility or our research becomes something akin to gossip - interesting, but as liable to bias, exaggeration and fabrication. Some exponents of narrative theory have suggested that the tapestry of the work, when taken as a whole, gives a sense of a truth, rather than a grand truth (Ely, 2007; Lewis & Adeney, 2014).

Attitudes have changed towards qualitative research (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007), but the discourses of positivist and post-positivist supremacy are still evident (for example, Lenihan, 2017), leading theorists to question, is narrative research ever anything more than provisional? Does it matter? (Squire, Andrews & Tamboukou, 2013).

The answer may be that it doesn't matter, if validity over time is never more than provisional; 'reality is constructed and reconstructed in the process of talking and thinking about it' (Acker, Barry & Esseveld, 1983, p.432), and any measure of validity that is possible would be out of date before the findings could be printed. In postmodernism, personalities are not ontologically fixed - so what does validity look like? For that matter, what would verisimilitude; something akin to recognisability (Bruner, 1990), look like? Narrative and postmodern research accepts a temporality and embraces it (Biesta, Field & Tedder, 2010; Bold, 2012), whilst other approaches may seek a truth for which time is irrelevant (Bold, 2012; Cortazzi, 1993; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Becker & Greer, 1957). The value of the research might be in something like verisimilitude, where the stories of participants 'ring true' for women in the future, or form the basis for an analysis of how the discourses around motherhood and teaching have changed, or why certain discourses persist.

Alternative measures of rigour in the research process have been posited (Bruner, 1990; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Coe, Waring, Hedges & Arthur, 2017; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1994; Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007). Merrill and West (2009) suggest that narrative methods reveal weaknesses of validity in other designs; the richness and depth of the data collected in narrative studies may highlight the relative meanness of the data collected by other means (Merrill & West, p.166).

### 3.3: The Formative Study

The formative study explored the life story of a primary teacher mother, Sian. The primary purpose of the pilot was to explore the methods planned for the main study; but also to gain valuable insights from Sian into how the process felt from a participant point of view. I used an unstructured, life story interview (Goodson, 2013), to allow Sian to talk about her experience of working motherhood. Sian was asked to 'tell me about your life as a teacher/mother, beginning at any point in your life', (Goodson, 2013, Shamir & Eilam, 2005). Sian began her story from the start of her teacher training, but reflected on her childhood, too. Sian is an ex-colleague and friend of mine, which raised questions about insider research relationships, particularly the ethical implications of working with your own 'tribe' (Acker, 2001). This had a major influence on the main study.

#### 3.3.i: Learning from the formative study: Research Design

Below is a summary of insights from the formative study regarding research design, which helped to shape the main study. The following section summarises ethical considerations from the pilot.

#### 3.3.ii: Researcher Neutrality

Reflecting on insider/outsider research has aided the rethinking of my assumptions about research (Harvey, Brown, Miller, Williams-Reade, Tyndall & Murphy, 2016).

I no longer believe that researchers can be neutral, at least not in this type of research.

Important considerations that have fed into the main study include using a reflexive process to increase verisimilitude, such as keeping a detailed research journal (Creswell & Miller, 2000, Blythe, Wilkes, Jackson & Halcomb, 2013; Pillow, 2003), probing during interviews to avoid assumptions and using a list of 'cues' to prompt

further interrogation of a statement. I have also considered the debriefing process (see appendix 13 for debriefing sheet), to deal with emotions and making aims of the study clear (Blythe et al., 2013). Informal debriefs became a part of the interview process:

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: The end**

For the main study interviews, I have ended each one so far with a debrief. They have been informal, but I have a checklist of things to talk about and I go through it. With Charlie, she chatted through the checklist with me, asking questions about ethics and what it was like to do research in this way. I felt reassured that she had heard what I felt I needed to tell her about withdrawing, contacting me/supervisors, anonymity and future use. With Aliyah, the interview had been much more emotional for me (and I think for her, too) and the debrief chat felt like a necessary transition between the highly emotive stories and the return to our lives.

#### **3.3.iii: Power and feminist approaches**

The role of power in the research process must be of central concern (Foucault, 1978, 1980). I initially thought that insider research presented significant challenges, because of the issues of power in the relationship. On further reflection, it seems that power dynamics will change with each participant, partly because of insider relationships, and will also change over time (Blythe et al, 2013). Insider researchers may become desensitised to 'potential role-conflicts' (Humphrey, 2012, p. 573). It is suggested that insiders may overlook power relations, (Ryan, Kofman and Aaron, 2011, as demonstrated by the questions we do not ask our participants, the questions we do not even consider asking; such as how their experiences are different to our own, and how their definitions of the terms and phrases they are using may have different meanings to our own.

Political and organisational complications have to be carefully managed to avoid participants, researchers and other parties feeling disconcerted by the research (Plummer, 2001), or betrayed (Moore, 2007). Sian could feel that my findings had been used against the interests of her, her school, family and friends in the analysis of her story (Wallbank, 2001). I can imagine Sian questioning ‘whose side are you on?’ in response to my interpretation of how she positions herself in regards to her relationships (see Acker, 2001).

The individual realities of Sian and I are vital to the understanding of her experiences; ‘insider research remains a necessary, albeit messy vehicle in social research’ (Cooper and Rogers, 2015 p. 1). In short, it is within my power to protect Sian from the messy, negative impacts to her career that participating in the research may expose her to; for example, if she was identified in publications about the study, but it is important to reflect on the necessity for this situation to arise in the first instance. Recruiting Sian as a participant has made those negative impacts a possibility; however, our relationship could also have minimised the power differential between researcher and participant. Factors that may have helped here are an equal standing in our careers and her view of me as a person, rather than as an inspector or evaluator of her performance (Blythe et al., 2013).

#### 3.3.iv: Feminist research is political

Decisions that I made had an impact on Sian, which required and requires careful thought and consideration of a feminist ethics of care (Noddings, 2013; Held, 2006;

Robinson, 2011; Tronto, 2011). Decisions also had an impact on me, as a researcher:

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: Ethic of care**

Working with Sian for the pilot has really brought home to me how tricky the researcher/participant relationship can be to manage. Sian's interview was paused at many points, due to phone calls from her partner and interruptions in the public space we were in. Three times I asked Sian if she wanted to stop the interview. Her response was, 'but this is important for your doctorate!' I realised that Sian's awareness of my situation had potentially put pressure on her to participate. Deciding to recruit Sian for the formative study had not really taken into account the depth of the insider relationship and the power and care issues that were shot through the whole project.

Conversely, to be ethical and reflect the data collected as fairly as I can, I need to include aspects of my research in the account that do not fit with the feminist ideal (Cooper & Rogers, 2015); such as treating narratives as storied truths, rather than truth, and including analyses of the positioning of the participants that they may not agree with (Smythe and Murray, 2000).

This means considering the potential impact on the wider community of 'insiders'; mothers and teachers. In the table below are some considerations from the formative study and how these were reflected upon and revised for the main study research:

*Table 1: Considerations identified in the formative study*

Experience of formative study	Implications for Main Study	Action/s taken
<p><b>Neutrality:</b> I found it very difficult not to get involved in the interview; from nodding and making affirming noises, to answering Sian’s questions about my own experiences.</p>	<p>The non-structured interview gives freedom to the interviewer, as well as the interviewee. Care must be taken that interviewer contributions to the interview do not threaten the integrity of the response; perhaps by leading the interviewee to discuss a topic that otherwise would not have been mentioned. Also, the potential for the researcher to ‘edit’ the participant story to be more forgiving or palatable is a risk (Gair, 2002, 2012).</p>	<p>Full transcripts of the interviews were produced and the responses and contributions of the interviewer were reflected upon, alongside the responses of the interviewee.</p> <p>A field journal was kept, noting where interviewer/interviewee interactions caused concern or were notable. Participation in the interviews was a human response to the stories being told.</p>
<p><b>Neutrality:</b> I found it very difficult to distance myself from Sian’s experiences. Our shared experiences, workplace and acquaintances made it hard to separate what she had said from what I knew previously.</p>	<p>I felt that having insider research relationships of the close nature that Sian and I had, would perhaps not be ideal for the main study. Sian’s interview was difficult to analyse because of previous knowledge that ethically, should not be included.</p>	<p>In the main study, I recruited participants that were not previously known to me. Although they were recruited through social media (Twitter) I purposely did not look back through their timelines or follow them on Twitter.</p>
<p><b>Power:</b> My friendship with Sian meant that there were issues of power in this research – I was not the white coated scientist, but Sian wanted to help me and give me helpful material for my doctorate.</p>	<p>Sian’s responses to ethics permission and the information sheet were telling; she was very trusting and did not feel the need to read the information, which led to my decision to read it to her.</p> <p>In the main study I knew it would be important to ensure that consent was as fully informed as I could manage – that participants took this seriously and were aware of the importance of this.</p>	<p>Part of the main study pre-interview briefing used the example of my formative study participant and consent. This helped me to explain my concerns for the participants and was a gentle way to explain why it was important for both parties to understand the research.</p>
<p><b>Power:</b> In the analysis of Sian’s interview transcript, I found it difficult to not apply my own experiences to Sian’s;</p>	<p>In the main study the participants were not known to me, and yet the assumed knowledge of teacher motherhood still created opportunities for me to apply my own experiences to the stories of the participants. I felt that this presented a risk in terms of</p>	<p>To make myself more aware of the experiences I might apply to the stories of others, I decided to include an autobiographical section in the Introduction (see section 1.2.iv), which would help to highlight where my own biases and assumptions may</p>

	retelling narratives in a false and ultimately disrespectful way.	come from; both for me and the reader.
<b>Feminist methodology:</b> I was concerned that the methods used in the pilot; unstructured interview and timeline drawing, put additional pressure on Sian to do all of the talking and to produce a visual artefact as well, all in a fairly short period.	With participants that were not previously known to me, I felt there was a risk that main study participants would feel obliged to try to complete visual methods as well as engaging in an interview. From Sian's feedback, I knew that having time to talk through her experiences had been valuable, but trying to draw the timeline at the same time had been a challenge. I also was aware that asking these very busy people to come prepared with artefacts may not be an appropriate way of demonstrating understanding of their workload and well-being.	In the main study I offered the opportunity to draw timelines, which two of the four did (appendix 18). I avoided getting paper and pens out until the participant had expressed their preference for just the interview, or interview and visual methods.
<b>Feminist methodology:</b> ethic of care to myself. In the formative study I found myself upset by some of the things discussed in the interview, I think this was exacerbated because of my previous relationship with Sian.	During the main study interview period, I spent a lot of time driving to and from interviews and being upset would have been potentially dangerous on the road. I also felt for several days after Sian's interview that I wanted to contact her about things she had said, to offer additional support. I did not feel that this would be appropriate with participants I did not know previously, and needed to find a way to avoid these feelings or to cope with them as they arose.	The main study interviews were planned so that a rest period was possible between the interview and driving home. In one case, I stayed over and returned home the next day.  The ethic of care is a challenge to manage and continued to be a struggle in the main study. I made sure that my main support throughout (my Mum) was aware of when interviews were scheduled, so that she could ensure I had left the interview location safely, but also so that we could talk through how I felt about the interview (without sharing details).

### 3.3.v: Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

'Foucauldian discourse analysis' as a concept suffers from the same issue as many I have encountered, in that scholars have not decided on a definitive methodology for it (Van Ness, McInnes Miller, Negash & Morgan, 2017, p.110), despite being an influential tool for interpretation (Reed, 2000). Foucault was reluctant to delineate a

method (Graham, 2005), and would have found it difficult to do so, given that his approach was to recognise 'multiple truths' (Foucault, 1994, p.288 also see Luke, 1999). However, it is unlikely that Foucault intended researchers to be anxious about detailing their methodological strategies (Graham, 2005); but rather to be clear about their methods, without 'trying to dictate what is to be done.' (Foucault, 1980b, p.236). FDA is an attempt to avoid the 'positivist trap' of essentialising the research method (Graham, 2005; Harwood, 2000), and might be considered as an underpinning influence, rather than a method (Frost & Elichoff, 2014, p.46).

Antaki, Billig, Edwards and Potter (2003) theorise six weaknesses commonly found when discourse analysis is used:

1. Under-analysis through summary
2. Under-analysis through taking sides
3. Under-analysis through over-quotation or through isolated quotation
4. The circular identification of discourses and mental constructs
5. False survey
6. Analysis that consists of simply spotting features

All six of these weaknesses applied during the process of analysing the formative study using Willig's model (2008); see section 3.6.iii for further information on how this was used in the pilot and main studies. Circular identification of discourses has been the most troubling and the 'circularity' of the analysis also applies to identifying descriptors, subject positions and action orientations. The problem is undeniable: 'the analyst links particular features with the wider phenomenon and then claims the presence of the feature as evidence of the existence of that phenomenon.' (Dunne,

Pryor & Yates, 2005, p.100). How to make these links more credible is difficult, but I acknowledge that without making some 'leaps', the analysis will not go beyond simply spotting features (Antaki et al., 2003).

### 3.3.vi: Learning from the Formative Study: Ethics

It is widely agreed that traditional models of ethical research practice for research do not fit well with narrative studies and offer insufficient guidance (Josselson, 1996; Smythe and Murray, 2000) The formative study highlighted some areas of concern; these will be revisited in the Ethics section (3.5) of the chapter in more detail, but an initial summary of the main issues follows:

### 3.3.vii: Authorship

Of concern to the researcher and the participant is the risk of emotional distress caused by 'having one's story reinterpreted and filtered through the lenses of social-scientific categories' (Smythe and Murray, 2000, p.66). If the participant reads the reinterpreted story, tensions can form between the views of their life (Josselson, 1996b) and participants commonly report that the analysis fails to capture their 'personal uniqueness and individuality' (Smythe and Murray, 2000). There is risk that participants may even change their own understanding of their experiences when confronted with the 'authoritative interpretations' of the researcher (Smythe and Murray, 2000).

For Foucault (1998), authorship is problematic, and it raises particular questions in a feminist study. 'The author function distinguishes certain discourses from others, privileges them, in effect.' (Tamboukou, 2013, p.94). Sian has shared her story yet any

publication will have my name on it. To mitigate this issue, Sian's story is not just to be assimilated into my study, to validate my own preconceptions or to fit in with a pattern. As Willinsky (1989) shares, 'I am concerned that a research process that intends to recover the personal and experiential would pave over this construction site in its search for an overarching unity in the individual's narrative' (Willinsky, 1989, p.259). I must be careful not to 'pave over' any participant's account, to fit my own ends.

### 3.3.viii: Sharing of sensitive information

It has been argued that the nature of participation in research projects like this one is impossible to predict; the methodology is emergent, the researcher and participant are finding their way as they go. In narrative research, it may be the case that you need to do the data collection before you can make informed decisions about whether to participate (as the participant) and what ethical protocols will be needed for the researcher (Smythe and Murray, 2000).

Sian responded to my request for feedback on the formative study method with a consoling answer; that another method would not have allowed her to 'tell her story in so much detail' but ethically, was it right take so much? Sian's time, commitment, and trust that her story would be used responsibly were requested and she has given much to the project, when as a teacher mother she is already poor in terms of time and emotional energy (Page, 2011). However, if Sian's story is used to support change for others and to benefit teacher mothers in some way, then perhaps this 'theft' of time and energy is justified. In the information sheet given to Sian, the promise of the pilot research was to inform the main study, but also to give opportunities to be involved

and an intent to use the pilot data to start discussion amongst the teacher mother community. It has been argued that not making full use of formative study data is in itself ethically dubious, as the participant has given their time and effort to what they may view as a redundant project (van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2001), which was part of the rationale behind including Sian's story in the findings and synthesis for this study. It could also be argued that any presumption that Sian had been coerced into giving up her time and sharing her experiences supposes that she is not able to make choices, or is in some way vulnerable through a lack of understanding.

Other people are a part of Sian's story, including her parents and husband. As part of a Foucauldian discourse analysis, their actions may be portrayed as part of an oppressive system; this is not a process that Sian would necessarily be comfortable with. Other actors are not consulted on their view of the relationships they have with Sian; their experiences have not been collected, yet their culpability and influence could potentially be a part of the findings.

## 3.4 Fieldwork

In this section, the fieldwork undertaken for the study is described. The section covers: participants (recruitment, insider status and an overview of their basic information); descriptions of the interviews in terms of place, time and my observations of the event; and how the life-history interviews were carried out.

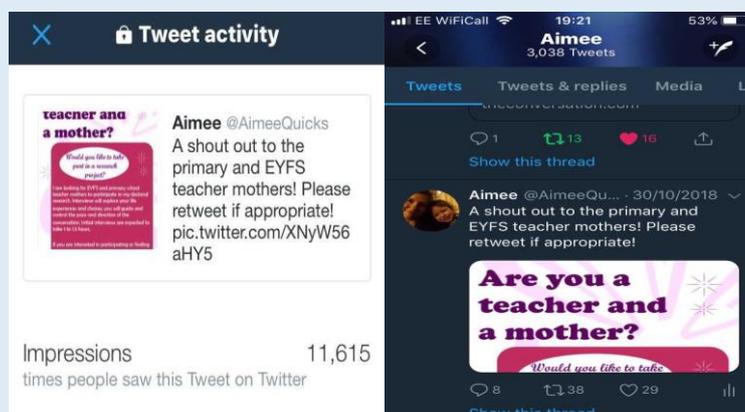
### 3.4.i: Participant Recruitment

Participants were recruited through social media. A single advert was posted on Twitter with email contact information and brief information about the study (see

Appendix 9). Recruitment via social media can engage potential participants who are hard to reach and unlikely to take part through other recruitment methods (Khatri et al., 2015; Sikkens et al., 2017). Through a single advert posted on Twitter, subsequent ‘re-tweets’ (forwarded posts on other user’s accounts), particularly from networks of individuals (such as WomenEd and the MTPT Project) engaged a large group of people in the tweet by an ‘organic growth’ (Khatri et al, 2015, p.4). This method of recruitment may introduce demographic selection bias (Khatri et al, 2015), particularly when the researcher’s profile gives a strong indication of political beliefs and key indicators, such as motherhood. Given the postmodern feminist theoretical approach to this study, a broad and balanced participant group is not required for positivistic aims such as generalisability, however the nature of social media gave me many opportunities to consider just how little of the classic scientific objectivity remained in the research relationship.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: twitter

The interest in the twitter ad was amazing – retweets by WomenEd meant that I had a lot of interest, quickly. I am quickly feeling like the recruitment process is out of my control, as potential participants publicly announce that they are going to take part, some even put their personal email addresses in the public responses to the advert. This is making me feel so uncomfortable, and also makes me realise how my carefully thought-out ethics proposal doesn’t account for some of the social media issues.



26 individuals responded to this advertisement by email and many Twitter users responded directly to the message in Twitter. Only email responses were taken forward, due to a concern that anyone responding directly (and publically) to the 'tweet' expressing an intention to participate had reduced or eliminated the chance of their data remaining anonymous. Fortunately, people who had publicly responded tended not to send an email requesting further details. This was an interesting 'side-finding'; I wondered if this group of people wanted others to think they were participating, had dissuaded themselves from taking participation further because of the public messages, or perhaps they expected me to respond publicly too, rather than the 'please email for further details' which became my standard response.

The email respondees were contacted within two days with the approved information sheet and a short questionnaire (appendix 10) to ascertain suitability for the study:

- Year group currently/most recently taught
- Number of children and ages
- First half of postcode/nearest town

Social media recruitment techniques can present issues for the researcher, as it is difficult to confirm the age, status and location of the potential participants and they may misrepresent or misunderstand the criteria for participation (Samuel, 2017).

Requesting this information before organizing an interview date and venue was generally successful in identifying suitable participants, but there were some issues

that again raised the question of how to make the study truly feminist.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: Picking your team**

One issue with selecting participants by asking some criteria questions is that I feel like the kid picking the team in PE at school. It is a position of power, where I decide who gets in and who doesn't. Now, I need parameters and I don't have the resources to interview everyone who is interested in the study...but taking the approach I have, I don't have the same justification for strict selection of a group to match a hypothesis. I am already saying that stories are unique and that my analysis looks for discourses and positions towards them...perhaps any story from any teacher mother could provide the material for this.

Six of the original respondees sent back their completed questionnaires within a few days of the email. These people became the initial participant group. Of the other 20 respondees, several have shown continued interest in participating, but have not returned questionnaires. Interestingly, some respondees have continued to contact me every month or so, asking how the study is going and offering to participate in future studies.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: like, retweet**

More twitter issues – one of the prospective participants has been through my timeline, going back over a year, and 'liked' or 'retweeted' lots of my tweets. Some of these do relate to teacher mothers, schools, Ofsted, etc...but some are related to my political views, family, personal interests. Should I have kept the account strictly research related? I started it for research purposes, but it quickly became 'my own' and now it could be influencing my participants to story their experiences in certain ways...either to affiliate with my views, or to draw distinctions between us.

The participant group contacted individually to arrange interviews in public places in their locality. Six interviews were organised, four interviews took place; the personal life of the researcher can also impact on research design and data collection:

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: Letting the side down**

My mum is poorly again, with shingles as well as recovery from chemotherapy. The interviews I set up in Brighton and Cornwall for the Christmas holidays have been cancelled. Kirsty and Jen were so understanding in their replies to emails, but I feel very guilty. They have offered their time and shown an interest in the study, their stories are no less valuable, but I just can't get to them. The ethic of care I have tried to show also applies in other aspects of my life.

#### **3.4.ii: Participant Overview**

The four participants who responded to the questionnaire and interview meeting request are described, briefly, here; along with Sian, the formative study participant. Anonymity has been an important ethical consideration throughout the study and some of the personal details of the participants have been changed slightly, to try to prevent any future reader of this work (or other publications which draw upon the data) identifying them. Some of the details from the transcribed interviews have been changed, such as; age of children, place of work and home and specific detail of key events, and this is reflected in the table below. The 'plot' of the life history has been preserved as far as possible, with the issue of anonymity in mind throughout the process.

*Table 2: Participant information*

Name	Age and Ethnicity	Family context	School context
Charlie	Mid-forties, white UK	Married 2 birth children of secondary school age. 2 step-children of secondary school age.	Key Stage 2 class Semi-rural, medium sized primary school.
Anna	Late twenties, white UK	Married 2 children under 5	EYFS class Large suburban school on outskirts of a major city.
Bell	Early 50s, white UK	Married 2 children, both over 18.	No longer teaching in primary: working in ITE in a university.
Aliyah	Early 30s, Muslim Arab	Divorced 2 children of primary age	Key Stage 2 Large primary school in the suburbs of a major city.
Sian	Late 30s, white UK	Married 1 child, aged 2. Pregnant with second child.	Resigned and serving notice period in a Key Stage 2 class Medium sized rural primary school.

### 3.4.iii: Insiders

The formative study involved a close friend and ex-colleague. As discussed in section 3.4.i, in the main study I decided to recruit participants who were not previously known to me, because of the ethical issues raised by close insider research relationships (Quickfall, 2018). However, some insider research issues continued in the main study, purely because the experience of being a teacher and a mother gave the

participants and I some shared language and experience (Hill-Collins, 1986):

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: insider outsider**

I really enjoyed the interview with Anna. She brought her child with her to the café, which was lovely...but it highlighted some insider relationship issues that I had naively thought would be bypassed by recruiting 'strangers'. Anna's interactions with her toddler, and between the three of us, created that sense of understanding that is both seductive and dangerous, because I knew I was beginning to make assumptions about how Anna felt. Disengaging from the wonderful experience of being with an inquisitive toddler and a supportive, creative parent is perhaps too difficult – it is building relationships with people like Anna and her child that I was trained for, and practised for 15 years.

The community confers insider status on the researcher, it is not the researcher in isolation that decides what their position is (Zinn, 1979). Boundaries also shift throughout the research process and during the interview itself (Griffith, 1998). The question is raised: 'How do we know when we are inside or outside or somewhere in between?' (Acker, 2001 p. 153). In the main study, I did not attempt to hide my insider status of being a mother to a young child:

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: question**

The first email response I got from a potential participant asked a simple question: are you a teacher mother, too? I replied honestly – yes, but if you choose to participate, I want to know about your story.

Ribbens McCarthy and Edwards (2011) suggest that motherhood is a core aspect of identity for many women, which in terms of my study, makes this 'motherhood' signifier particularly important to the idea of being an 'insider'. Insider/outside researcher

distinctions are often a feature of qualitative studies, when interviews are chosen as a method (Cotterill, 1992; Perryman, 2011; Southgate and Shying, 2014).

#### 3.4.iv: Insider Research

Insider research is traditionally applied to qualitative research (Blythe, Wilkes, Jackson and Halcomb, 2013; Griffith, 1998), particularly ethnographic studies, where the researcher hopes to become part of the 'tribe' they are investigating (Acker, 2001). It is generally described using similar terms; insider research is 'conducted by people who are already members of the community they are seeking to investigate' (Humphrey, 2012, p.572, also see Coghlan and Brannick, 2005). Insider researchers share a 'subjective position' with their participants, based on ethnicity, social class, disability, race or other intersecting signifiers (Malpass, Sales and Feder, 2016; Griffith, 1998). Insider researchers and participants have 'undergone similar experiences, possess a common history and share taken-for-granted knowledge' (Hill-Collins, 1986, p.526). These definitions of 'insider researcher' all apply to this study.

Further distinctions have been made in the researcher/researched dynamic, including the idea of 'indigenous and external' (Banks, 1998, p.7), pertaining to the origins of the researcher/participant. Banks sees the insider/outsider distinction as a perspective taken during the research, whereas the indigenous label would denote a more significant and lasting bond between the researcher and the participant, such as being from the same town, or having worked at the same place for many years.

Griffith (1998) suggests that as researchers from any discipline, we cannot be 'outside of society' (p.361); there is an element of insider work in any research project, just as we may also remain outsiders, based on some descriptors or signifiers (Wilkinson and Kitzinger, 2013). It would appear, given the definitions of insider research stated above, that most researchers in education are going to be affected by this distinction, whether they are conducting interviews, case studies, netnographies (see Kell, 2016, for an example), or meta-analyses. There will be shared signifiers such as similar backgrounds and beliefs, even in research relationships that are conducted over a distance. Rooney (2005), also suggests that insider research has the potential to increase validity through the richness and authenticity of the responses.

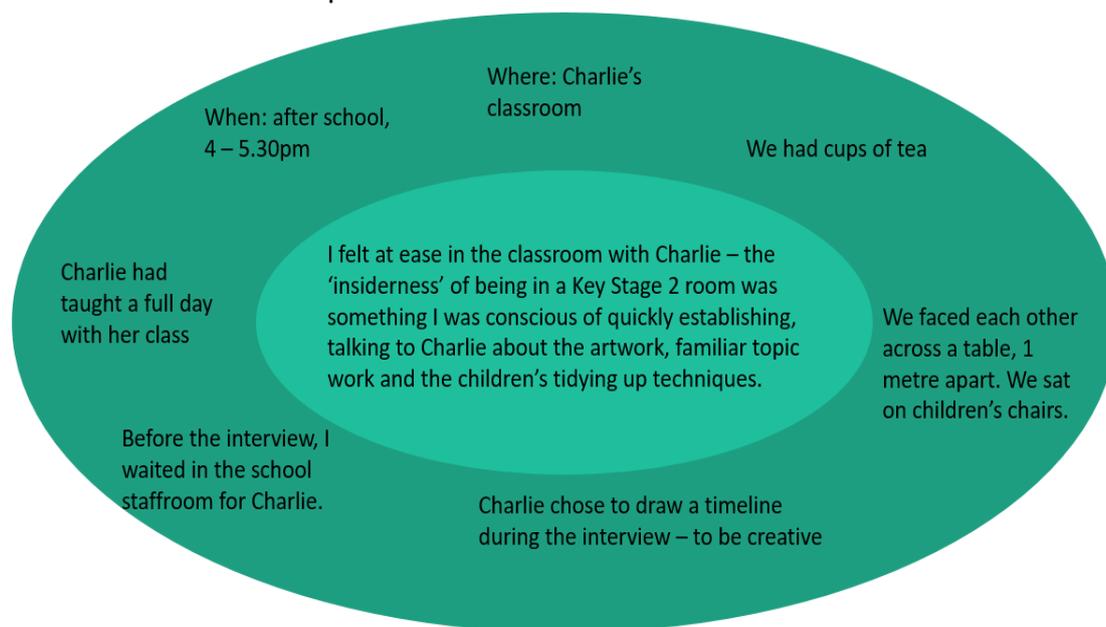
#### 3.4.v: The geography and history of the interviews

For each participant, I 'mapped' the interview (Clarke, 2005) in terms of location, duration and 'feel' of the event from my perspective (see figure 10). This was a natural progression from the general research journal I had been keeping, which I hoped would add to my 'reflexivity toolkit' (Blythe, Wilkes, Jackson and Halcomb, 2013; Pillow, 2003). Basic maps of initial thoughts and feelings can then feed into 'situational maps' (Pasque, 2013), where the interview discussion is recorded visually, mapping complex 'situations of action and positionality, of the heterogeneous discourses to which we are all constantly awash' (Clarke, 2005; also Pasque, 2013).

The mapping of the interview after each one also helped me to accept my position in the research; at first, my reaction to interviewing was to question what benefit the participants could possibly achieve from participating and how I could claim authorship

of their stories. The mapping reminded me that as a researcher I had a place in the story beyond the researcher guilt described by Finch (1984); ‘feeling that my interviewees need to know how to protect themselves from people like me’ (1984, p.80).

### Charlie’s interview map



*Figure 10: Example of an interview map.*

Locations of the interviews were chosen by the participants and my only stipulation was that it should be a public place, not their home, which was part of the ethics approval for the study to support safeguarding and healthy researcher/participant relationships (BERA, 2018). Hoschild and Machung (2003) interviewed women in their homes, which for many was an incentive for taking part, but visiting private homes for this study could have put me in a vulnerable position (Sheffield Hallam University, 2020). Interview locations varied; a garden centre, coffee shop, pub garden, primary

school classroom and restaurant. Geographical location also varied, from rural areas to the inner city.

The timings of interviews varied across the five, but what all of these had in common was that the participants were between 'shifts' when they met me. Sian was on school holidays but had come into school to work, so could meet me between there and home. Anna was not working that day, but had her young child with her, otherwise she would not have been able to meet me. Bell was between work and home, as was Sarah, who I met in her school. Aliyah met me after school, with time constraints as she had to collect her children from the childminder.

All of the interview situations were grounded in a sort of pragmatism about 'it's now or never' and 'it's here or nowhere'. These women would not easily have been able to come to my university campus to be interviewed in a calm office setting, during the daytime and with no other commitments and 'shifts' to race off to. As a researcher, already aware of how much I was asking of them in terms of time, energy and potentially emotional involvement, I was keen to make the interviews as easy for them as possible, which meant asking the participants to suggest a place and time to suit them. The flexible nature of the interviews is demonstrated in the following two journal extracts, which also explain some of the ethical and methodological questions

that arose:

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: the restaurant**

By the time I met Bell, it was dark – after seven, and people were going out for the evening rather than commuting home at this point. Bell was tired, I was tired – it felt like a positive interview and Bell was generous with her time and energy, but I did wonder if the story would have been very different if told earlier in the day, or on a non-working day.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: borrowed time**

Aliyah agreed to meet me again, after the disaster we had when we first tried to meet up (I was delayed in traffic for two hours). She is coming from school and meeting me on the way home – with a time limit, because her children will be on their own if she is late home. This is humbling. She is inconvenienced by this interview, its time she hasn't got, for a project she will get none of the credit for. All I can do is write down these feelings and experiences and read them, re-read them, to remind me of the responsibility of being the researcher.

### [3.4.vi: Life-History Interviews](#)

Unstructured interviews were initially daunting, as the following extract suggests; even seemingly unimportant details, like not having seen the participants before so that I could recognise them, were a source of some anxiety. I sent participants a photo of me when arranging the interview:

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: The start**

The start of every interview so far has been really terrifying. The first one was especially so. You walk into a room and realise that you have no questions – you just expect them, a person you have never met, to talk to you about their life for an hour. And the other thing I realised quickly was that I didn't know what the participant looked like – on twitter, most teachers don't use portraits for their profile picture. Interviews in public places mean that I spend a lot of time smiling expectantly at people who are just trying to get across the room.

On reflection, unstructured interviews gave participants a sense of control over the process and gave more opportunities for their voices to be heard in the stories (Smith, 2007; Dhunpath, 2000). As reflected in the following extract, my participants were keen to share their stories and I wondered often if they would have been limited by interview questions, however well thought-out:

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: Unstructured**

The interviews so far have been 'easy'. Or at least, in terms of generating a story. The participants all know in advance that there won't be questions, so that isn't a shock – but what has come across is that they want to tell their stories. They come to meet me in rain, snow, ice – after school, on their 'days off' with children in tow, on the weekend when they have got so many other things they could be doing. The unstructured nature of the interview doesn't seem to have created any problems for them (but I continue to look for issues).

### **3.5 Ethics and Reflexivity**

Ethical considerations became a major part of the research journey (Quickfall, 2018).

In this section, main considerations are discussed and described, beyond those tackled in the evaluation of the pilot (see section 3.3).

### 3.5.i: Anonymity

It is suggested that it is impossible to anonymise insider data (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001), because members of the community will identify themselves and others.

Participant interview transcripts would certainly make them identifiable to someone who knows them well. Breaches of privacy are a real possibility in narrative research, even when pseudonyms are employed (Etter-Lewis, 1996) and so as a researcher it is important to protect participants from harm that may come from them telling their stories (Smythe and Murray, 2000). An example of negotiating issues around anonymity comes from Welch, Happell & Edwards, (2010), who simply do not promise anonymity, but in their findings do not give any details about participants or verbatim quotes. Participants had their own views on anonymity:

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: Use my real name**

No participants ever want to make up their own pseudonym. In fact, three participants have suggested that I use their real names in the write-up. I don't know how to feel about this; have I done a bad job of explaining where this research might end up? I have explained that I don't have ethical approval to use their own names, which made one of the participants laugh! She thought it was funny that a researcher might be a lot more worried about anonymity than a participant.

Part of the decision to recruit participants via social media came from reflections on the formative study and how my insider relationship with Sian had increased the risk of her story being identified (see section 3.4 for further details). I had also considered that being an outsider researcher might be preferable to participants (Blythe et al, 2013), who might feel more assured of anonymity because there is no perceived link between them and the researcher; the reported responses could be 'anyone'.

Use of social media for recruitment adds to the issue of anonymity (Henderson, Johnson & Auld, 2013). Many potential participants responded on Twitter directly, disclosing to a potential audience of millions that they were intending to take part in the study. Henderson et al (2013) suggest that researchers using social media for recruitment share their ethical dilemmas and issues, to better inform the research community in this expanding and little investigated area.

### 3.5.ii: Informed Consent

There are identifiable ethical dilemmas around informed consent (Humphrey 2012), for example, informed consent rituals may become a formality, not a real consideration of whether to take part or not (Juritzen, Grimen & Heggen, 2011). However, consent could be considered a renegotiated situation, throughout the research process, rather than a fixed, summative point (Miller & Bell, 2002). Fully informing participants, particularly in this type of qualitative study might not be possible or desirable, as the research methodology and methods may benefit from revision throughout the process (Juritzen et al., 2011).

Following advice from my supervisors, participants were sent the information sheet (appendix 11) in advance of the interview and given opportunities to withdraw, or to not respond and this was made explicit to them in email communications. Before interviews began, the information sheet was shared in person and the consent form (appendix 12) explained verbally. Experiences from the formative study were pivotal in

this process:

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: Consent**

She responded, slightly exasperated that I had asked if she wanted to take part, as I already knew she did. I sent the information sheet through to her, knowing she probably wouldn't read it as she had a fair understanding of what the study was about. So ethically, I am not convinced that I will have informed consent – she thinks she knows what it is to be, but actually, I have no way of knowing whether she understands or not. (*n.b. subsequent to this extract, and before the interview began, I read out the information sheet to the participant, which became the first part of every recording of each interview*).

#### **3.5.iii: Do No Harm**

A commonly reported ethical conflict in narrative research is being trusted by participants with their private lives and personal stories (Smythe and Murray, 2000), but then making these public through publication and dissemination. The relationship between participant and researcher switches to one between the researcher/author and the reader of the thesis or report, potentially creating feelings of betrayal and guilt (Josselson, 1996).

Insider research is difficult and emotional (Cooper & Rogers, 2015; Coy, 2006) making the researcher question their own place in the research process. This can be 'painful, emotional and provocative' (Cooper & Rogers, 2015, p.6.). The emotional effects can

persist, as I found in the days that followed the interviews with participants:

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: emotional carpark**

The interview tonight was too much; it went really well, I think – but I walked away feeling a massive weight on me. When I got into the car, with a two hour journey (at least) to get home, I just cried and cried – I couldn't start the car until I stopped. It was overwhelming that this story is now in my bag, on a recorder – I have been handed it, this unique telling, with an understanding that I will do something worthwhile with it. But I can't help feeling that I don't deserve it. It's too much.

I found that I was not able to disentangle myself from the research and the stories of the women (Moore, 2007). Detachment can be difficult for insider researchers (Sikes & Potts, 2008). At times, the ethical tenet of 'do no harm' was not an idea I was applying to my own well-being and emotional load. As Sikes and Hall (2020) attest, there is 'no shame in looking after our own well-being as we would that of participants when the personal costs do become too harmful' (p.169), however as they acknowledge, our passion as researchers to complete our work and improve conditions for the groups we are working with means that often as researchers we see the emotional pain as part of the work and a price that is well worth paying.

To mitigate the impact of this emotional work, Sikes and Hall recommend that we are aware of the risks and protect ourselves, but also that we should be aware that these sort of investigations may not seem to be potentially 'emotionally and psychologically disturbing – that come to close for comfort because they touch on our own and participants' lives – and so be ready to recognize when this happens' (p.170). They also share the benefits they found in working together and giving each other emotional support, and suggest that this is very helpful when working in areas that

'come too close for comfort' (2020, p.170). As a doctoral researcher, with a focus on an individual project, this is problematic, but a close community of researchers were great support to me throughout the work, both at the university where I was studying, and the university where I work. Being able to discuss issues as they arose, such as the one described in the following journal extract, was invaluable for my emotional well-being:

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: Twitter

I have taken the twitter app off my phone for a while, as one of my interview participants keeps popping up in my timeline and it looks like she is having a tough time at work. I feel like I need to keep my distance, but would find it hard not to engage if I read the tweets. The ethics here are complex. I have a relationship with her now, but the agreement was a **research relationship**.

A feminist perspective on insider research suggests women are the best informants about their own lives (Acker, 2001, Harding, 1987). A feminist researcher should therefore come as close as possible to positioning herself as the 'interlocutor' (Wallbank, 2001), but there is no guarantee of rapport in the research relationship

(Blythe et al., 2013).

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: Clicking**

Of all the interviews, hers was the one that I think made me feel most on edge. I don't know why – it was friendly, I didn't sense that she wanted to withdraw or was unhappy with how it went – but it just wasn't like the others felt. When she talked about her experiences, I could recognise parallels in my own; she really seemed to open up...but the atmosphere was different. Perhaps we were tired, or something had happened earlier in the day...perhaps she didn't like my accent, or my dress, maybe I reminded her of someone she doesn't get on with, or she didn't like the way I had placed the recorder on the table. Or perhaps from her point of view, it was a great experience...Maybe it is me.

The 'micro-politics of the research must be addressed' (Bhavnani, 1993, p.98) because participants could feel that my findings had been used against the interests of them as individuals, or their organisation, their families and friends (Wallbank, 2001). I can imagine participants questioning 'whose side are you on?' (Acker, 2001). The individual realities of the participants are vital to the understanding of their experiences - 'insider research remains a necessary, albeit messy vehicle in social research' (Cooper and Rogers, 2015 p. 1).

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: Whose side are you on?**

Using parts of Willig's 6 stage discourse analysis model has thrown up some major issues with feminist ethics for me. I am taking the transcripts and looking for positions, then looking for reasons for positioning herself in that way...what is in it for her? It feels uncomfortable – but then I can't just report what I have been told without analysis...it wouldn't answer my questions and it wouldn't fit with what I believe about how these ideas of motherhood work. I am changing my mind about how much I share. It wouldn't be fair to ask participants to comment on what I have analysed as their positionings.

### 3.5.iv: Reflexivity and the Issue of Knowledge

The 'insiderness' of the participant/researcher relationship meant that a careful consideration of my position was required, including an awareness of my own biases, opinions, tendencies and beliefs (Berger, 2015); see chapter 1 (section 1.2.iv). How I represent the five study participants is troublesome, particularly with the addition of historical and social elements to make the stories into life histories - 'whose story is it - the researcher or the researched?' (Pillow, 2003, p. 176).

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: coding the participants?**

I have just arrived home from interviewing Aliyah, a really long drive back. All I can think about now is how I describe her in the research. She is a Muslim woman, born in the Middle East – I didn't ask her how she wanted this to be recorded in the research, or if she wanted this recorded at all. In the interview transcript it is going to be clear, but I think I will have to get in touch with her about how I 'code' her as a participant. It is all very odd and uncomfortable, thinking about her in this mechanical, pigeonholing way, when she has just talked to me about her life – her joys, her struggles, her relationships.

Pillow (2003), accepts that researchers use reflexivity to validate and question their practice (Pillow, 2003, p.175), but that there are problems with reflexivity as a concept and an activity. Patai (1994) suggests that people who have time for reflexivity are privileged academics, and questions whether reflexivity has ever improved research.

Reflexivity will not 'automatically strengthen the credibility of an account' (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1995, p.9). However, as Pillow (2003), asserts, not attempting to be reflexive is hardly likely to improve qualitative research, so we might as well try to consider

what we are doing and why, throughout the process. Pillow (2003) advocates an uncomfortable reflexivity, rather than the cosy and forgiving journal of minor weaknesses, and this became part of the lived experience of carrying out the research project. Every interview was a reminder of my insider status and my feelings about my own parenting and teaching, a personal sting when I reflected on the ethics of the study, as well as what the study was doing to me as a researcher:

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: Keeping a research journal**

Many of these (journal entries) included 'meta-entries' about the business of keeping a research journal. Keeping a research journal has been like picking a scab, over and over and over and over again, until it seems certain that a scar is unavoidable. The worst feeling is that some of the ethical scabs that I keep picking will never heal and I will just have to learn to live with them, in the work, in the thesis, in whatever I do next. Why did I think keeping a journal would solve every issue?

As a researcher, the impact of the study on me was a consideration of the ethics approval process (see appendix 15), however, on reflection this consideration was not sufficiently deep to take into account the challenging situation of being an insider researcher involved in unstructured interviews with other women. After the interviews, I often felt exhausted and emotionally drained, and conflicted about the research relationships with the participants. Researchers 'need to be aware of the possible repercussions' (Sikes, 2010, p.20) of researching lives of others and protect themselves. Discussing the experiences of narrative research with my supervisors and other researchers has helped considerably, and using Pillow's work on uncomfortable reflexivity (2003) has reinforced the importance of 'staying with' the discomfort to better inform the research.

There are significant issues concerning the acquisition of knowledge that trouble an insider research perspective. As discussed, postmodernist perspectives reject the idea that ontological distinctions must be drawn, but presuming a social constructionist epistemology and using Foucauldian discourse analysis means that my ability to analyse the data depends on the possibility of an insider researcher being able to identify the discourses at work in their own lives; to see from outside as well as inside.

Acker, Barry and Esseveld (1983) talk about the 'adequacy' of findings, urging that we question whether our research fairly and accurately 'reflect the aspects of life that we claim they represent?' (p.431). Cooper and Rogers (2015), go further and suggest that the suspicion aimed at insider research has led to researchers being more reflexive and careful about their assumptions, thus increasing validity.

Researcher assumptions are often cited as a major drawback in trying to conduct insider research (Berger, 2015; Couture, Zaidi & Maticka-Tyndall, 2012; Drake, 2010; Sanger, 2010; Mercer, 2007). Drake (2010) likens this to the difference between an outsider or insider exploring a coastal geographical area. The insider researcher may assume or presume that everyone involved has the same understanding; that their experiences and memories are representative of the community; 'Insider status entitles her to represent the voice of her participants in what is essentially her own' (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2013). In the literature this is described as an innocent

occurrence, but there is also a suggestion of deliberate misrepresentation, designed to serve the researcher's interest (Wallbank, 2001). My own journal reflected this idea:

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Shift Story: speaking for Sian**

A strange thing happened when I was typing the transcript of Sian's interview. The interview itself had been a frustrating event; we had to move twice to get away from construction noise in the beer garden of a village pub. Sian had also taken several phone calls from home, from a seemingly agitated partner, which I did not want to include in the transcript. I started to edit as I was typing; taking out our comments on the noise, on the phone calls – and it crossed my mind that this sort of editing could quite easily lead to words and phrases being changed slightly to clarify meaning – to clarify what **I mean**, not perhaps what Sian meant at the time. I decided to transcribe the interview as closely to the recording as I could at that point, partly to remind myself that Sian does not speak with my voice.

Drawing upon Drake's metaphor of the coastal explorers, I think we 'sell short' the research community if we assume that we are either conscientious outsiders or lazy insiders. Assumptions can be pervasive and hard to identify, but a thorough literature review will uncover some assumptions and misrepresented information. There is also the benefit of the local knowledge that Drake refers to, and many have suggested that insider studies gain deep insight and engagement, because and not in spite of the shared knowledge that the researcher and participants have (Cooper & Rogers, 2015; Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, Blythe et al 2013; Mercer, 2007).

It has been suggested that a form of bravery is required to choose insider research and write about it; the exposure of your own feelings, personal life and authentic voice is a risk and can cause anxiety for the researcher (Vickers, 2002). Oakley (1979), suggests

that 'academic research projects bear an intimate relationship to the researcher's life' (p.5). It is true that this doctoral project was initially provoked by my 'personal dramas' (Oakley, 1979). Given the commitment of time and finances involved in doctoral study, it is not unusual for candidates to pursue an area that is of personal importance (Brailsford, 2010, Hawkes, 2016) and there has been a surprising lack of research into choice of doctoral focus (McCulloch, Guerin, Jayatilaka, Calder and Ranasinghe, 2017).

My doctoral journey began with a choice between this personal and 'insider' work (as I was still a full time teacher at that point) and a less personal study of children's experiences of the transition between Early Years and Key Stage 1. The more personal study was more appealing, more immediate and more motivating; it also had the benefit of making my doctorate, which was essentially the third priority in my life (Evans, 2002), a part of the top two priorities – motherhood and work. It could be argued that this makes the research much more vulnerable to assumption and bias (Wilkinson and Kitzinger, 2013). At the time, with a full time teaching post, a toddler and other caring responsibilities, the insider research also seemed easier and more accessible. The thought of spending doctoral fees on work that was about my situation, and women like me, was also more attractive.

More reflection is needed on whether this 'personal interest skew' could be detrimental to the quality of research across the social sciences; however, data on how doctorates are funded, how thesis focus is chosen and whether professional doctoral candidates have different motivations, is scant (McCulloch, Guerin, Jayatilaka, Calder and Ranasinghe, 2017; Taylor and Adams, 2020). The added challenge of a part-time route, alongside concerns that a professional doctorate like an EdD has additional

criteria for relevance to the profession and future practice, are both factors that may affect a decision on focus and methodology.

### 3.6 Data Analysis

In this section, narrative analysis and Foucauldian discourse analysis are explained. The model for analysis of the study data begins with Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA), and the use of a six-stage model (Willig, 2008) to scaffold the process. The FDA was then applied to an analysis model based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979); Ecological Systems Discourse Analysis (ESDA).

#### 3.6.i: Discourses

Narrative analysis examines how people make sense of their 'experiences in society through language' (Souto-Manning, 2014, p.165). Having used a narrative approach to my research design, narrative analysis is a natural continuum for looking at the participant's sense-making in her story. Life-history research often combines the individual's experience with the social and political events of the time, analysing the impact on lives (Bold, 2012, p.96-97). This endeavour often turns to an analysis of how the social and political discourses of the time shape and restrict the individual – narrative could be seen as the individual looking out, posing research questions based on the individual's view of their experiences (Souto-Manning, 2014). However, using discourse analysis in combination with life-history may highlight additional considerations of the language used by participants. The definitions of narrative analysis, narrative inquiry and discourse analysis vary widely (Jaworski & Coupland,

1999; Johnstone, 2001; Thomas, 2013); see appendix 6 for a family tree of narrative and discourse analysis.

Discourse analysis broadly concerns the 'study of language in use' (Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2001, p.3, see also Miller, 2000) and may be described in contrast to the individual looking out (Souto-Manning, 2014) approach of narrative analysis; as it deals with the way the outside world creates the narratives of individuals, looking at a social problem as the motivation to investigate (Souto-Manning, 2014). The discourse analyst describes the language text, interprets the relationship between the discursive processes and the text, and explains the relationship between the discursive processes and the social processes (Fairclough, 1995, p.97). Thomas (2013) puts this simply, when he says that in 'gutting the interview' the discourse analyst is focussed on 'the use of particular words, phrases, idioms, similes, metaphors, kinds of rhetoric' (Thomas, 2013, p.242).

Discourse analysis has fragmented and become a forest of different methods of analysis (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000; also see appendix 6), including critical discourse analysis and Foucauldian discourse analysis, both of which concerned with uncovering power discourses in everyday narratives and based on the idea that there 'are no neutral words or forms – words and forms that can belong to 'no-one', language has been completely taken over, shot through with intentions and accents.' (Bakhtin, 1981, p.165).

### 3.6.ii: Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

Souto-Manning (2014) describes discourse analysis as powerful, because of the connection between discourse and social context (p.162). What has led me to discourse analysis is how DA plays 'a role in making categories of people and new ways for people to be' (Hacking, 1986, p.223). Teacher mothers have been made a category of people (Pinnegar, Dulude-Lay, Bigham & Dulude, 2005), with arguably a new way to 'be' – or at least, expectations of how to behave in those roles (Conley & Jenkins, 2011; Dillabough, 1999; McNamara, Howson, Gunter & Fryers, 2010; Page, 2013; Thompson & Kehily, 2011). As Souto-Manning (2014) points out, there is an opportunity to connect the individual and personal stories of women, with a social context. Discourse analysis is also considered a suitable, consistent tool for poststructuralist feminist researchers (Gavey, 1989).

Foucauldian discourse analysis is used to examine sociocultural and historical impact (Andersen, 2003) on the creation and continuation of discourses (for a guide to terminology for FDA, see appendix 7). These discourses shape how people think, behave and feel towards groups and individuals and a Foucauldian discourse analyst deconstructs how language is used to illuminate these discourses (Willig, 2008). FDA depends on the constructionist view that language alone constructs meaning.

Although, as discussed, the definition of what constitutes a discourse is wide, a limitation of FDA is that it cannot account for the way bodies can communicate as the 'embodiment of lived experience' (Stevenson, 2004, p.5) and what Radley (1995) describes as extra-discursiveness (also Ramazanoglu, 1993). Edwards (1995), suggests that even bodily communication and experience are interpreted or analysed using

language. Sims-Schouten, Riley & Willig (2007) give examples of non-discursive elements such as 'financial stability' in their interview transcripts, which they state cannot be accounted for by FDA – however, they do not consider that the very idea of what financial stability means could be viewed as an object created by discourse; what is considered an acceptable living standard is a discourse maintained by a community or society. The non-discursive realm is not ignored by FDA, but the evidence considered when illuminating discursive constructs is usually discursive in nature (Speer, 2007).

'It is through discourse that power relations are maintained in society' (Foucault, 1978, p.162), is the basis of this method of analysis, and it is not just what is said, but how it is said in a particular structure (Acker, 2001). Acker is referring to the power position of the narrator, as an aspect of the analysis, acknowledging that understanding a discourse is impossible without an understanding of the specific context (Souto-Manning, 2014, p.162). FDA is finding the statements that 'function to put a discursive frame' around an individual or group, and form a particular way of viewing that group or individual, and how they see themselves (Graham, 2005, p.10). Scheurich (1997) describes FDA as uncovering how the problem group is seen or known as a problem, which leads to questions about how these ways of knowing and talking have become normal or privileged, and what this reveals about the operation of power, particularly relevant to feminist research (Scott, 1990).

The table below outlines each stage of Willig's model (2008), which was used as part of the unique model for data analysis in this study (ecological systems discourse analysis).

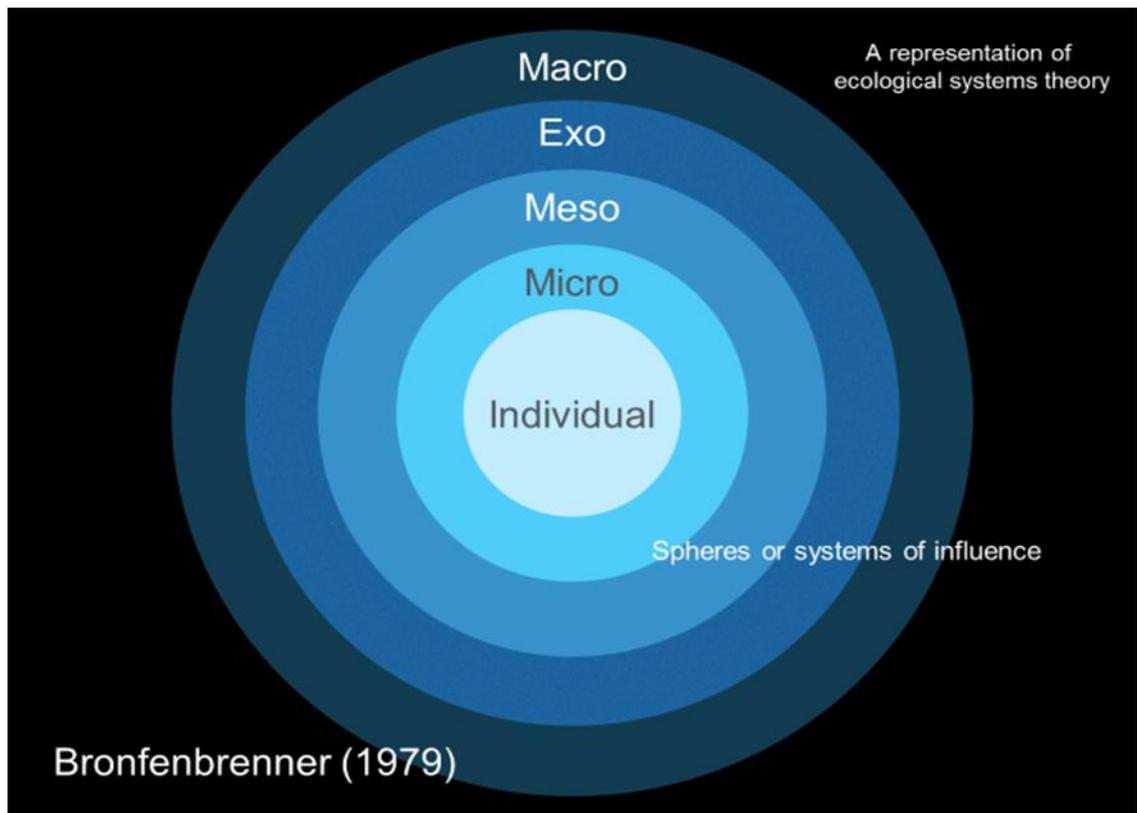
*Table 3: Willig's Model of FDA (2008).*

Willig's (2008) Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Model, as applied to my research data	
Stage	Description of process
Stage 1: Discursive constructions	<p>Willig's first step is to identify the discursive objects and the way they are constructed. Identifying the discursive objects should already have been done, in the phrasing of the research question (Willig, 2008, p.115).</p> <p>The discursive objects are 'teaching' (denoted in the question by teacher and work) and 'motherhood' (denoted by mothers and mothering). The first stage of analysis involves the identification of different ways these objects are 'constructed' in the text (Kendall &amp; Wickham, 1999). Willig urges the researcher not to simply look for keywords, as the objects may be referred to in subtle ways (2008, p.115).</p>
Stage 2: Discourses	<p>Willig (2008) describes stage 2 as a focus on the differences in constructions (in this case, of teacher-motherhood). I have organised some of the constructions of teacher-motherhood that were identifiable in the text in a table, together with examples of the transcribed interview and the discourses that these might represent (appendix 20). As in other examples of FDA in use (Crowe, 2005; Stevenson, 2004; Van Ness et al., 2017) the identification of these discourses can be problematic (Antaki, Billig, Edwards &amp; Potter, 2003). I have followed the Willig model here, but with concern that identifying the discourses 'ad hoc', as seems to be the suggestion, could easily lead to the 'circular discovery of discourses' (Antaki et al., 2003; Stevenson, 2004). Acknowledging that my interpretation is one amongst many possible interpretations, highlights that the participant is not a 'thing in the world', whose meaning lies ready to be discovered (Miller, 2000, p.330).</p>
Stage 3: Action Orientation	<p>Willig (2008, p.116) describes this stage as a 'closer examination' of the discourses within the discursive construction that inscribe the 'object' or 'body' in different ways. Looking at the action orientation means thinking about the reasons why 'teacher mother' has been described in the way it has. Why does the participant talk about herself as ultimately responsible for the health and care of her child? How could this discourse be deployed, and for what reasons?</p>
Stage 4: Positionings	<p>Willig (2008) now suggests that we take a closer look at the subject positions offered by the discourses, to the 'object' - in this case, a person, so a 'subject'. Willig suggests that discourses 'make available positions within networks of meaning that speakers can take up (as well as place others within' (p.116). This is complicated by an idea that the subject position identified is not a role – they offer a position to speak and act from. As Willig points out, this has epistemological implications, as having a subject position may limit what can be thought and experienced by the speaker (p.117). From a subject position, ways of seeing and 'codifying certain practices' are privileged (Deleuze, 1988, p.11).</p>
Stage 5: Practice	<p>This stage involves a systematic review of how the discursive constructions and subject positions open up or close down options for acting (Willig, 2008). 'Certain practices become legitimate forms of behaviour from within particular discourses.' (ibid, p.117). For example, in the pilot interview Sian blames herself for her perceived poor performance in teaching since she had</p>

	<p>her baby, whilst acknowledging that there are many factors that prevent her working at the same pace and for the same hours that she used to. Her behaviour is to become the guilty party, to 'keep her head down'; despite the legal position her employers are in, to safeguard her well-being and to support her with a transition back into the classroom.</p>
<p>Stage 6: Subjectivity</p>	<p>In the final stage, Willig (2008) looks at the relationship with discourse and subjectivity (p.117). Having taken up subject positions, the participant's future actions are tied to a 'way of being in the world' (Davies &amp; Harre, 1999, p.35; Willig, 2008, p.117).</p> <p>Willig (2008) suggests a straightforward reading of the previous five stages, in order to identify the consequences for subjectivity, but metaphor and the positioning of 'I' in the text have also been suggested as tools for highlighting these relationships (Pinnegar &amp; Daynes, 2007, p.5). Willig suggests that this stage of the analysis is the most speculative, but it is more that speculative – it is suggesting a direct link between what is said, and what is felt, thought, believed and done. There is a leap between the existence or availability of subject positions and the feelings and actions that are theorised as caused by these positions. There is dispute as to whether the postmodern position necessitates that this relationship is causally bound; it seems possible that although subject positions are likely to create conditions where some actions are more likely, for an individual, we could not claim that this is an inevitability (Willig, 2008).</p>

### 3.6.iii: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model

Bronfenbrenner's original model was designed for understanding the worldviews of young children, in trying to illuminate developmental delays and influences on their perceptions of their own place in their world (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). It has since been used for studies on adult lives (Hoare, 2009) and to explore the spheres of influence on teacher parents (Kell, 2016). It has also been used as part of a data analysis framework in combination with thematic analysis (Bluteau, Clouder and Cureton, 2017). The theory is based on the assumption that relationships are embedded in systems that affect and influence them.



*Figure 11: Commonly used representation of Bronfenbrenner's theory (1979).*

It is important to point out here that the classic diagram of ever decreasing circles is just one part of the theory, which actually has three other major interconnecting parts. This diagram represents the CONTEXT part of the ecological systems. Bronfenbrenner added to his theory over time and called this evolved model a bioecological model of human development (Ashiabi & O'Neal, 2015; Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Whilst very often the theory is used as if only the 'context' quarter existed (Tudge, Mokrova, Hatfield & Karnik, 2009) it is likely that some of the perceived weaknesses in the model are due to just one dimension of it being considered.



Figure 12: Complete bioecological systems theory model.

Bronfenbrenner's later adaptations to the theory, including a 'chronosystem' (Berger, 2012; Bronfenbrenner, 1995, 2005) adds the influence of time. Macro-time, also known as the chronosystem, is about the changes to the whole **context** of the individual over time. The chronosystem describes how the rest of the ecological system changes over time, and more specifically, the lifetime of the individual. This helps in exploring how changing policies and discourses over time may have influenced actions, and can be reconciled in our current ecological system - reminiscent of Foucault's genealogy (1972, 2010) and the idea that discourses change over time and

should be 'dug up', as part of understanding our cultural history. This also fits with life-history interviewing, where historical and political context is taken into account (Goodson & Sikes, 2001).

### Critique of the theory

Use and misuse of Bronfenbrenner's theory has been critiqued, particularly the simplification of the model that was intended to take into account complexity of life experience (Tudge, Hatfield and Karnik, 2009). Bronfenbrenner's evolving theory included dimensions of process, person, context and time (Bronfenbrenner, 1988; 1993; 1994), which have been taken into account in the model for analysis here.

#### **Theory is too broad/oversimplified**

Bronfenbrenner's theory has come under fire for both being too broad in scope and oversimplifying the world of the individual; perhaps because for some complexity theorists, it reduces incredibly complex processes like learning to a system of factors, whilst for some cognitive psychologists it covers too much to be useful. Although Bronfenbrenner's theory has been criticised for being oversimplified (Kell, 2016) it gives a framework for thinking about the complexity of an individual world, particularly when the whole theory is used. This also sits with intersectionality and a perspective of power as a dynamic process (Bilge, 2013). Bilge discusses how intersectionality works at a microsocial and macrosocial level (2010), reminiscent of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems.

#### **Detail required is too extensive**

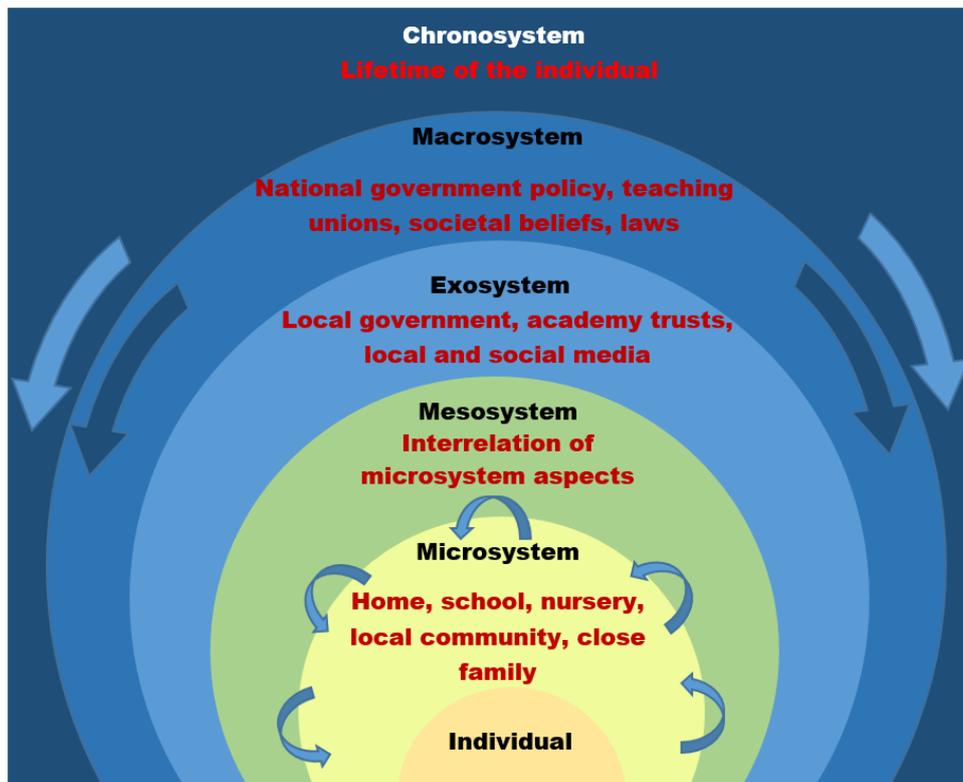
Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems are also criticised for requiring too much detail in practice. However, it can be argued that Bronfenbrenner never expected this theory to

become a form filling exercise in collecting all the information about an individual in order to analyse their ecological systems, or predict their future. What he perhaps set out to do with this theory is show how complex and delicate the process of development is, and how small interactions in the microsystem have huge impacts.

### **Crossing of boundaries between systems is too complex**

Another critique of the theory is that crossing between the ecological systems is complex and never fully explained, for example, how ideas from the macrosystem filter through to the microsystem and the individual. There are also some grey areas where it can be tricky to decide where in the ecological system some aspects of life should go, for example, when the relationships an individual has are not 'standard'. If you have never met your father, does he belong in the microsystem, or the macrosystem is something of a myth? Again, this critique seems to arise when the theory is pressed into use as a methodical, systematic guide to development, where each element of the theory should be possible to 'fill in' for an individual.

Bronfenbrenner's point is to explore just how complex, interconnected and tangled a life can be, as a sort of antidote to theories that reduced development of the individual to single factors such as genetics, parenting style or environment. Bronfenbrenner attempts to capture something of the wealth of factors that influence how we learn and grow, which whilst flawed, can be viewed as a refreshing change to treating individuals as machines that can be programmed.



*Figure 13: Ecological systems as they may be organised for a teacher-mother.*

In figure 13, I have adapted Bronfenbrenner's original conceptions of what each system may represent to reflect the context of a teacher and mother. Clearly, how this is organised for an individual will vary; for example, for someone working as a local councillor, local government discourse may be part of their microsystem. Participants, if given the opportunity, may have organised a conception of their ecological systems in different ways. What Bronfenbrenner's model does for this study is to prevent the analysis and interpretation of individual stories to be reduced to one of three common current views of identity (Hoare, 2009), accepting the complexity of a whole person in the application of theory and tools to the analysis of data about that person. For this study it provides a framework for thinking about different influences on teacher mothers. It is included in my theoretical framework to support a Foucauldian analysis of power within the systems, rather than assuming that subjects of domination are

indeed dominated from one place, or by one person or group (Davis, 2008). This also sits with intersectionality and a perspective of power as a dynamic process (Bilge, 2010).

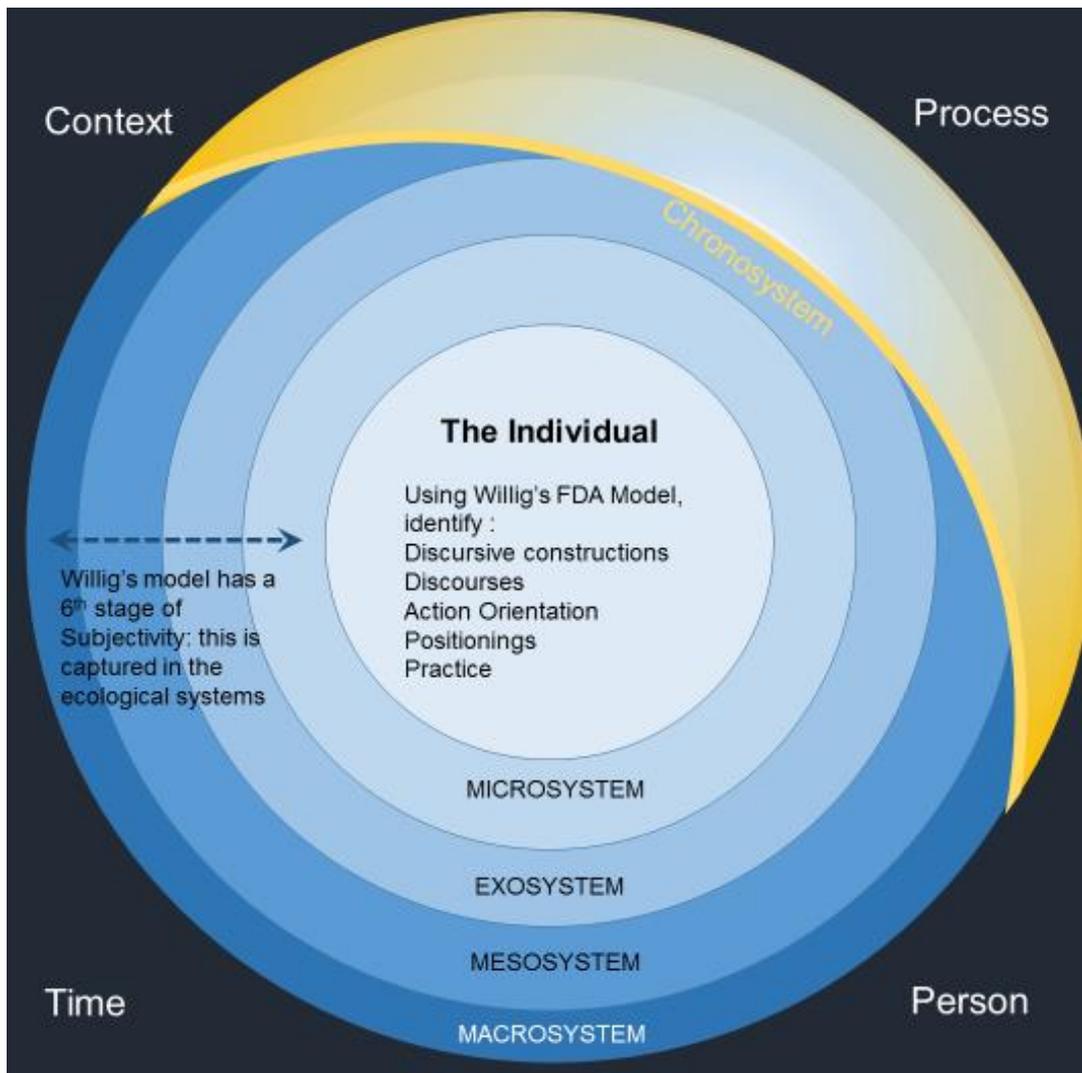
As a researcher, my role is to track the narrative through the system;

*Authors move their narratives of individual lives back and forth through different layers of situated engagement in the microsystem (family and Friends) and mesosystem (schools, local communities, workplaces) to broader areas of indirect engagement represented in the exosystem and macrosystem. Harnett, 2010, p. 165*

Hoare (2009) argues that using reductionist models, which look at details and separate aspects of a whole person, are damaging; 'the end result is a reduction of the entire organism to a partial, lopsided view, a view that varies depending on the lens in use.' (Hoare, 2009, p.68). It is intended that Bronfenbrenner's theory, used as part of the theoretical framework and analysis tool, has added to the richness of analysis and appreciation of the whole person.

#### 3.6.iv: Ecological Systems Discourse Analysis

Ecological systems discourse analysis shows where the participant was positioning themselves in relation to their worlds, what they were saying about their microsystems, mesosystems and the macrosystem, and then feed into a bigger project of transposing all five ESDA analyses (appendix 21) to show where we might find points of coalescence and convergence in the lives of other teacher-mothers (Allen & Baber, 1992, p.13; Ramatanoglu and Holland, 2002).



*Figure 14: Exploring Willig's process with Bronfenbrenner's model (1979).*

Ecological systems and Foucauldian discourse analysis have been used to analyse individual and coalesced data, as set out in the table below:

*Table 4: Ecological Systems Discourse Analysis Process*

Ecological Systems Discourse Analysis process used in this study		
FDA Stage	Description of FDA process (for individual stories and coalesced discourses)	Description of Ecological Systems process (for individual stories – then one coalesced map produced).
Stage 1: Discursive constructions	Construction identified – teacher mother and all synonyms for these (see participant sections).	
Stage 2: Discourses	The way teacher-motherhood is described is identified as a discourse. Each story contains many discourses of teacher-mother and also of teacher and mother/parent separately. 	Initial identifications of discourses are considered in terms of where they may apply to an ecological systems model – are they to do with home and close family, school and local community, wider community, or national/international systems?
Stage 3: Action Orientation	At this stage the researcher analyses why these discourses have been used in the story – what potential benefits are there to deploying this discourse? What does it help to explain?	
Stage 4: Positionings	How does the woman telling her story position herself in terms of the discourse? Is she identifying something about other mothers that doesn't apply to her? 	Discourses plotted on an ecological system 'map' and alternative interpretations of system borders (the line drawn between micro and meso systems, for example) and placement of discourses are considered. Limitations of positions are drawn out – are some systems being overlooked? Are discourses clustered?
Stage 5: Practice	In this stage, the researcher looks at what actions open up or close down, depending on how the teacher-mother has positioned herself within the discourse.	
Stage 6: Subjectivity	Given the previous five stages, consideration is given to the potential next actions and options of the participant and how the discourses and their positions in regards to them affect the future. 	Ecological systems maps for each woman interviewed give an indication of where the discourses identified in their stories may influence their lives.

For individual maps, see Appendix 21. For the collective map, see section 5.2.

The two approaches, FDA and ecological systems, work together to illuminate the connections between the stories of individuals and their worlds – the geography, history and culture – but also the relationships and systems that shape their stories.

The ecological systems serve as boundaries which assist in exploring different aspects of the influences and settings of the stories, but they are also interconnected; 'like Russian dolls, these different layers nest within each other and are contingent upon each other' (Harnett, 2010, p. 165).

### 3.7: Conclusion

In the methodology chapter, I have explained:

- the research design, including how a narrative approach was used
- an overview of lessons learnt from the formative study
- the fieldwork
- ethics and reflexivity
- the data analysis model and process

Ethical considerations have been a major part of my study, in terms of time and emotional investment. Concerns most pertinent to the method and recruitment have been anonymity and informed consent, which may still have been a concern as an outsider researcher, but the ethical implications for this study are made all the more 'human' because I know some of the worlds that my participants negotiate. Whilst the study had full ethical approval (see appendix 22) and all ethical procedures were carried out, including signed consent from participants and careful anonymization of data (see appendices 11 – 15), the discussion continues about how a study can be ethical and truly feminist. The study has highlighted ethical issues that have not been explored extensively in the literature, including recruitment via social media and online presence of researchers.

## 4: Findings

---

### 4.1: Introduction to the stories

In this chapter the stories of each participant will be recounted. In keeping with a feminist approach, I have included as much of the women's own words in each story as possible; to 'offer insights, glimpses into others' worlds and ways of seeing the world' (Fraser and MacDougall, 2016, p.249), and have tried to give them the first and last words in their stories, whilst mindful of issues around anonymity. The stories chart the interview in the temporal order in which events and emotions were recounted, because gaining understanding of each emotional event requires some consideration of how this fits into the narrative (Nussbaum, 2003); narrative past is 'indispensable for understanding any present instance of emotionality' (Kleres, 2011, p.185).

However, aspects and events are not recounted here to reflect how many minutes were spent on them in the interview. Some events recounted in detail here were not the most lengthy sections of the interview transcript and importance given to the story by the participant has been the guiding principle in writing the recounts; in an attempt to minimise the challenges that accompany attempting to 'recognise multiple interpretations' of the same narrative (Bold, 2012, p.62). An example of this is the emphasis given to Sian's experiences of being prepared for all eventualities. This was peppered throughout her interview; in the recount of her story, this aspect has been given a higher profile and the experiences linked to this have been gathered. The rationale here was to make the story easier to follow for the reader, who was not there during the interview, to join together separate incidences of a similar

experience, and also to make the returned-to events more prominent than they may have been in a cold overview of what was described by the participants.

Qualitative research analysis sometimes suffers from a lack of clarity over how the findings have been 'mined' from the vast amounts of data generated (Caelli, Ray and Mill, 2003), and analysis of data adds to the amount of information gathered during the project, rather than reducing or simplifying (Gibbs, 2007). Qualitative analysis also falls foul of criticisms about how biases are present in the themes that have been selected by the researcher (Caelli et al., 2003). My aim here is to justify the analysis, given the research questions and the data collected, whilst acknowledging that there are other ways this could have been done that would have generated a different set of findings from the data.

The extracts of the participant interview transcripts have been shaded, to make these easy to identify. Slight changes have been made to the original transcription for ease, for example, repeated 'ums' and 'errs' have been taken out (Page, 2010). These utterances were not critical for the type of discourse analysis used in this study and their exclusion has made the narrative easier to follow.

## 4.2: Participant sections

### 4.2.i: Order

Participant sections are in the following order:

Sian

Anna

Charlie

Bell

Aliyah

The order of the participant stories is the order they were interviewed in, with Sian first, who was the formative study participant. I have considered the place of her story in the chapter, as her story is the one that shaped the methods and analysis for the following four interviews. I thought about keeping her story separate, or putting it to the end of the chapter, but her interview and story have been so influential on the rest of the research that it feels right to have her at the beginning. It is hoped that this will also help the reader to appreciate how the formative study influenced the rest of the project.

#### 4.2.ii: Thumbnail sketches

Each story begins with a brief thumbnail sketch (Roberts, 2006) of each participant has been constructed to give some contextual information about the teacher mother. However, care has been taken to preserve the anonymity of the participants and some information has been changed to make identification (although still possible) less likely (see Ethics section 3.5.i). This policy of changing information and redacting any identifying geographical detail and names continues in the extracts from participant transcripts. To give an insight into the level of changes made, an example would be that children's ages may have been changed by a year, up or down. These changes may of course make a difference to how the reader interprets the stories, but the ethical imperative here is to provide the level of care regarding anonymity that was promised in consent briefings with the participants (see appendices 11, 12 & 13).

#### 4.2.iii: Interview maps

Maps of interviews give basic details about where and when the interview took place, as well as other details such as who else was present if the interview took place in a

public area, noise level, duration of interview and how the interviewer and interviewee were positioned (Clarke, 2005; also Pasque, 2013). Again, the point of giving this information is two-fold; reflecting on these aspects of each interview helped with the analysis of the transcripts and helped me to appreciate the richness of an unstructured interview. Secondly, this additional context gives the reader a better sense of the interview and may help in identifying flaws and biases in the study in future critiques and analysis of the data.

#### 4.2.iv: Foucauldian Discourse Analysis of transcripts

Willig's Foucauldian discourse analysis model was used to analyse the interview data. Discursive constructions are described first, then discourses, action orientations, subject positionings, practice and subjectivity are discussed using selected quotations from the transcripts.

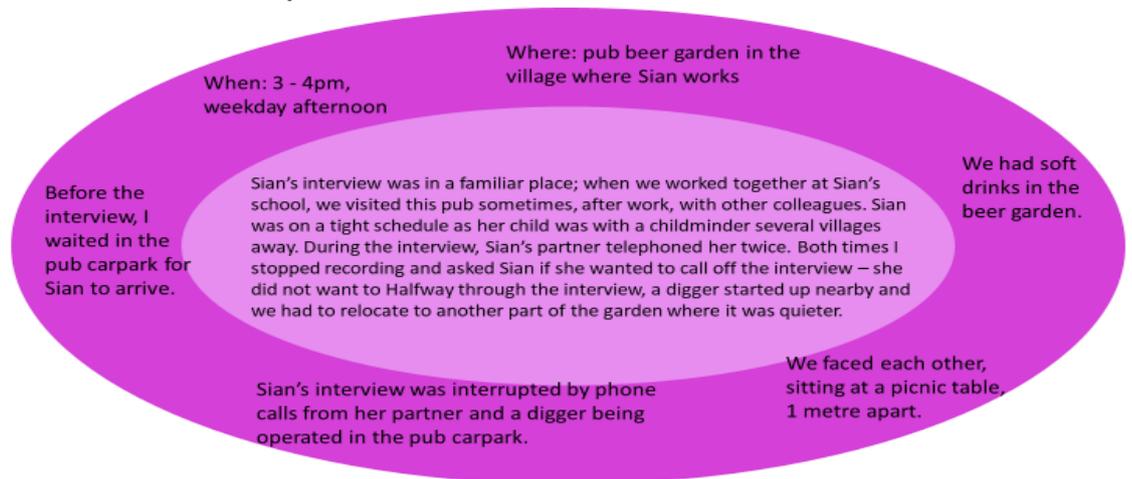
# Sian

## Thumbnail Sketch

*Sian is a white British woman in her mid-thirties. At the time of the interview, she has one child of pre-school age and was pregnant with her second child. She worked full time in a larger than average rural village primary school and was teaching Key Stage 2. Subsequently, Sian left her post and returned to the same school in a part-time role, before being offered more hours and a permanent contract in another local school, which she accepted. Sian has been a friend and colleague of mine for approximately 15 years and has shown an interest in the study since I first thought about applying for a doctorate.*

## Interview Map

### Sian's interview map



*Figure 15: Sian's interview map.*

*Sian's interview was interrupted several times by phone calls and loud environmental noise. The interview was still recorded using a Dictaphone, but the recording required*

*more work than the others in terms of transcription and some of the exact wording may not have been preserved in the full transcript of the interview, as some interpretation was required because of the noise and decisions about when to 'cut' the interview when Sian's phone was ringing.*

## **Sian's Story**

*It started when I had to arrange my work experience when I was at secondary school. I wanted to be a physiotherapist and an animal physiotherapist, but you have to do human physiotherapy and then transfer it. So that's what I wanted to do kind of at that point and I said, Right, I don't want to go into hospital for work experience because there's nothing I can do. They won't let me do anything. I'll end up wiping poo and sick and wee and making cups of tea for the week and really don't want to do that. I know what I'll do. I'll go to the local primary school because they started nine and finish at three. It's literally down the road and I can walk there every day. I can muck around with a load of kids, have a great time and go home... and that's going to be it! So I did work experience in school because I didn't want to do the hard work experience placement! Then I realised I really wanted to be a teacher. So that was kind of where I was like, 'I've got all this, this starting at nine and finishing at three is great!'*

Sian started her story from her own school days; there is a lot of laughter recorded in this part of the interview. Sian's first teaching post was in an inner-city school.

*And I went to uni, and did teaching because I couldn't think of anything else I wanted to do. So I didn't do any other degree, just did teaching, which really limits me at this point in my life. Because I have a degree in primary education, not even secondary. It's very specific. So yeah, I went to uni, had a great time. My course..loved it. Started teaching and hated the first year. absolutely hated first year was awful. Just because it's such a difficult class and they had 20 boys and five girls in the centre of (city), and (estate) kids basically and it was so hard. And I mean to the point of like, you know, I was an NQT obviously, but my NQT time, the NQT teacher they got into cover me and was an experienced teacher. And after the first half day of teaching them she walked out so she came back and I was still picking plastic money out of the light fittings, at Christmas. I have no idea what happened in that afternoon.*

*So for a little while, I didn't have any NQT time because no one would cover my class. So you know, yes, there was a bit crap, but I think it was because they were very difficult. But I got through it. And I came out as stronger teacher at the end of it. I'm sure the head teacher supported me when he came and observed me every three weeks which you know, a few of my friends were like 'that's horrendous'. But actually him sat at the back of the room meant I could actually teach my class because they actually listened to me and I didn't have to do that constant behaviour management so they had like a decent lesson.*

*And yeah, I kind of felt, like you know the end of the year all my friends were like, my you know, my teacher friends were going 'Oh, yeah, this is all wonderful and I'm going to miss my first class so much. Cry! Cry!'. Well I won't. But after that improved, and I really enjoyed the next two years then I moved to Greenshire and Greentown. That's a lovely place and really enjoyed it I you know, I was really enjoyed my teaching job then.*

Sian then moved to her current school (at the time of the interview) where she has worked for ten years.

*...then I moved to (county) and (village). That's a lovely place and really enjoyed it I you know, I was really enjoyed my teaching job. I became SENDCo and really enjoyed that and yeah, I got a lot of job satisfaction. Getting married. Obviously, the ups and downs with you know, lessons and stuff but generally I would say I was I happy teaching. I didn't have an issue with it. And I enjoyed the SENDCo side more. But I liked being in the classroom with the kids.*

Sian then talked about how her career changed during her pregnancy and when she returned from maternity leave.

*And then when I came back from maternity... and I know to be fair when I was pregnant, I didn't enjoy it at school. I wasn't enjoying it. I was feeling I was being targeted. Because you know, you're tired, you don't get as much done and I was in Year 3/4 forever and ever and ever. It's only two of you. You've got like constant work, movement, people moving in and out, you just... so you get in that... I really was beginning to feel that it was really hard work and came back after having (first child) and didn't really want to come back. Really enjoyed the first six, seven weeks when I came back from maternity.*

*I think it was just different yeah from maternity and also I was in a different team. I was in Year 6 with three teachers and a student. So obviously summer time as well when you've not had all the assessments to do so where everyone else is finalising assessments. I wasn't going to do that - I'd say it was easier. And I actually thought 'I really enjoyed this'.*

Sian then recounted how the situation changed. When she refers to someone walking in, she is talking about classroom drop-in observations, which were a feature of the management strategy at the school.

*I enjoyed it. Because I think I was lulled into a false sense of security because I hadn't thought about it for the summer. So you've got your easy end of the year without you having to write reports or the assessments, which actually is what makes it challenging. And I just had to teach for the summer and I went off to all the different schools and it was great. And then I was put back in Year 3/4. And again, actually, initially it was all right there.*

*I felt like I, I just felt like you spend your entire life living out of the car, yeah. And flying around from this place to that place because you've got to take little ones to childcare, then you've got to be at school, then you go to go pick him up from childcare, got to make sure that you've got this bag or that bag... I mean, my car is full of coats, and you never know what the weather's gonna do... coats and hats and sunscreen. And that's fine, because that's being a mother, but you sort of spend your entire time rushing from one place to the other. You don't actually sit down and enjoy any one bit of it. So you know, you're teaching, you are shattered because you were up at three (am). And you know, then someone walks in and says you're not very excitable or dynamic. Just feel like ripping their head off. Because you know, you be exciting and dynamic if you've been up from three 'til the morning with a small person who's got a bit of a cold or whatever, you know, still feeding and still doing whatever you're doing.*

Sian went on to talk about the future and also describes more of the experience of her teacher-motherhood.

*I might return to teaching when my children are school age... yeah because the pressures, you know, I don't know maybe... I just think that perhaps, you know, then you will get your time with your family and that would be lovely. But at the minute I don't feel like I have any time. I'm literally running, it's get home, bath when he has been picked up from the child minder, a little bit of a cuddle, read a story, put him into bed and all I'm thinking about is, 'please go to sleep quickly because I've got all this marking to do, ready for tomorrow'. All this planning to do as well and you are wishing away the time with them so that you can start your work again, so that you're not going to bed at 11 o'clock because if you're going to bed at 11 o'clock and then up at three, you are not a nice person to be with.*

*You know, you still have always got your work hanging over you. Yeah. And then you know, someone says, 'you're finished?' - No, it's never going to be finished, which is quite depressing. And then you have to give up the Sundays. And you have to say, look, because Daddy's got the day off on Sunday, please can you look after him so I get a day maybe at the most with my child that week. And it's just that constant in the back of your mind. I've still got all that work to do. I've got that pile of books or that boatload of planning that I haven't done for next week yet. And it just takes it all away, anything actually I do, and then when you're tired, you're not doing a very good job in the classroom as well, you think well you know what I mean... yeah, let's say you hand your notice in, in a bit of a strop and then....*

Sian describes having to ask people to look after her son, including her husband.

*I think the problem was that they expect the same amount. Of course they do. They expect the same amount of work from you, and you expect to be able to do the same amount of work. And actually, it's a difficult thing when you've got nothing else, let alone when you've got a whole other person who needs an awful lot of caring... however easy and nice and calm the child is, and will sleep for 12 hours a night and is really well behaved, they still need your attention and you can't just say, 'just sit there for a minute while I do this work'. You know, I wouldn't want a child that would, because that they're not inquisitive.*

*But you can't do that. You have to juggle you have to ask people very nicely if they can have this person, you know, they can look after you feel like you have to call in a lot of favours. Yeah. And so then you're feeling guilty for that. There's a lot of guilt. Because you, yeah, you feel guilty for not spending the time with your children, you feel guilty because you're not doing enough planning and so other people are having to do more work because you're not doing as much as you were doing before. Not that you're not pulling your weight, but that you're not doing as much as you were and there is the expectation you will continue to do that work. You'll just come back and you will carry on doing exactly the same. But, you know, there's no way you can and I don't know how, obviously as a business they expect, they need you, they pay you the same amount of money, don't they? I mean, I think if I had gone for a job share, they wouldn't be paying me as much money. Yeah, the expectation possibly wouldn't be as high, you'd have a little bit longer to do certain things. Obviously, you're getting less money, you would still have to pay for childcare, so I don't know. Maybe someone who's doing part-time, maybe it's no better because you still have your child with you when you are trying to catch up at home.*

She explained what her next steps are in terms of finding another job.

*I will lose my maternity pay, but ultimately I'm sure we'll survive on whatever it is we can do... and I just think it's given me a bit of a... 'cool, I could do all sorts of different things'. So you know, I have been looking, it's difficult because obviously I'm pregnant. So initially when you wouldn't even notice it, and I kind of had a bit of an all, 'I can do anything I could do things in lots of jobs', but they weren't quite coming up quite yet. And then, and then, start thinking, because they're all year contracts or, you know, you may apply for something... that no one's going to employ someone. I mean, you know, best will in the world, maybe they will. But I would be very surprised.*

Sian talked about other aspects of being a teacher-mother.

*We still feel like, because I'm still teaching, I'm still doing all the things I was doing before that hasn't stopped just by handing my notice. And when do I get time to apply for a job? Yeah, on top of that, actually, it's worth it because I'm going to apply for these jobs. If I'm lucky, I'm going to turn up for an interview. They're gonna take one look at me and think 'she's going off for six months. There's another candidate, there's always going to be a better candidate.' Unless you're the only one, I suppose but it hasn't been... I've actually have looked and thought, well, presumably, these are all coming up for year contracts. In theory, they'll come up again hopefully. So I sort of feel like I've got other options. And I'm probably not going to go back full-time. So I think that was probably a mistake... if I could have gone back part-time before. And I never asked because I assumed I wouldn't be able to because of experience of the feelings on job share and there was no job share available at the time at school and even if you can talk to your Union, but if there's no job available for you to go back to then....*

*So I never did. And I think perhaps I think if I had gone back part-time, I probably would still be doing it. Because I didn't, I did full-time, I'm doing just as I was doing before and it just... you sort of just try and fit that extra person into your life. Yeah, that extra person actually is more important than everything else. Something had to give, so it was job.*

She also talked about her place in the family:

*I you know, I had his hair cut (child) but I don't get those things done, because I go to the bottom of the pile and that's fine. But I think there are times when suddenly you're like, actually yeah, I'm already at the bottom of the pile. Don't put me down even further. Yeah, and it's like when I think, "when was the last time you had a 40 pound pair of shoes?" Because (child's) shoes cost £40 every time. These (Sian's shoes) were 10 pounds.*

*You know... and yes of course they are more important than you and that's how it goes, but I don't know...in other jobs maybe it's the same, but I think the level of the work, I mean everyone says you know, in teaching the level of work has just gone up and up and up... their expectations that you don't just teach the children, you have additional responsibilities. And then the you know, the actually trying to get these children to a certain academic place, you have to work and work and work.*

*And yes, you get great holidays. There's no denying it, you get good holidays, get you know, about six weeks off... who else gets six weeks off? As in completely off from work? You know, yes, we might do a little bit of work here and there. People say "I work through my holidays", but you don't work the whole six weeks, possibly for a couple of days. And you might go in for a couple of days, but you still have five solid weeks off. And you don't get that anywhere else, but the problem is you have to fit in the amount of work in your other weeks and as a single person or even as a married person that is doable because you work hard knowing that you get your holiday. But children don't go in a cupboard for six weeks and then come out to play in the holidays. You have to still deal with everything that comes along with them.*

*It's relationships as well, your friendships and things, all my teacher friends understand the workload and they know that you'll get together in the summer or over Easter. And that's fine. And I don't think I've ever felt guilty about sort of saying Oh, I will meet you in August. Yeah, but with children.*

Finally, Sian reflected on how being a parent had helped her with her work as a teacher:

*And I think, especially as a SENDCo, in that you are having to sort of, break news to them, that their child perhaps isn't doing quite as well as they would hope...Or perhaps, you know, there is something that's underlying that. And for those conversations, I think, I find harder, but also, I hope I'm a bit more sensitive to them, perhaps whereas before, I'd sort of go in and say, 'Well, I think it might be this.' Now I sort of put myself in my shoes and think, Oh, god, what if someone was to tell me this, how would I deal with that? What would I want to know? And be perhaps go about it in a slightly different way.*

*So I think certainly, yeah, I think it does change. I don't know that it's necessarily changed from being tired and grumpy! But I think definitely towards an empathy with parents; just having that, you know, realisation and also perhaps telling parents things that I would probably brush off. Now it's different, I want to tell them because I feel they should know. I would want to know.*

## Sian by Aimee

Sian describes a changing attitude to teaching, starting with school based work experience, 'they start at nine and finish at three...I can muck in with a load of kids, have a great time and come home'. Her first teaching job: 'Yes I was a bit crap, but they (the children) were very difficult. But I got through it and I came out a stronger teacher at the end of it, I'm sure.' To her experiences of teaching more recently: 'I wasn't enjoying it, I was feeling that I was being targeted...you got that constant work, people moving, people moving in and out.'

What I feel becomes clear in this process of highlighting discursive constructions, is that Sian is probably missing out much of the story here, because of the insiderness of our research relationship. She doesn't actually describe teaching; she talks about how she felt at different points in her career, but it feels like much is unsaid here, a theorised pitfall of insider research (Berger, 2015; Couture, Zaidi & Maticka-Tyndall, 2012; Drake, 2010; Sanger, 2010; Mercer, 2007). Searching for Sian's constructions of teaching raises the question of whether she would have articulated this in more detail with an outsider-researcher (Southgate & Shyling, 2014).

Sian describes motherhood changing over time, perhaps a 'side-effect' of the life story interview, in which she was invited to create a verbal timeline of her experiences. Willig doesn't describe this as part of stage 1 of the model, but in Sian's text, it is difficult to separate the constructions of teaching and motherhood. Many examples that I identified when re-reading the transcript seemed to co-construct teaching and motherhood, presenting them as one single role or responsibility; for example:

*So you know you are teaching and you are shattered because you were up at 3am, then someone walks in and says 'oh you are not very excitable and dynamic'.*

This would appear to be about teaching and motherhood, as Sian is referring to the expectations that a teacher should be 'exciting and dynamic', but also how motherhood doesn't fit with this expectation in her life.

## Identified Discourses of Teacher/Mother

### Teacher-mother should be bottom of the pile

*'because I go to the bottom of the pile and that's fine. But I think there are times when suddenly you're like, actually yeah, I'm already at the bottom of the pile. Don't put me down even further.'*

Sian describes herself as rightly being at the 'bottom of the pile' in terms of care, giving an example of her child's shoes costing four times more than her own, and her child's haircut being more important and forgoing her own haircut to pay for his. Then she questions this positioning, eluding to others trying to move her even further down the pile she is already at the bottom of. She does not suggest or argue that she should be more than bottom of the pile, and repeats at points throughout the interview that children must come first in terms of attention, effort, time, money and care.

In terms of subjectivity, Sian's future choices and whether she perceives herself as having options will be impacted by this positioning. She expects to be the 'last in line' in her family life, after children and her husband, and also echoes this discourse when talking about expectations in school and how her situation cannot be taken into account in a 'business' situation, which is how she describes the current school she works in. A discourse of cold, unsympathetic 'business', together with a position where being the lowest priority person is 'fine', seems likely to restrict Sian's choices and her perception that she has choices to make, particularly if these are likely to benefit her more than others. The idea that the person who is caring for everyone should be cared for the best is not evident in her discussion of the teacher-mother situation.

### Ultimate responsibility for family and work

*'I was still picking plastic money out of the light fittings at Christmas'*

The discourse of ultimate responsibility emphasises Sian's importance in the family; she is irreplaceable in her position as carer/earner/organiser. This position also emphasises her importance at school, although to some extent her contributions are not recognised fully. Sian evidences this in her practice with the example of an experienced teacher who could not cope with her difficult class, explaining that she was still clearing up after the session months later. Sian does not question why she should be responsible for tidying up after someone else; the burden is hers because they are 'her' children.

*'And that's fine, because that's being a mother but you sort of spend your entire time rushing from one place to the other. You don't actually sit down and enjoy any one bit of it.'*

Sian's discourse around family and motherhood reflects the same idea of irreplaceable status and ultimate responsibility. Sian describes and orientates herself in regard to this discourse; in some respects normalising the idea that motherhood is about rushing and not enjoying your status. There is no question that anyone else could take on this role or part of this role in practice.

Sian's positioning suggests that ultimate responsibility for her family comes down to her, and responsibility for many aspects of school work are also sitting with her and monitored/accounted for. Any failing in this role is due to Sian's incompetence, rather than an issue with the system, workload and expectations, and she does not consider how others could also be responsible or share the load; she asks favours of others when she cannot cope on her own.

This positioning potentially means Sian is accountable as well as responsible. Any dip in outcomes, progress, standards (particularly at school) means that she is somehow lacking and not working hard enough.

### The Guilty Party

*'...a little bit of a cuddle read a story, put into bed and all I'm thinking about is please go to sleep quickly because I've got all this marking to do, ready for tomorrow.'*

A discourse of guilt runs through the transcript. Sian admits to 'neglecting' her husband, feeling guilty about it, but has no option, building on what she has said about her responsibility and expectations of her. She does not share any expectation that she should be supported better or that she may also be suffering neglect.

Sian also talks about prioritising her own child – she has to – but also suffering guilt because school workload has to be done. The subject position seems to be that the mother should prioritise her children and not be distracted or withhold attention from them.

Sian's subjectivity is of teacher-mother as ultimately responsible for bringing two worlds of care and workload together. Sian positions herself as the guilty party in several relationships – her marriage, her parent/child relationship and her workplace relationships. Her position is that whatever she is doing, someone is missing out or being neglected.

Sian is positioned in such a way that whatever she does, someone suffers. Her own welfare is not a consideration in this positioning.

## Set up to Fail

*'Just feel like ripping their head off. Because you know, you be exciting and dynamic if you've been up from three till morning with a small person.'*

Sian presents a discourse of being set up to fail. She points out the unrealistic expectations of the teacher-mother role, through the perspectives of senior leaders in school.

*'They're gonna take one look at me and think 'she's going off for six months. There's another candidate, there's always going to be a better candidate.'*

Sian orientates herself against an unfairness in a system where pregnant women are not considered for jobs; perhaps through bitter experience, perhaps through continued exposure to a discourse which would suggest this is the case. Taking this subject position takes responsibility away from the individual in some respects, as powerlessness becomes normal, pervasive and unchallengeable.

The experience of teacher-mother is that of being set up to fail in Sian's positioning. When things go well, it is 'business as usual', when things are perceived as not going well, personal accountability is cited and 'systems' and 'procedures' begin.

Interestingly, Sian does not seem to apportion any blame on the senior leaders who are carrying out the surveillance and putting pressure on her to maintain the workload levels she was battling with before she was pregnant and a new mother.

Sian ultimately leaves her post as full-time teacher, and positions this decision as an instinctive reaction to an unfair system where accountability has encouraged her to 'jump before being pushed'. Sian could be seen as questioning how she can win in the system as set up currently.

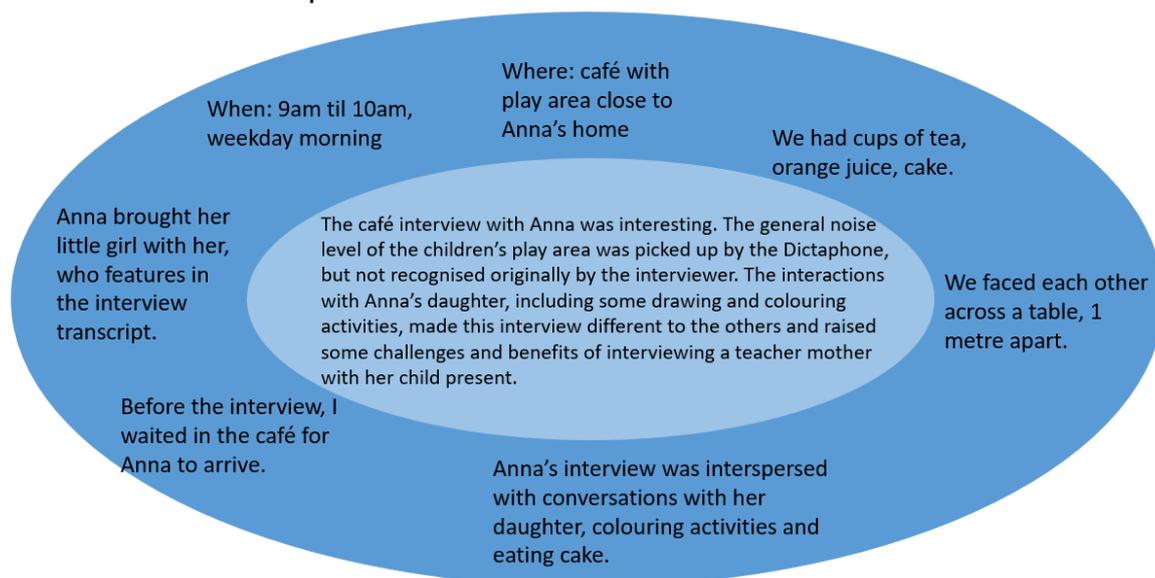
# Anna

## Thumbnail Sketch: Anna

*Anna is a white British woman in her late twenties. She has one child who is under 1 year old and another who is 4. She lives in the suburbs of a large UK city. Anna teaches in a large primary school in the EYFS provision and she job shares the role, working part-time contact hours. Anna is married to a secondary school teacher.*

## Interview Map: Anna

### Anna's interview map



*Figure 16: Anna's interview map.*

## Anna's Story

*I am trying to work out where I saw your tweet. Was it through the MTPT project thing that retweeted it?*

*(Child) is my second and I went back to work at the start of term and the end of September and I think it was quite soon after that I saw the MTPT project because I think obviously you are very dependent on the school you are in and the way a school treats women who've had children is just really almost at the whim on the leadership team.*

The Maternity Teacher Paternity Teacher project facilitates mentoring and training relationships between teachers and had 'retweeted' my advertisement for participants.

*I spoke about this a little bit when I went through the (MTPT) coaching. When I had my first child, and I went back, it felt quite a challenging experience and still its ongoing. There is quite a discussion around women working part time being very expensive or just being awkward to manage job shares.*

*So you feel like a bit of an encumbrance really, it's really difficult. When I first went back, my first maternity leave, I just started teaching languages because they found this little job that I could do around the school and I really liked it and I was really engaged with it professionally, so I invested quite a lot in it.*

*The someone else went on maternity leave and it just sort of changed. But that was one thing but I had also been told off, at another point about not working hard enough. I had a falling out with one of my line managers and I don't know, it just felt really uncomfortable and I ended up working four days a week and having a class of my own.*

*Even though it was slightly reduced hours it was obviously the whole job and it just felt a really tough time. I think this is probably the same with all teacher mothers, that thing of when I didn't have children, I could get into school at half past seven and stay until school nearly finished, until six, and I could fit most things in.*

This interview was quite different to the others because Anna's daughter was present and she features throughout the transcript.

*Then I had a child and because of day care I couldn't drop them off until eight.*

*(To child) Why don't you go play?*

*Then we had a creche at work so subsidized childcare. Then it also means I had the responsibility to pick up and drop off. If I drop them off its such a long day, I'll have to go and get them at five at-*

**Aimee:** *And they were right there on site.*

**Anna:** *Yes that's it, they're on site. Obviously, it's amazing and for this city it was subsidized.*

*(To child) Do you like the orange juice? But the orange juice is very sweet. You like the cake, oh.*

Anna went on to describe the workload of school work.

*It started to be that thing about working after (first child) had gone to bed in the evening and you don't really have any time for yourself, if anything else. I just didn't go to bed until a bit later. You start to feel like you're stressed with her because you said, "Go to bed" and "I've got to finish up this stuff for tomorrow".*

Anna then jumps to returning from maternity leave after her second child.

Interestingly, the Head Teacher and Executive Head were both working part-time at the point when Anna was interviewed.

*Then I continued for two years until I got pregnant again, but this time I knew that if I went back four days a week I would probably have a whole class and I really didn't want that, so I said that I wanted to go back-- I said actually two or three days because I would rather go right down and then fortunately one of my colleagues was also working only two days and they said, "Well could you both up your hours and do a job share?". (School managers said) 'Even though we really don't think job shares work, we don't really like them, we would like you to do this.'*

*I haven't actually worked early years before but I think, 'okay let's do it'. I'm up for something new in school and feeling positive about going back. It felt more exciting to do something completely different and feels more motivating that way. Obviously now with both of us...where we have to... we feel we actually want to demonstrate that class share job shares can work and colleagues have said things like, "We didn't think the children would be able to cope with it, having two teachers," and you think, who told you that?*

Anna talks job sharing and challenges of part-time roles in several sections of the interview.

*But it does mean that one week I do three days and so my entire working week is contact time in school and then the other week it's a bit tricky. It's just that thing of when I was in school and I did have clearly timed PPA time I used it and I did the marking. But I know other colleagues who are parents just go home. But I can't work at home because there's children there.*

*But I can't work at home because there's children there, after they go to bed and you think oh maybe me and my husband would quite like to just watch a bit of tv or have some time together.*

*(To child) That's coffee, you don't need coffee. So, that's hot. No, I know. Yes, hot. Hot.*

*I feel like at the minute the experience of being a mum and a teacher is better than it was because of the working pattern. I really trained to be a teacher at the end of my 20's. Then you think the teachers-- surely, it'll get better because we get longer holidays. It can be quite inflexible and feeling like you want to be at work early to get things done before the children come in and then it's just that juggle of childcare isn't it?*

Anna goes on to describe finding an alternative position in another school.

*Before I went on maternity leave there were some comments about you can't apply for more senior positions if you're working part time...*

*Okay, maybe there will be somewhere else that really will be better. But I think it's really daunting the thought of finding a new job when you've got children generally, especially within teaching. Because we hear that about it's so awkward or it doesn't really work to have children and work part time as a teacher.*

*It makes you think maybe this is such a good thing I shouldn't leave it. Well it's not helpful but it's that kind of conditioning isn't it?*

Anna then talks about her experience of working in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

*My husband's a teacher as well so he equally wants to get to work early. Then there are other bits about teaching generally that I am sort of glum about. The politics of it all and I think being in early years you concentrate on having an outstanding provision for the children, that is really where I like to dedicate my time.*

*But the reality is I spend so much time on writing up my observations, so the spellings are correct and I've got all the statements linked to it properly. Then when you are tired and you do feel like you are not managing it very well, the sense that the admin is where your focus is. It makes you feel a bit more worn out and it is a bit harder to manage.*

*In the day there is no moment to yourself. I think I've been year three before and you think, "Oh the children go to assembly and then actually you get 10 minutes there and you get your break time". It's not like that at all but on the other hand I think when I was in year three, I did really enjoy the fact that the children have that sense of greater independence and they teach you. By that age they've got their real interest, haven't they?*

**Aimee:** Yes.

**Anna:** They can really share them. Some of the things we did, it just feels like we are teaching them how to do SATs and that progression. I want to make them really excited about being in school. Then how to talk and communicate.

Anna presented the current situation with home and school and thoughts on the school she works in (her first teaching post).

*Obviously now we're at the point where (eldest child) is actually going up in September for proper primary school. But then until you're going around and looking at other positions and thinking about maybe using my skills to support her school community. I just think the school I'm at is a really excellent school.*

*I think the children who go there are very lucky. It's such an amazing parent community, maybe that would be quite rewarding for me to do. I worry about the school but you've just got to do what you can, I think, but again it's just time isn't it? It is hard to manage things especially if you've got a smaller child. I'd like to think that.*

*I think recently I have felt a bit...maybe I'd like a change at work, but I don't feel like I could choose where I go. I don't know, I haven't actually looked. This the first school I've taught at since I qualified as a teacher and so this idea of applying for a job... I don't know if I've got the confidence in my abilities.*

*You never—it's being under continuous scrutiny but it really chips away when you do it for a long time. You feel disempowered. I can't say that I'm consistently rated outstanding but I'm a good teacher - but does that mean I'm not good enough?*

*You never—it's being under continuous scrutiny but it really chips away when you do it for a long time. You feel disempowered. I can't say that I'm consistently rated outstanding but I'm a good teacher - but does that mean I'm not good enough?*

Anna 's interview finished with reflections on how her teacher experiences had interacted with her motherhood experiences. She shares more detail of how her husband and her share childcare, and notably how he requested flexible working.

*I did two home visits where our children come into the class. By the end of that, I was like, "I don't know how I will manage. I don't think I can get from-- how are we going to drop them both off and pick them up?"*

*I find it the whole idea was making me feel stressed. I don't know; like an au pair. I don't know how people manage this at all and he said (husband), "Well how about I ask if I could drop down my work and do four days a week?"*

*I think you should do that regardless because I think I don't know how you can be a reflective practitioner if you don't have thinking time and also for your daughters. So we went and asked. They said, "Well you've got to speak to the head" the first time he had really spoken to her since the job interview. Men in school come up to him and say, "How did you manage that? I'd love to work four days a week".*

*I think that it would massively help women, mother teachers, if there was also a culture of not always just parents, people being able to have a bit more flexibility in their life.*

## Anna by Aimee

Anna talked about being a teacher and a mother in combination, throughout the transcript – she framed this interview this way from the beginning; ‘So shall I tell you about being a teacher mother?’. Because the two discursive constructions are interwoven for Anna, I have decided to report them together here. Many of the highlighted sections of the transcript were coloured twice, because they were constructions of teaching and motherhood. This fits with an idea that motherhood is a key signifier (Ribbens, McCarthy & Edwards, 2011; Malpass, Sales & Feder, 2016), that pervades other perceived aspects of identity (Sheriff & Weatherall, 2009), but also the

very familiar feeling that life has changed dramatically on becoming a mother. This led to the discursive objects becoming a single object – ‘teacher-motherhood’.

Anna describes teacher-motherhood as being a burden to others, for example, the leadership team of the school. ‘So you feel like a bit of an encumbrance really, it’s really difficult’. Her discursive construction also included some nuanced variations on teacher-motherhood; for example, she talks about ‘job-sharers’, which appears to be the same group of people who are also teacher-mothers.

## Identified Discourses of Teacher/Mother

### The ‘good enough’ teacher-mother

*‘You feel disempowered. I can’t say that I’m consistently rated outstanding but I’m a good teacher - but does that mean I’m not good enough?’*

The discourse is one of teacher-mother as doing enough; seemingly meeting the minimum requirements. Anna’s action orientation is one of the ‘good teacher’; Anna points out that what she does at work is ‘good enough’ and that she manages the work and the role sufficiently; but this explains why she may be passed over for promotion. She notes that in her practice, there are roles that she cannot take on because she is not classed as outstanding and is therefore ‘a risk’. Her discourse is one of defending the ‘good enough’ label and suggests that teacher-mothers should not feel guilty for being ‘good enough’ – it is not possible to do it all - but questions are raised by Anna about how you know you are good enough.

*‘...all those Instagram posts of people making play dough at home....’*

Anna also describes being a ‘good enough’ mother and comparisons with the parents who seem to be spending more time and energy with their own children. Being ‘good

enough' means that Anna should not expect particular praise or reward for what she is doing.

*'Then there's the thing with teaching, you can't do everything.'*

Being 'good enough' may also be a reason to reject feelings of guilt in Anna's positioning. She allows herself a gap, a space to not be chasing an outstanding label and her subjectivity in the wider ecosystem could be considered to be empowering in some respects; her forgiveness of herself for not being able to do everything could potentially give her some freedom from the discourse of perfection and performativity.

#### Time moves differently

*'I think this is probably the same with all teacher mothers that thing of when I didn't have children, I could get into school at half past seven and stay until school nearly finished until six and I could fit most things in.'*

Anna orientates her status in terms of time itself being a factor in teacher-motherhood; time moves differently for this group of people and she generalises this to all teacher-mothers, perhaps to situate herself as part of a community that feel this way.

*'in the day, there is no moment to yourself.'*

Anna's subject position is that as a teacher-mother there is no time to go 'above and beyond'. This could be a limiting position; time is finite and there is not enough time for her to be more than 'good enough'. The amount of work or the system that supports this requirement to overwork is not questioned during the interview.

*'It started to be that thing about working after (first child) had gone to bed in the evening and you don't really have any time for yourself if anything else.'*

Anna positions herself and teacher-mothers as being different to other teachers in terms of time available to do the job. This means that her status as teacher-mother and the relationship she therefore has with time, are limiting factors on her career. As time is out of our control, Anna's wider ecological system situation as an overlooked part-time teacher is also out of anyone's control in this discourse.

#### Limitation of being a part-time teacher

*'So you feel like a bit of an encumbrance really, it's really difficult.'*

Anna orientates herself in the part-time teacher role as a burden on the school and senior leaders. She positions herself as having some sympathy with what she perceives as their view; that part-time teachers have a part-time commitment to the school community. Positioning teacher-mothers as a burden may mean that Anna is unlikely to expect better support or conditions in other settings, because teacher-mothers would be a burden anywhere.

*'We feel we actually want to demonstrate that class share job shares can work.'*

Anna points out the unrealistic expectations of the part-time role, as well as the undesirable nature of job shares, in the eyes of senior leaders. She positions herself as being responsible for contesting this view, together with her job-share partner, she seeks to challenge the value of part-time teachers and demonstrate the effectiveness they can have in the role. In her interview, she talks about this 'demonstration' as

being within her own school, but also how this demonstration may have a wider impact when disseminated through social media channels and teaching unions.

*'Before I went on maternity leave there were some comments about you can't apply for more senior positions if you're working part time.'*

Anna's positioning of part-time teachers being inherently less valuable explains the reasons why the teacher-mother may not have been promoted or been recognised for her work; part-time work means part-time support from above. Comments from colleagues reinforce this and Anna's action orientation is that part-time work is a barrier to promotion. This may excuse the school leaders in practice; supporting teacher-mothers is a burden and therefore possibly unobtainable.

In terms of subjectivity, Anna's positioning of better support and treatment as difficult to achieve anywhere, as part-time teacher-mothers are a burden, could restrict her in terms of promotion or seeking alternative employment in other schools. Anna's positioning of her as a teacher-mother who has unreasonable demands made of her, but is also a burden on the school community, may mean that in practice she does not expect support or credit/reward for her work.

Conley and Jenkins (2011) found that head teachers and other senior leaders did not value part-time workers and also shared their concern that under new institutional models, leaders have increasing powers to discriminate against this group of workers.

## Politics of Work

*'Then there are other bits about teaching generally that I am sort of glum about. The politics of it all.'*

Anna points out political issues and decisions at government level that have affected teacher-mothers, as well as the teaching profession more broadly.

*'I think that it would massively help women, mother teachers, if there was also a culture of not always just parents, people being able to have a bit more flexibility in their life.'*

As a teacher-mother, not only is there a particular situation to deal with (biases, guilt, expectations), but also the wider political debate around education, part-time work and teacher workload. Political decisions act upon Anna in ways she cannot control; this makes her feel weary. As with the discourse around time, politics is a macro-system issue impacting on the individual, potentially reducing agency and Anna orientates herself against this. Anna positions herself as knowledgeable about the wider politics, and concerned about the impact on her situation and that of her school community.

*'The stories of burn out and they're true and you see it all of the time because it is relentless and the repetition every year.'*

Anna's practice is to be affiliated with organisations that may have political impact now or in future; she positions herself as proactive in tackling the politics, particularly around the issues she has direct experience of; maternity and paternity, and flexible and part-time working.

# Charlie

## Thumbnail Sketch: Charlie

*Charlie is a British white woman in her mid-forties. She is married with two birth children and two step-children, all in their teens. She teaches Key Stage 2 in a semi-rural location, which is also where she lives now. She originally trained as a secondary school teacher, with a subject specialism in a modern foreign language. She trained as a teacher straight after her undergraduate degree and taught in secondary schools for several years. When she met her first husband, his career took them to a different country and Charlie got a job in a primary school. They had two children together and then divorced. Charlie then met and married her second husband. Her second husband had three children from a previous marriage.*

*Charlie agreed to draw a timeline during her interview; see Appendix 18. This meant that the interview was structured historically from her teacher training to current day, with very little more general talk until the end of the interview.*

## Interview Map: Charlie

### Charlie's interview map

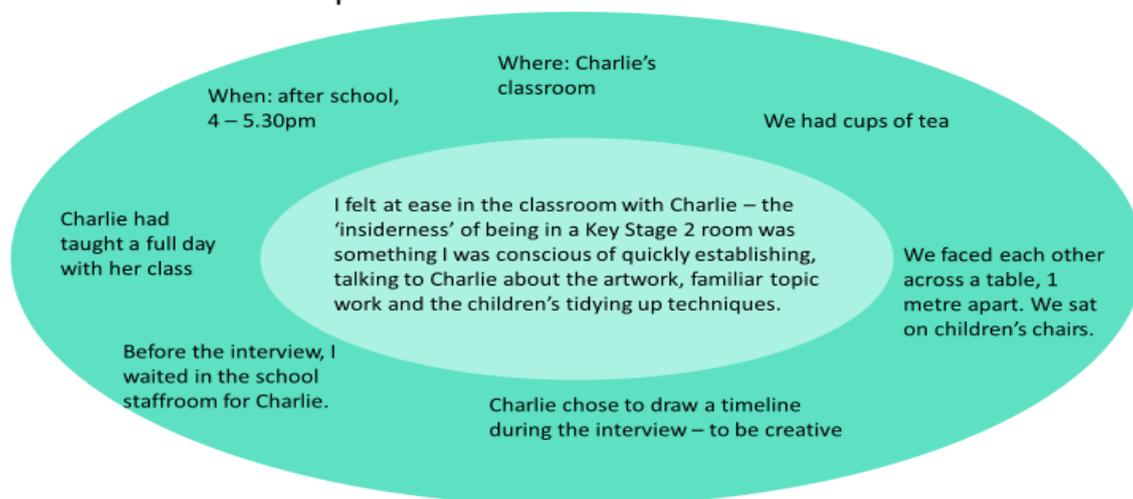


Figure 17: Charlie's interview map.

## Charlie's Story

*About being a teacher. So, I actually started teaching, I taught piano from the age of about 15, because I had gone through my grade really quickly and my piano teacher said that he had too many people wanting to go with him, so, would I take on some of his, like, younger students, so, I did. So, I was only 15 and I started teaching piano in my free time, as it were, after school. So, I'd go home and I'd have, like, two or three piano students. It's not really teaching, well, it is teaching but anyway, that is where I started [laughs]*

*And I carried on doing that all the way through until... Well, I teach my own children now, so, actually that's sort of something that I've kind of carried on throughout my entire time, really. So, I did it. it sort of saw through school, through A levels, did it through university, it helped pay, you know, through university, and then there was a few years when I didn't do it and then as soon as my children were old enough I picked it up again, so, now I teach my own children, so, that's kind of sort of carried on really. But I picked up teaching again when I went to university, I suppose.*

Charlie begins the interview by describing the beginning of her teaching experiences, and went on to talk about teacher training and her first teaching jobs in Scotland and England. Place names have been anonymised.

*So, I trained to be a secondary languages teacher, which is not at all what I do. Yeah, that was 1999, and I got a job teaching secondary languages in Scotland and I did that for two years, and then, in that time I got married. I got married in 1999. It was a busy year, yeah. So, we got married and then in the year 2000 we decided that we wanted to have children.*

*We decided we were going to move back to England, and my husband was an engineer, so we moved here because there was Car Co., and there's a real lot of engineering here, so, we moved here. We didn't know Midtownshire at all, we'd never been, we just-- it was a case of, you know, my husband get a job because we knew I could work anywhere really. So, we moved to Midtownshire in 2000, and I got a job, again, teaching languages in a secondary school in Midtown, and then we had my first son in 2002. It was as soon as I moved to England, actually, within about the first three months I just thought, "This is awful actually. These parents are horrendous, the children are disrespectful," and it wasn't because it was a secondary school, you know, I taught in secondary in Scotland and the children were lovely, the parent were lovely, but I'd come down to England and the parents...ust the attitude I felt was really, really difficult. Even though it was a good school I worked in, in Midtown, it was a good school but, I thought, "Oh gosh," you know?*

*And I decided then that was it, I was never going back to teaching again, because I just found that in Scotland the profession of a teacher was really-really high and respected and you go to parents even the parents were really respectful, they were kind of, I don't know, teaching was just held in really, really high esteem and I loved it. Even though I was in quite a difficult school the parents were still really, you know, "What do you think?" you know, you know, they were very... Whereas when I came to England and I couldn't believe the attitude of parents and I just said I...I just said... I don't want to do this anymore.*

Charlie was drawing her timeline throughout this part of the interview and added details to the 'wiggly timeline' as she reiterated the period in 2002 when she went back to teaching.

*And so, I kind of put up with it and then just said, "You know what? we're gonna have a baby, let's just do it - and so, once I had (first child) I just said, "Right, that's it, I'm not-- I'm not going to go back to teaching. I'm just gonna be a full-time mum." That's it really as far as I was concerned and then-- So, I had (first child) and I was a full-time mum and I was quite happy, um, just being at home looking after him really, and then in 2004 we had (second child), then my husband decided that he wanted to take a sabbatical from work, and I was really undecided about this.*

*But anyway, he came home from work one day and just said, "I've done it. I've left," and I went, "Right," and he went, "Yeah, they wouldn't let me have a sabbatical so I've just handed my notice in." At which point I kinda went, "Ummm, okay, what are we gonna live on?" Anyway, so we had saved, so we had a couple of months where it was fine, but you know, but we knew actually...obviously. So, at that point, I saw in a local paper that there was a job going in the local primary school.*

Charlie went on to describe the experience of teaching an unfamiliar phase whilst also having a toddler and a newborn at home.

*So, the local primary school advertised a job and I had never planned on going back to work, I was still breastfeeding, so, it must have been 2005, and it was a school it was just down the road, so I could walk to it and they wanted a part-time person to introduce primary languages to their school and it was, you know, four hours one day, two hours the next day and I thought, "Oh, it's just down the road, I can come home for lunch, I can come home and feed the baby," and, "I think that might be quite fun, actually." So, I went and did it [laughs] So, I moved to primary and it kind of really shocked me actually because suddenly I was teaching year one to year six and I was teaching languages, so, it was a bit of a thing.*

*Jake was one and John was three and, like, I was still breastfeeding Jake, so, I was still going home. So, I'd quickly feed him before I went to work, come home at lunchtime, feed him again, then come home at the end of the day, feed him again. But I was breastfeeding him, bless him...It was fun because I think because my husband at the time, he was at home.*

*So, I actually felt absolutely fine about it because yeah, I saw them in the mornings, I could come home for my lunch, have lunch with them, I'd be home again at a quarter to four, you know, and I felt like, actually, I wasn't missing out, and it was only sort of two days a week at the beginning. So, I didn't really feel I missed out, and actually, I didn't go on to be doing sort of the more-- the more sort of-- involved with, like, consultancy until, certainly (first child) was at school and he went to the school I was teaching at. So, he was there and (second child) was at playgroup by then anyway, so, I didn't really feel like I was missing out, he was already going to the playgroup sort of sessions, nursery sessions.*

*So, I didn't feel like I ever sort of missed out on them, I kind of felt like I had managed to-- to, you know, to juggle it quite well really, um, and, like, for John, when he started school, he went to the school I was at. So-- Yeah.*

Charlie and her husband had a second child, then the marriage broke down. The 'she' is the head teacher, and Charlie also references what she is drawing on her timeline:

*They decided they were going to cover their PPA with doing something structured, which was great, but they'd never done it before, there were no resources, there was nothing out there, so, I had to do-- I built a whole curriculum, wrote a curriculum, wrote a scheme of work, did everything. But I mean, just loved it, it was great. It was-- It was totally...She said, "I don't really care what you do, I don't want to think about it. Just do it," you know, and it was great. So, I started to do that and I did that until I did it for 10 years in the end.*

*But in that time all kinds of things happened-- I'm going to need to do a little-- a little side bubble here now, because all kinds of things happened in that time [laughs] So, in this time I became a primary languages consultant, so, I worked for the local authority. So, after the first year of doing primary languages, my husband has always said he was just going to take year out and he would just find another job somewhere else after it, but I became a primary languages consultant, and so, he said he wasn't...he didn't go back to work. So, I stayed; I carried on working as a primary languages consultant sort of on the side.*

*So, I was still working at the school for one and a half days, two days a week or something, and I was doing this on the side, and that continued until about 2012, yeah, when I...Basically, the primary school, they just pulled me in, and they pulled me in, and they pulled me in and I ended up being a class teacher, based on nothing. As far as I was concerned it was like...yeah, and then basically they made a bad appointment who lasted about two weeks and they were stuck, and they said how would I feel, and I'd done loads of bits of cover here, there and everywhere and I went, "Yeah, I'll give it go," and that was it, then I never went back really. But in this time, I also got divorced in 2010 so, my, so, me and the children, we moved out into a different house.*

*So, I still had the children with me but they went to their dad's a part of the time as well, so, it was kind, we sort of shared the care, but to all intents and purposes I was kind of a single mum and doing all that as well.*

Charlie then met her second husband, who had three children. Charlie's temporary post in her current school was stopping her from applying for a mortgage, so she eventually asked the Head about becoming a permanent member of the team:

*When I was a class teacher at the other school, like I say, I felt... I always felt like I fell into it and I would never-- so, I didn't get a permanent contract because it was like, oh, you know, he'd just gone really, this other teacher, he didn't work out, he'd just gone, so, "Will you fill in?" and I was like, "Well, okay, how long for?" "Oh, don't know really," and then it was kind of on this sort of contract and I was thinking, "Should I be looking for another job? Are you suddenly going to tell me that I haven't got a job anymore?" and it was, it was really sort of unsettled and it was...*

*But then after, I don't know, I'd been doing it for a year and a half I suddenly went, "Do you think there's any way I could get a permanent contract?" and they went, "Of course, have you not got one?" "No. we've been trying to get a mortgage and we can't because I haven't got a permanent contract," and they were like, "Oh, we forgot," sort of thing, you know? So, then they gave me...and it was fine but I think it's because I'd been there so long, you know, I ended up being at that school for 10 years and I'd been there so long they just assumed, you know, didn't really consider it, you know, just sort of, yeah, "Charlie 's doing her job, she's doing great, fine."*

Charlie describes feeling lucky to have a primary school job in a place where she is valued.

*Yeah, you see, I absolutely feel like, you know, it was all just a little series of happy accidents or little coincidences that, you know, that sort of happened along the way and suddenly I fell into doing this and it's like, I do feel like this is where I supposed to be, but God, I went a ridiculous route to get there, didn't I? [laughs]*

*Yeah, and part of that is, you know what, if I hadn't split up with my husband and suddenly desperately needed to work full-time, I probably wouldn't have gone on to do all of the things that I did, but actually there was that sudden, "Actually, oh God, do you know what? I actually really need to do this now. I going to have to pull my finger out and get a full-time job," you know, and if that hadn't happened I probably wouldn't have, you know, ended up where I am today. It is sort of... it's weird how events sort of take over things, isn't it?*

In Charlie's final extract, she talked about the current situation of being a working mother:

*But, I mean, the kids are quite good actually, you know, they're quite self-sufficient in many ways, you know? So, they get themselves up and get themselves dressed, make their own packed lunches, make their own way to school, come home, you know, and we-- you know, my husband-- my husband works from home, he works from home, he's there when they come home. So, he kind of oversees the homework and things, he kind of gets that out of the way and I just go home and I sort of feed them and that's it really actually, as long as I sort of do the feeding and keeping them clean, he oversees homework and stuff like...*

*But then, that only probably works because he's at home. If he wasn't at home... I don't know how people cope when they're, you know, if the husband's got a nine to five job as well, actually that would just be awful, I don't know how you manage that, but because my husband works from home we can-- we can do it...But then I say, "Do you know what? Any house that's got four teenagers in, it's going to be fraught actually." Whether you work or not it's going to be...always going to be things kicking off, isn't there? Because actually, that's the nature of teenagers, right?*

# Charlie by Aimee

Charlie talks about teaching as a separate undertaking to motherhood throughout most of the interview, although there are points where the two roles are intertwined. Charlie's construction of teaching is one of hard work and often thankless tasks, her interactions with the school community often causing her to question the role; 'Whereas when I came to-- to England and I couldn't believe the attitude of parents, um, and I just said I-- I just said-- I don't wanna do this anymore.' Charlie includes in her construction of teaching the non-contact tasks that it entails, including marking and curriculum design.

Charlie's construct of motherhood also includes step-motherhood. Charlie disclosed during the interview that one of her step-children had died several years ago, which had a huge impact on Charlie and her family. Although this was a potentially interesting discourse in Charlie's story, I did not feel it was appropriate to use this thread of the interview for discourse analysis and talked to Charlie about this after the transcript had been shared.

## Identified Discourses of Teacher/Mother

### Happy accidents

*'it was all just a little series of happy accidents or little coincidences.'*

Charlie orientates herself as the recipient of fortune due to happy accidents; her situation and achievements are due to luck. Charlie's children are also the subject of

happy accidents, in that they are intelligent and resilient, which is orientated as accidental. The subject position is one of a teacher-mother as unaccepting of responsibility for positive or desirable outcomes.

*'I went a ridiculous route to get there, didn't I?'*

In practice, Charlie's positioning as any success being down to luck may mean that she does not take credit for her hard work, or expect credit for future achievements.

Charlie may be positioning herself as modest; her children just happen to be intelligent – but in terms of her subjectivity in the wider system, she may be positioning herself as unworthy of praise and reward.

#### [It's fine: normalising responsibility and performativity at school](#)

*'I built a whole curriculum'*

Charlie orientates herself as 'fine' with demands of being a teacher-mother, particularly in the role of teacher and the workload and expectations of the job. The discourse is one of teacher-mother as receiver of additional workload without complaint.

*'if I go and ask them they might just say "No, you're terrible at the job, leave."'*

Charlie's positioning of being accepting of additional workload, being overlooked for a permanent contract and lack of support with transitions between key stages would suggest that in future, she would continue to accept performative demands as part of her practice. This is potentially damaging to others who are not in a position where they can accept additional workload and sets up unworkable expectations. Charlie

does not identify the leadership of the school or wider policy as having created this expectation of workload which cannot be completed within the contracted hours of the post. In terms of subjectivity, Charlie is potentially projecting this normalising of performativity in line with colleagues and the wider community of teachers.

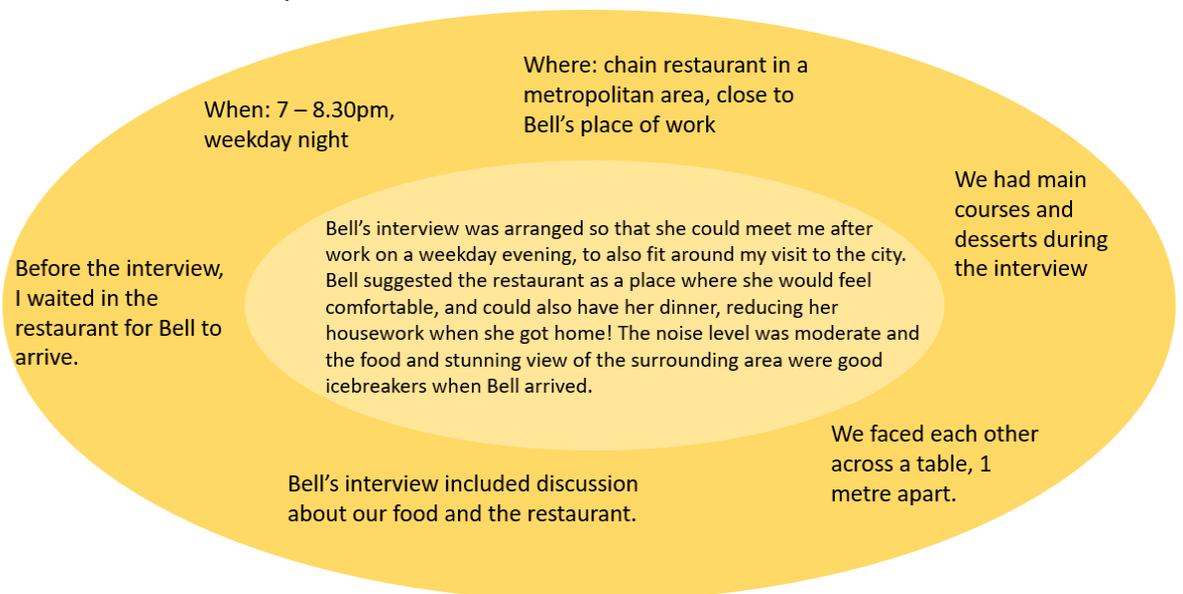
# Bell

## Thumbnail Sketch: Bell

*Bell is a white British woman in her 50s. She has two daughters who are over 18, one of them is a teacher, the other is at university, a son who is at secondary school and two step-children who are at college. Bell started her life-history with her undergraduate degree. During her degree, Bell and her then boyfriend got pregnant with their first child. Bell's boyfriend then became Bell's husband, and during the third year of her degree, they had their second baby. Bell worked at several primary schools. Bell and her first husband divorced and she met and then married her second husband, had a third child (whilst studying for her doctorate) and also gained two step-children.*

## Interview Map: Bell

### Bell's interview map



*Figure 18: Bell's interview map.*

## Bell's Story

*On my summer holidays between years (on the undergraduate teaching degree) I gave birth to my second child. So, effectively they have been with me from the very beginning, they really were a part of the whole journey to becoming a teacher and I think, actually, I was a better teacher as a result of them growing up alongside my understanding of how children think, how they learn. Yes, it became a very different experience of training to be a teacher with that going on as well.*

*I had taken the year out, which was pretty reasonable at the time, a gap year was not unexpected, though a gap year to have a baby, a little bit more unusual. What was fascinating was that when it sort of got around our local area that I was expecting a baby the first question was always, "Oh, does this mean you're not going to university?" I would always say no, and then the second question was always, "So, is your mum going bring up the baby?" That was 1992. Not that long ago, and people were still thinking that you could not do these two things together. The study more than working, I think people had gotten their heads around women could work and have a family but the idea that you could study and have a family, that seemed to be the really odd thing.*

*It just never seemed to occur to anybody that it was actually possible and I mean, when I got to university they were pretty good, I mean, there was no particular special circumstances, usually I was allowed to bring my daughter in if I was really struggling with childcare. But they could not get their heads around I was not a mature student. I was not ticking that box, so, I was not flagging for any of their welfare, support, you know, the rare occasions where I sought it I had to explain the whole, "Yeah, I have a toddler," "Oh, so you're a mature student?" "No, I'm not 21 yet." "But you have a child?" "Yes," "And you're in your second year?"*

*"You're not what we expect from a teenage mum, you're not what we expect from a fledgling professional because you already have these responsibilities."*

Bell begins her interview with her teacher training and the special situation she was in at that time. Bell had her first child before she began her ITE undergraduate degree in her late teens and her second child before she completed the course.

*When everybody else sort of just assumed it was all impossible I just assumed it was.*

*When I found out I was pregnant, I basically knew, no matter what happened, I was going to be keeping this baby, but I also knew that I never ever wanted to be in the position where I was blaming her for me not having done what I should do, having not achieved what I could achieve. I don't know, there has always been this really weird thing, how could I possibly ask my children to aspire if I was not willing to give it a go?*

*Yes, it is possible and no, it was not easy. Parenthood is not. I could have stayed at home and just brought them up and still would have found it tough. They would not have got as much out of me though because the mental stimulation you get from a job like teaching, yes, you come home and you are shattered and you are spending all day prioritizing other people's children and missing out on things like school plays, sports days, things like that.*

*But I was doing something that made me feel fulfilled in a career sense and was keeping me thinking things over, always trying to come up with new ideas and everything. So, that kind of mental stimulation meant that when I did need to be a mum I could park that knowing I would be picking her up again tomorrow and I could focus on that. So, it never felt like it was an either or choice, it has always been all of it.*

*So, the throw in; I now have a third child, actually, my husband and I divorced and through a complete and utter aligning of stars I met another (husband's job), my children told me I have a type... So, I have got two stepchildren that are a bit younger than my children and then we have a son together, so, I am still an educator with a small child.*

Bell describes her feelings about her attitude to work.

*I can honestly say I have a problem; I am a workaholic. However, I try to keep it focused on things that at least kind of combine together.*

*I think as well, I spent a long time refusing-- and I still do now-- refusing to take on too much parental guilt because I always made sure that the people involved in the care of my children were good people who looked after them, who cared for them, you know, I have that proverbial village to raise a child in but I put that village together, it was not a random act. I went and I found the child minders, the nursery teachers, the settings, the schools, everything I needed to ensure that they were safe and okay and looked after and nurtured I made sure was in their life.*

*I have always had a bit of a sense that my role was not necessarily to be the sole nurturer as a mother, my role was to make sure they were nurtured and yes, I was part of that but there is also a lot of other people involved, which meant that they had a lot of people who-- It had just been me they would not have gained quite so much. Like I said, I cannot expect anything from them that I am not prepared to have a go at myself.*

*So, if I wanted to think of my children having a successful career of their own but also not feeling that they had to sacrifice their dreams for family and being part of that kind of unit, I had to show them it could work, it could be done, or at least make a darn good start to try and do anything.*

Bell also talked about motherhood and the breakdown of her first relationship.

*It's too easy sometimes to think that motherhood in particular is about sacrificing. I do not buy that. I do not buy that there is a massive difference between mums and dads once you have actually got the mechanics of birthing out of the way and okay, I breast fed all of my children as well, so, that, my husband probably could not have handled. But particularly my first husband, yes, he loves our daughters but he has quite a traditional view of what is supposed to happen and then he married a completely non-traditional woman.*

*We still have a lot of regard for each other. It was horrible at the time and again, that was probably the only time while trying to parent my girls through a divorce I lost probably about six weeks of my life in terms of time because I was getting divorced, because I needed to be home when they came in through the door at the end of the school day with a smile on my face going, "What should we have for tea?" and I could not keep it together at school for other people's children and keep it together at home for them.*

*So, I was signed off for that period of time because that was where I needed to be. Yes, there is only so much you can do. But once I kind of got through that and understood a bit more about how difficult he had found family life and actually kind of helping my girls over that bit as well, you know, the anger at their dad for leaving.*

Bell expands on each stage of her career and family life.

*I think underneath it all because we had fundamentally a very strong, familial relationship, because it had been just them and me for so much of their life, even when I was married to their father I think lashing out as a teenager, you do it where you feel safe, you do it to the person you know will forgive you for it ultimately. So, that is what happened, at the point where they felt safe enough to do it they lashed out and I got the brunt of it. So, that was tough.*

*That was the only time when I started to wonder if I should be feeling guilty, whether I had done something terribly wrong, because for some reason they did not seem to understand that it had all been for them and about them, all of it. I remember when I had my eldest, it was not the worst labour in the world, but it was not the best, it was a tough labour, but I was sitting there in a hospital bed and you know, everybody just kind of abandons you up to the point where you have a baby and I remember thinking, I get it, I understand the meaning of life now and that was it.*

*Everything, everything was about that, having the next generation in my arms and being responsible for helping them become the adults they have potential to be. I am very proud of where they have got to and I am just as excited as anyone else to see where they are going to get to next. They are amazing people and every so often I allow myself a little bit of a pat on the back, you know, "I made that."*

*But like I said, they made me better as a teacher. I was able to look how other people's children and go, "You've got a story, you've got a home life that you're going home to".*

Bell returns to a thread here of the special situation of being a teacher and a mother.

*We did go through phases with the girls, they come home and say, "My teacher said--" and I would go, "Oh, actually I'm not totally sure that is right," and sometimes you know it's the child has misinterpreted it and sometimes it's because they have been told something wrong. "My teacher said this," "I'm not sure that's right," "No, he said so, so, it is," and you go in this kind of a, "Look, I'll show you, we'll go and find out and--," "No, my teacher says so, so it must be true," and then like, "I'm a teacher, and your mum, That is Top Trumps, I win."*

Bell also describes a strong social justice thread in her life history. Much of the detail of the example she gives has been omitted to maintain anonymity.

*The family in the middle of it, you know, they were in the middle of it, it should not be up to them to fix it and I guess this is the other thing, what my children have seen over and over again is my, if you like, social justice perception of things, my wish and willingness to be an ally to those who do not have that core family structure that we have that may be a little bit fractured and a little bit broken but actually, ultimately is still incredibly strong.*

*When children are going through a bereavement and they do not have the language and they do not have the understanding to articulate their feelings or even understand how they should be feeling about it and all the rest of it, trying to make the spaces, give them time.*

*But yes, all of those things are things that they have seen me do but that I have made sure they see because again, it's-- I guess I always took my responsibility as a role model to my own children quite strongly, so, how can I expect them to care about anybody else if they do not see that that is okay to do and that is actually a good thing to do and that it does not take away from them.*

*I think that is the other things, you know, there is enough room for us to care about these other people but still know that we come home to a home where we are loved and cherished and it has not somehow been made smaller because we are trying to spread it out a bit more. I do not know; it sounds very new-agey kind of a--*

In the final extract, Bell describes herself:

*My friends, especially the ones that know me a long time, they just say, "It's brilliant because your life is better than a soap opera but no one will believe it," and I do sometimes think that the world is just mocking me. "Let's see what we can pile on this one."*

*I have achieved every ambition I have set out for myself. I am a little bit lost at the moment because the sort of career goals that I had was to get published and to get a PhD and I have got those, so, now I can only do more of the same and I kind of do not know what I want. When I grow up, I am not sure what I want to be.*

*So, I have done those things now, but they took a bit longer because-- and this sounds as if I am trying to not take any responsibility for my life choices-- but teenage pregnancy, you know, mental health issues of various family members, some caring responsibilities, a father who worked away during pivotal points, a husband who then worked away during pivotal points, you know, bringing up two children while trying to study, et cetera.*

## Bell by Aimee

Bell constructs teaching and motherhood as one concept throughout most of the interview. She identifies both roles with modelling; modelling working hard to achieve goals, modelling strength in the face of adversity. Bell talked about social justice and how a sense of fairness and equality characterise her teaching and mothering.

### Identified Discourses of Teacher/Mother

#### Teacher mother pioneer discourse

*'there is a particularly unique set of convergences that made my whole journey into motherhood.'*

Bell orientates herself as a pioneer in terms of teacher-motherhood; she found ways to make the situation work, with few role models or peers in a similar situation. She also

*'I have that proverbial village to raise a child, but I put that village together, it was not a random act.'*

orientates herself as in control of her destiny; she has managed the situation, the support, the organisation of teacher-motherhood.

She also links here to another of her discourses; that of an ethic of self-care. Whilst Bell positions herself as a role-model, she reminds that she did not raise her children or teach her classes alone. Where Bell reasserts her status as pioneer and role-model is in her positioning of herself as organiser of care, not necessarily 24 hour a day carer.

*'my role was not necessarily to be the sole nurturer as a mother, my role was to make sure they were nurtured.'*

Bell positions herself as in control of her teacher-motherhood now, and a pioneer in terms of her early experiences of the special circumstance of teacher-motherhood.

*'When everybody else sort of just assumed it was all impossible I just assumed it was.'*

Bell's practice is one of capable, experienced wisdom. Because of Bell's positioning, she has opened up opportunities for her to mentor others in a similar situation. She personifies the idea that teacher-motherhood is possible, following her lead.

#### [Role-model mother discourse](#)

*'I had to show them it could work, it could be done.'*

Bell orientates herself with being a role-model for a number of different situations, including being a teacher-mother or working-mother; particularly with her own daughters. She says she 'had' to show them it was possible, suggesting that the onus was on her to prove it. Bell orientates herself in the same way when she is talking

about role-modelling hard work to achieve goals.

*'she has said to me, "I knew I could do it because you did."'*

Bell positions herself as a teacher-mother who is highly conscious of role-model status and impact. She talked about how her children have been influenced by her strong sense of social justice and gave examples of how she had demonstrated this throughout her teacher-motherhood.

*'what my children have seen over and over again is my, if you like, social justice perception of things'*

Bell's practice around being a role-model to her daughters and others, in terms of workload, self-care, working hard to achieve goals, suggests that she would position herself as a wise and experienced person in her community. Whether Bell actually did and does protect her workload and maintain a standard of self-care is open to interpretation, but the position itself could potentially make it harder to admit to thoughts or behaviours that do not meet her role-model ideal. Bell did talk about an ethic of self-care that would provide an alternative mode of practice.

#### [Work ethic / ethic of self-care discourse](#)

*'I can honestly say I have a problem; I am a workaholic.'*

Bell strongly orientates herself with an ethic of self-care, combating the ethic of care that would suggest the teacher-mother puts herself last. However, she also admits to overworking. Bell positions herself as choosing this way of life and being in control of her workload. In parts of the narrative, Bell orientates herself with struggle and self-

sacrifice; particularly when she is discussing putting her children first, before work and other relationships.

*'there is enough room for us to care about these other people.'*

Bell positions her teacher-mother status as espousing an ethic of self-care, to a point. She also describes a strong sense of social justice that is not in competition with self-care. Bell's strong assertions about taking care of herself and making sure that she is a role-model in terms of work/life balance mean that the likelihood is that she opens up opportunities for herself to opt out of additional workload, explain to others why her time is important and why she must put herself first, some of the time.

*"I'm a teacher, and your mum, that is Top Trumps, I win."*

Bell's discourse of self-care is embedded in the strength of teacher-motherhood; as in this quote, the 'Top Trumps' she speaks of is the knowledge and experience she has gained as a teacher and mother and how this puts her in a position of greater wisdom. In terms of subjectivity, Bell positions herself as unwilling to risk her own health and happiness in service of others; however, there are notable exceptions with her own children.

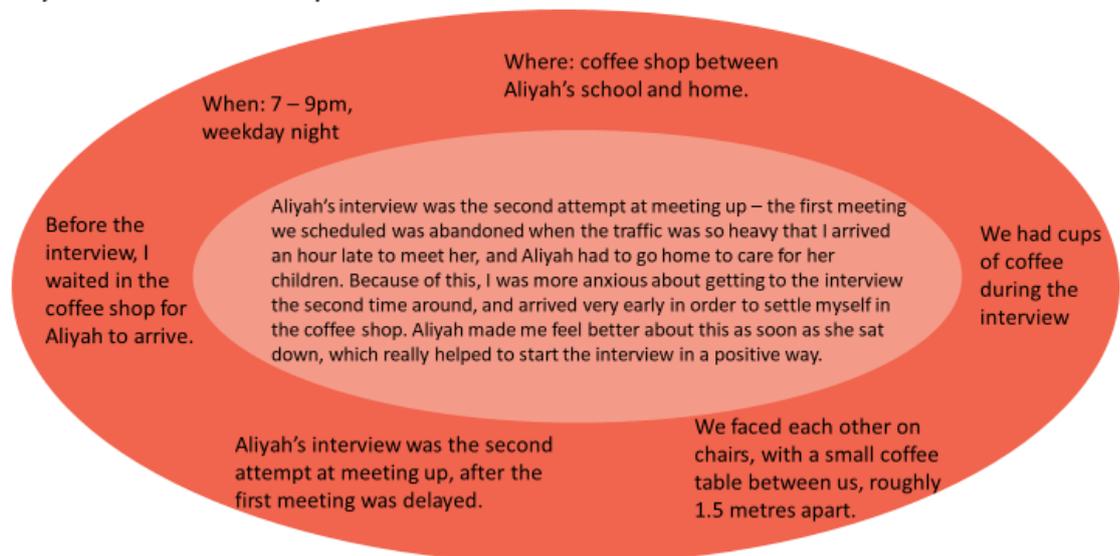
# Aliyah

## Thumbnail Sketch: Aliyah

*Aliyah is a British Arabic Muslim woman living in a predominantly Muslim community, she is in her 30s and single parent. She has two children who are both of primary school age who she has sole custody of. She lives in a large city in England and teaches in an above average size primary school, where she is based in upper Key Stage 2. Aliyah was born in the Middle East in a war zone, which her family fled. She arrived in the UK in her late teens with little English and few formal qualifications due to frequent moves across Europe and different education systems.*

## Interview Map: Aliyah

### Aliyah's interview map



*Figure 19: Aliyah's interview map.*

## Aliyah's Story

*Well, it's tough. It's hard work, it really is and sometimes I struggle, I feel that my whole life is revolved around children; children at work, children at home, children during the holidays, you never get a break, you never have a break. I think I feel guilty quite often as well because I feel that I go into work and I give my all and I give 100%. I am full of energy, I am bouncy, I am doing everything and then I get home and I crash and I do not give the same quality time to my children; and that is hard.*

*That is hard to accept, to deal with and I think I have felt it more since I have become a single mother. It's just a lot of hard work, but it is harder because it's all on me, it's me or nothing. So, I feel like it's all me, I have to be there. If I go out I have to take the children out and I have to think a million things. Holidays, it has to be me, I cannot take a break for myself, I cannot have a day for just me because the children are always there and their dad does not take them. So, it's literally me all year round. So, yes, it's tough. I mean, I do have my parents but my parents work full-time as well and it's hard asking them, "Can you look after them, can you have them for the night?"*

Aliyah begins her story with a summary of her teacher-motherhood, and in particular, single teacher-motherhood. Aliyah talks about personality traits, she talks about resilience, self-care and parental guilt.

*I am quite good, I am quite resilient and I am quite... I would not say patient, I think I am quite resilient, so, I take a lot on and I tend not to ask for help, and I tend not to complain very much, so, I just get on with it and if I am feeling down or if I am tired I just keep myself to myself and I just get myself out of it.*

*But every now and again, about once or twice a year when it hits you really hard, it's like, "Okay, I need to stop, I need to look after me, I need to do something for me." But then you think about the kids and you are like, "Well, they have been at school the whole time, they work just as hard as you have," and you have not taken them out because you are too busy or you are too tired or finances are tight, money is tight and you want to go on holiday and have fun, but what about them?*

*So, it's a constant guilt trip, it really is. It's quite tough, yes. I keep think, I was saying to one of my colleagues the other day who does not have children, I was saying to her, "I don't think it ever stops, I don't think the guilt ever stops." You know, sometimes when I go to parent's evening and the teacher says to me-- and my daughters, for example, I felt so bad, I was like, "If that was a child in my class I would do everything to make that child do their homework". But I am not doing anything with my own daughter because I am so exhausted. But then I think, "She is actually good, she'll pick it up, she'll be fine." But yes, you still feel guilty. If I can give them more of me, more of my time and attention, could they do better? It's tough, it really is.*

*That is it, and it's hard because you never talk to someone else about that because you judge yourself within yourself, you do not want to go openly judging yourself to other people; when it's other you think, "Yep, I'm doing a great job with my children. I do the best for them, protect them, it's absolutely fine.," which means I am doing something good but inside you, you know you can do better.*

Aliyah also describes the feeling of learning to accept being a 'good enough' teacher and mother.

*I think it's a teacher thing and I think me, naturally, I am a perfectionist and even within my work I have to learn the hard way that things do not need to be perfect; good is sometimes good enough, or satisfactory is sometimes also good enough and I need to stop working all hours and beating myself up for not reading the book, or I have not made the perfect birthday cake. "Yes, everything has to be perfect and it needs to be completed on time, it needs to be done, it needs to be perfect," but now I have actually learned I cannot. I cannot sustain it; I am going to harm myself if I carry on doing it.*

Aliyah then goes back to her childhood and tells a chronological story of her life so far, which I have not left in the extracts shared here, as details would make her more identifiable. Her childhood story is dominated by the family's escape from a war zone and journey through Europe. Aliyah's education was fragmented across many countries and education systems. Aliyah arrived in the UK in her late teens and began the process of learning English; she married her ex-husband when she was 21, and Aliyah wanted to go to university but could not afford the fees as she was classed as an international student at that time. They had their first child two years later.

*So, when I had my son I decided I cannot actually continue working in the (retail outlet) because of the hours, the hours were too long and I had a baby and my ex-husband was a teacher, secondary school maths teacher. Then we decided, we said, "You could work in the school, why don't you be a teaching assistant?" I thought that was a good idea, it will be good hours, I can pick up my son, I can drop him off at nursery, but then I could not get a job as a teaching assistant because I had not qualifications as a teaching assistant.*

*But then, out of nowhere, one of the teaching agencies contacted me and were like, "Oh, you can speak Arabic. We need a teaching assistant who can translate in a certain school and we have a lot of Arabic speaking families and we need someone to translate. So, even if you don't have a qualification we'll have you." So, I did.*

*So, I did that for four years and I fell in love with it. I fell in love with it and I was looking at the teachers and I was thinking, "I could do this job. I actually could do this job."*

Aliyah then travelled to the Middle East and Africa, following her husband's career. She returned to the UK to start teacher training.

*But then when I wanted to do my PGCE I brought both of them back and again, I went back to parents' house because I thought there was no point in me being by myself.*

*First of all, I had no income, I am a student. Yes, I have a student loan but I cannot pay rent and everything with two kids. I knew it was going to be hard, so, I needed the support, I needed someone to be able to pick up the kids from school and drop them off, to do all of that stuff, you know, to feed them, to put them to bed while I am working. So, yes, we were pretty much in one bedroom, me and two kids, doing my PGCE.*

*I think I have always been, my mum says to me that I have always been resilient. She says, "Even when you used to be ill when you were a child, or if someone hurt or you were upset, you would never cry."*

She described her marriage in terms of her aspirations and the actual divorce:

*It was always his career because you did not have one, "You did not have a career, you did not have a degree, so, you have to support me in my journey," kind of thing. But then funnily enough, I did not find the same reciprocated when I started my career because then it was like, you know, "I have a meeting or a have reservations or I need to work late," and you know, "Well, what about the kids? What are you going to cook today? Why are you late?" kind of thing.*

*So, then when the divorce happened it was-- it has been quite a struggle for the last two years. I think mainly financially because obviously we had two incomes and now we have one and I have got a mortgage and I have got the kids. My parents have been very helpful. We are getting there; we are doing it.*

*So, they do, they understand more. They do understand more and they are more-- I would say they are resilient as well. I think my daughter is working, she is very resilient. The older one is starting to learn; his personality is sort of like his dad but he is starting now a bit. So, like you said, now they are a bit older they can sort of understand that you cannot go on holiday because you cannot afford it, they sort of understand that. Yes, if you cannot get something, like my son wanted PS4 the other day, I was like, "I can't afford a PS4, I literally cannot get you a PS4," and so, they are becoming more patient and more understanding, and I think helpful as well.; the housework, in terms of the housework and the day to day stuff, that is getting easier because they do more and they take on that responsibility that each one of them has to do their room, has to do their own ironing, has to empty the dishwasher, you know, the little things, so, that helps a bit as well.*

In the next extract, Aliyah's own words on this period of her life are important in understanding how she positions herself in relation to the divorce and her current situation:

*I find that I have to because I was doing everything. I was doing everything even when I was married and it was a strain, it was a real strain because he would not do anything and I had a full-time job, I had to cook, I had to clean, I had to iron, I had to do the food shopping, I had to remember every single thing, I had to pay the bills, absolutely everything was on my shoulders. It was hard, it was really hard.*

*In fact, sometimes I think now it's easier because now I do not resent it because I know it's only me and I am responsible for it and I am organized and I know when to do certain things. Whereas before it was like, "Why are you just lying there on the sofa doing nothing? Can you not see me doing the cleaning and doing this and doing that?" "Have you paid so and so?" "No, I haven't," "Well, how many times do I have to remind you about paying this bill? Come on."*

*So, yes, in some ways I think now it's easier. That is what I often say to my friends it's like, "Actually, it's now easier," and it's also now on my terms. If I want to work late there is no one to tell me, "You're ignoring me, you're working late," you know, it's all about work these days kind of thing. If I want to not cook I can just get a takeaway, beans on toast, nobody cares.*

In Aliyah's final extract, she talks about being a role-model of resilience for her children and her own mother:

*My son said to me the other day, he is amazing, bless him, I came back from work, I think it was Wednesday after staff meeting, so, I did not get home until half five, quarter to six, got changed and straight away and started making the dinner and he came up to me in the kitchen and was like, "How do you do it?" "And you don't stop and you are still standing here making dinner, how do you do it?"*

*"Well, I have to go to work to earn a living and you both have to eat, I have got to come back and make food, so, this is what life is like and this is what I am trying to teach you, you have to be resilient, you have to work hard, nothing comes easy." The hope is they grow up to be like that.*

*Yes, and that is what I am hoping. I mean, I grew up with my parents working, you know. My dad was in the army, it was the Iran war and then it was the Gulf War, you know, and my mum was working two jobs, she was working two jobs because my dad was in the army and there was three of us and we lived on our own, she did not live with family. We had our own apartment and I used to watch my mum run from either picking us up from school, go to her second job, make us food, go to her second job, come back, make us dinner, get our clothes ready, do our homework with us, drop us off in the morning, and so on. So, you do see it, so, hopefully it will rub off on them.*

## Aliyah by Aimee

### Identified Discourses of Teacher/Mother

#### 'Teaching' as constructed in Aliyah's Transcript

Aliyah describes being a teacher as; 'tough. It's hard work, it really is and sometimes I struggle.' She often refers to teaching and mothering as one construction, with some notable exceptions. For Aliyah, 'teaching' covers all of the work she is required to do at school and for school.

Aliyah's route into teaching was through working in a school, 'I fell in love with it. I fell in love with it and I was looking at the teachers and I was thinking, "I could do this job. I actually could do this job."'

## 'Motherhood' as constructed in Aliyah's Transcript

Aliyah's construction of motherhood includes her perspective as a single mother, which seems central to her identity as a mother. Because of single motherhood being a significant part of her narrative, this has formed a main discourse in Aliyah's ESDA analysis.

Aliyah talks about the continuous presence of children in her life, a feature of the special circumstance that teacher-mothers may experience. 'I feel that my whole life is revolved around children; children at work, children at home, children during the holidays, you never get a break, you never have a break.' As in other participant's narratives, Aliyah uses teaching and mothering simultaneously in some sections of the transcript and although it is clear when she is talking about her own children and those in her class, often the two are intertwined. Aliyah's story ended with her reflecting on the experiences of the last few years and how her relatively recent career as a teacher, motherhood and her divorce have made her a stronger person; 'I think I feel more happy with myself and more confident in myself. I am more assertive; I can stand up for myself and for what I believe in and for what I want.'

## Analysis of Aliyah's Interview Transcript

### The guilty party

*'I think I feel guilty quite often as well because I feel that I go into work and I give my all and I give 100%. I am full of energy, I am bouncy, I am doing everything and then I get home and I crash and I do not give the same quality time to my children; and that is hard.'*

Aliyah talks about feelings of guilt around always having children (either at home or school) that she could be doing more for; particularly her own children. The subject position is one of the teacher-mother as always neglecting someone, somewhere. This

orientates her as mindful of the needs of others.

*'So, it's a constant guilt trip, it really is. It's quite tough, yes. I keep think, I was saying to one of my colleagues the other day who does not have children, I was saying to her, "I don't think it ever stops, I don't think the guilt ever stops.'"*

However, Aliyah also discusses how she is battling these feelings of guilt, because she is a good enough teacher and mother. This orientates her as a reflective and realistic practitioner and parent.

*'I have been forcing myself to try and do things for myself because I decided that sometimes it's okay to be selfish and you kind of have to be selfish.'*

However, as with Aliyah's other positions as teacher-mother, she considers the alternative view. The subject position here is one of teacher-mother as a person who should rally against feelings of guilt and shame. In practice, Aliyah's positioning around her feelings of guilt would suggest that she may hold herself back from prioritising her needs above those of any child, but that she is reflecting on this.

Aliyah also talks about how she has reflected on feelings of guilt and discussed this with colleagues. She positions herself as aware of the barriers to her subjectivity in the wider world here, in that she talks about how guilt could prevent her going on holiday or out with friends, which she acknowledges are activities which help her well-being and happiness.

### [Single Motherhood is different](#)

*'It's just a lot of hard work, but it is harder because it's all on me, it's me or nothing.'  
'I cannot take a break for myself, I cannot have a day for just me because the children are always there and their dad does not take them.'  
'You know, going out or doing things for myself or dating or whatever it is. It's quite tough.'*

Aliyah describes and orientates single motherhood (also divorced motherhood) as different from her previous status; single motherhood is hard and the responsibility is all hers – she is potentially powerless. However, Aliyah also talks about how her current single status is easier in some respects to her married life – she has been liberated.

*'In fact, sometimes I think now it's easier because now I do not resent it because I know it's only me and I am responsible for it and I am organized and I know when to do certain things.'*

Aliyah also explores a discourse of single-mothers having freedom to make choices. In practice, Aliyah again reflects on two options for how her positioning affects her view of her place in the world and how she interacts with her ecological systems. She acknowledges that in some respects she is powerless; and from her action orientation towards the discourse, there is an expectation that some of her options are limited. Aliyah's expectation of limits on her options may come from familial and cultural expectations, she also has talked about the high expectations she puts on herself. Aliyah also positions herself as having choices, because she has ultimate responsibility. She decides and lives with the consequences. In terms of subjectivity, this would suggest that Aliyah feels she has control over her situation and can make decisions about her future.

#### [History of resilience](#)

*'Yes, I think I have always been, my mum says to me that I have always been resilient. She says, "Even when you used to be ill when you were a child, or if someone hurt or you were upset, you would never cry."'*

Aliyah orientates herself as a person who has always been resilient – from early childhood – someone who can cope with tough situations and a naturally resilient person.

*'But every now and again, about once or twice a year when it hits you really hard, it's like, "Okay, I need to stop, I need to look after me, I need to do something for me.'"*

Aliyah explored a discourse of the teacher-mother as exploited for her resilience. She also talked about the dangers of being resilient, in the eyes of others, because there is an expectation that you can tackle anything. Although in terms of practice this generally applied to school life, she also described how her ex-husband had expectations that she would be resilient, both during their marriage and since the divorce.

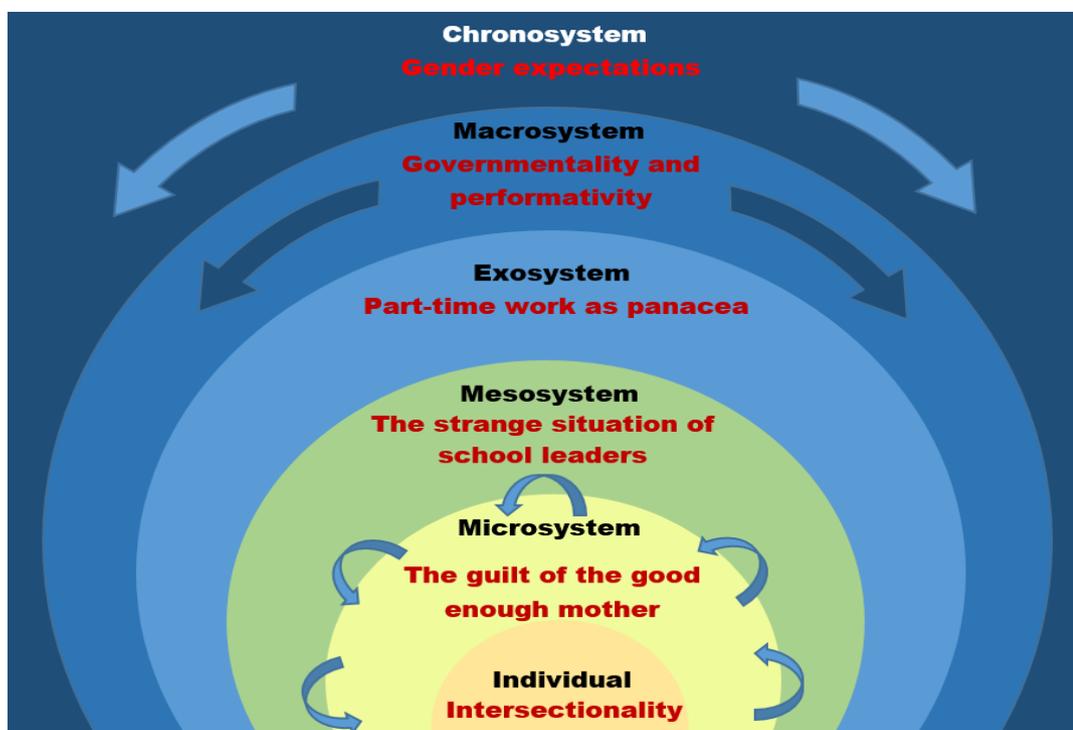
*'But resilience, it does not benefit you sometimes because people pile on top of you because people think that you are ok...they just pile more and more until you sort of just explode.'*

Aliyah again reflects on two sides of her practice as 'naturally resilient'. Because she positions herself as resilient, she invites further workload and reduced support, as she is seen as ultimately able to cope with anything.

However, she also positions herself as resilient enough to know when she is taking on too much; and a mistress of her own destiny in some respects, as she can say no to additional work if the situation gets very bad.

## Chapter 5: Synthesis

### 5.1: Introduction

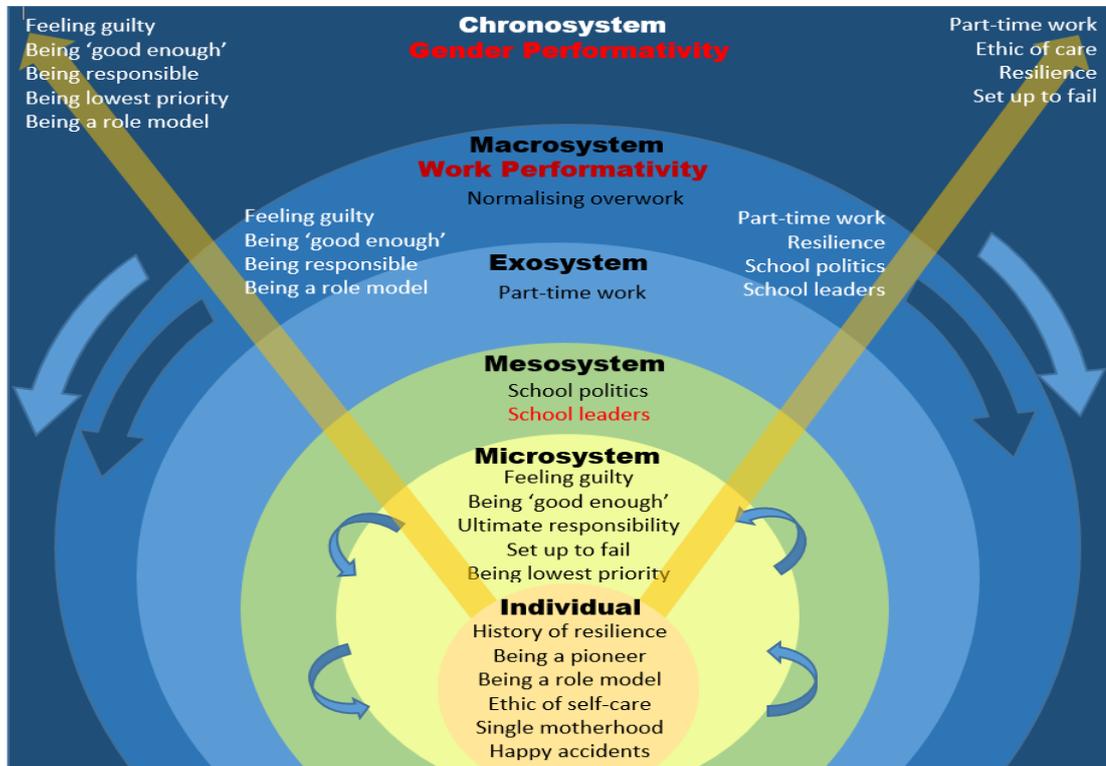


*Figure 20: Discourses discussed in this chapter.*

The discussion of findings in this chapter is based on the collective response to discourses identified. As a postmodern feminist piece of work, the stories of each individual are unique and valuable in their own right. In order to fulfil the feminist call for activism, following Butler's suggestion that women can reinforce a new approach to doing gender (Butler, 1990; Jenkins & Finneman, 2018), commonalities are drawn out so that coalescences of resistance and support for teacher-mothers can form.

In this section I will be reflecting on the main discourses that have emerged from the interviews (see figure 21, below), through the overarching issues of work

performativity and gender performativity that are inherent in the discourses of every system, and create a ‘perfect storm’ of competing narratives to teaching and motherhood.



*Figure 21: How discourses from ecological systems feed into the overarching issues of work and gender performativity.*

At the ‘individual’ system level, unique discourses have been drawn out from Aliyah’s story that highlight the ongoing importance of considering intersectionality as part of an analysis of women’s experience. Beyond this, into the micro, meso and exo systems, discourses have been selected where participants have coalesced around a discourse, so that their different positionings and orientations can be discussed. In consideration of these discourses, I have explored the overarching and underpinning trends that may have brought about these discourses; including performativity in the education system and gender performativity through recent history and across social systems (section 5.8).

Power is being exercised wherever we find it. No one person, properly speaking, holds it; and yet it is always exercised in one direction and not another, by this group in this case, by this other group in this other case. We don't really know who has power, but we do know who doesn't. (Foucault, 1977, p.3).

In the discussion of the findings, it is clear that the teacher-mother participants are very often in the position of being the group who clearly do not have the power in a significant way. Where the power is exercised in directions, I have looked for explanations of how this works in the current education system; but the individuals who control the direction are not always clear to identify.

## 5.2: Collective Analysis of Discourses

Discourses were identified where participants held positions; then discourses were selected for inclusion in the thesis, which would add most to the knowledge and understanding of these issues, as well as providing opportunities for activist work. For example, guilt is not a new theme in the literature on parent teachers (Kell, 2016; Page, 2013), however the connection to discourses around being 'good enough', and teacher-mothers going on to accept limitations to career progression and perceived reduction in recognition and praise, due to being just 'good enough', are not widely written about. Attaching this discourse to the wider issues of clashing gender and work performativities is also novel in the literature on teacher mothers. Anecdotally, guilt is not discussed in these terms on social media, either. Whilst participants have taken different positions on the discourse of guilt (particularly motherhood guilt) their 'action orientations' (Willig, 2008) suggest that their future actions may be limited based on how they position themselves. A position of acceptance that being a mother means 'just managing' the job may mean that the participant would not apply for a promotion, expect performance-related pay increases, request changes to working

patterns or raise issues over workload. Anna’s concern about finding another post where her part-time work would be valued, Charlie’s acceptance of a temporary contract that was not discussed with her in subsequent years and Sian’s admission that she cannot work at the same pace and intensity as other teachers are all examples of this from the findings.

On the collective diagram, positions have been mapped to correspond with interviews where there was a clear link between the transcript and the discourse. Being ‘good enough’ and ‘being guilty’ were so closely associated in the discourse analysis that writing about them separately created repetitive sections of text, so for the thesis these have been amalgamated. Separate analyses of these discourses can be found in the appendix (see appendix 20).

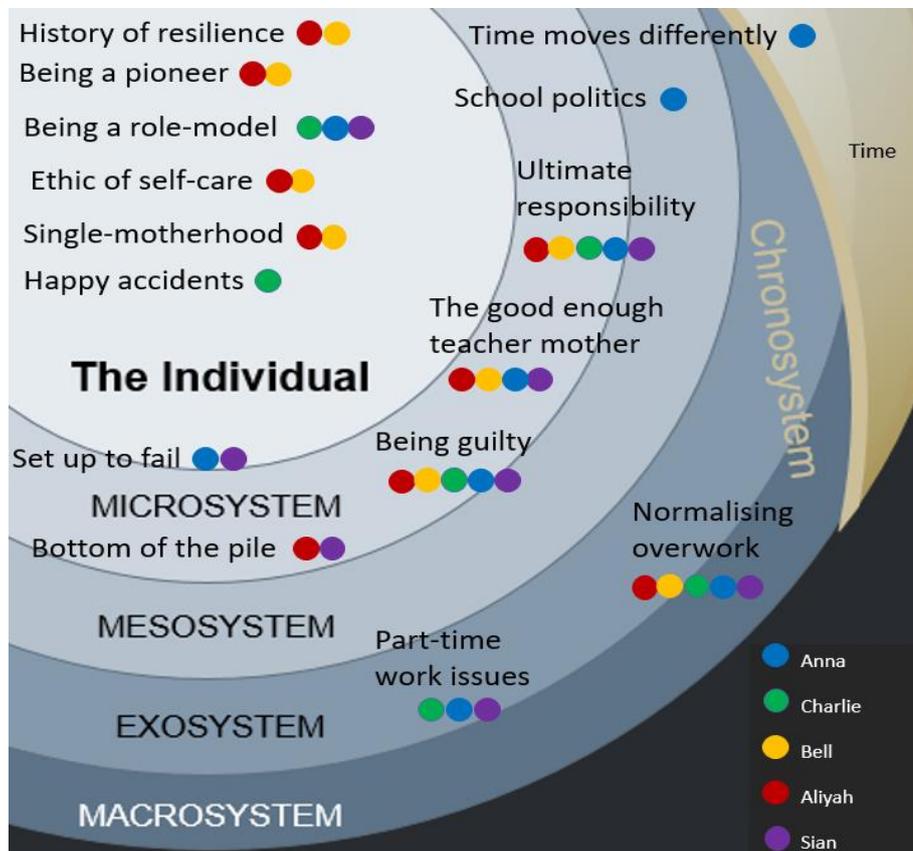


Figure 22: Collective ecological systems discourse analysis.

Finally, using FDA and identifying shared discourses and participant positions with regards to what is in the transcript has another unfortunate effect, in that what is missing from the stories is overlooked in favour of what is there and tangible.

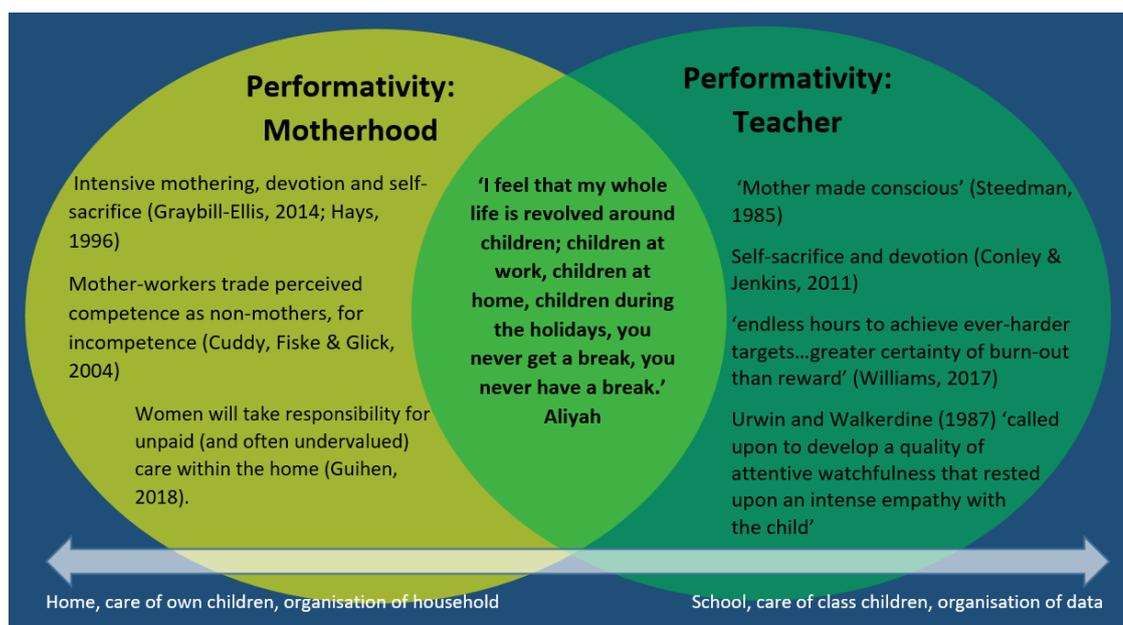
Ecological systems maps helped me to identify a gap in participant orientation; an example is given here of a reluctance to blame, or a perception that the school leaders are not responsible in part for the challenges of teacher-motherhood. In the ecological systems maps, very few of the discourses sit within the mesosystem (the interplay between the aspects of the microsystem; for example school and home). This is where discussions with school leaders, governors and the local authority/academy trust leaders sit, and interestingly participants did not widely recognise these people as responsible for their workload, career trajectory, well-being or safeguarding. Anna did not explicitly point out the hypocrisy of senior leaders who had flexible working arrangements, Bell acknowledged the workload and yet labelled herself a 'workaholic', and Sian excused the behaviour of senior leaders based on a business and outcomes model of education.

### 5.3: Chronosystem & Macrosystem:

#### Gender performativity, work performativity and the perfect storm

Within the narratives of my five participants, discourses identified and their positions towards those discourses are enmeshed in a much bigger story; gender performativity, work performativity, and the perfect storm that is created for teacher-mothers who may be performing two incompatible roles and cramming a 'fourth shift' into their day. Gender performativity, in terms of motherhood specifically, requires that a mother is

nurturing, devoted, self-sacrificing and available if she is to meet the expectations of the good mother (Sorensen, 2017). Work performativity, in terms of teaching, requires that a teacher is responsive to targets, data, and evaluations, can set aside their personal commitments and be ‘an enterprising self, with a passion for excellence’ (Ball, 2003, p.215).



*Figure 23: Competing performativities for teacher-mothers.*

Media representations of the possibility of ‘having it all’ suggest that either part-time work or being exceptional are the only ways to balance career and family (Sorensen, 2017), yet the wider issues of work and gender performativity and our tacit acceptance of untenable situations is not interrogated. Individuals are responsible for the ‘choice’ to take on career and children – yet performativity suggests that the individual has no choice; ‘performativity is not a choice. Those who do not ‘do their gender right’ are ostracized within the culture, as the broader power structure prioritises the maintenance of gender polarity or binary.’ (Jenkins & Finneman, 2018, P.159).

Performativity is 'as a kind of logic and in relation to discursive effects, is a *normative* force on systems: inefficiency is not, and will not, be tolerated in efficient systems.' (Locke, 2015, p.248). In terms of work performativity, these discourses are normalised through exercise of performativity measures and lead to an acceptance of overwork and poor working conditions as inevitable outcomes (Holmes, 2019). The literature on workload and well-being of teachers generally covers some aspects of overwork and systemic causes of this (section 2.4). However, the combination of overwork at home and work, plus an acceptance that being a teacher-mother means not meeting the minimum 'efficiency' requirements of the school or system at large are not well understood. The performative experience of a teacher is to be overworked, to exceed the working week by many hours (even if they have gone part-time to mitigate against this) and to accept that initiatives to improve standards, increase efficiency and drive up pupil attainment are prioritised over individual staff rights and needs. All of my participants discussed workload as an issue, and for many the combination of workload and lack of time for schoolwork to be completed in evenings and weekends was a focus (for example, Anna and Sian describe waiting for children to sleep so they can get back to school work). As a teacher-mother, there is the additional responsibility of parenthood that is informed by specialist training (with the weighty expectations of success that can accompany this). Bell talks about her friends and relations expecting her to know what to do with children and to be a role-model. The burden can be unmanageable; you can have it all, if you can do all the work.

Foucault (1988) suggests that sets of practices that we are subject to – techniques of the self – make us believe that we need to change.

The practice of the self implies that one should form the image of oneself not simply as an imperfect, ignorant individual who requires correction, training and instruction, but as one who suffers from certain ills and who needs to have them treated either by oneself or by someone who has the necessary competence. (Foucault 1988, 57)

Others have suggested that this has led to a cult of self-reflection in teaching (Perryman et al., 2017). For the teacher-mothers who shared their stories for this study, viewing themselves as imperfect, ignorant and in need of correction may explain their acceptance of little praise for their work in the classroom, or gratitude for continued employment regardless of conditions, contracts and unreasonable requests. Charlie took on curriculum planning for a whole subject area on a precarious contract, Anna feels continued pressure to 'prove' part-time models can work; they both express gratitude to their employers for giving them a chance to prove themselves with additional workload and unfair attitudes to legal work patterns. They do not express anger about these conditions because the performative norms of teaching and mothering reinforce their personal 'weaknesses', rather than the systemic issues that require teachers to work beyond their contracted hours for schools to function.

Traditional theories do not explain why my teacher-mothers would subscribe to discourses of overwork from their immediate worlds of work and home, however, the idea that somehow working longer hours may contribute to an improvement or correction in their practice, and fulfil their expectations of being a self-reflective practitioner, does chime with some of the narratives explored here. My participant stories (particularly Anna, Sian and Charlie) certainly suggest that this is still a major discourse for them and they position themselves as accepting of untenable expectations and ultimate responsibility for everyone else.

It seems likely that many teachers try to manage an increasing workload because of 'notions of good teaching, collegial and personal expectations, and the moral imperative of teaching to provide the best possible educational opportunities for students' (Bartlett, 2002, p.18), and mothers are likely to be trying to fulfil gender performative notions of 'good motherhood' (Paige, 2013). These discourses around the good mother and good teacher of young children have been with us for a century or more. Despite changes to working lives and beliefs about child development and parenting, they are slow to change and the special situation of the teacher mother can be considered a 'perfect storm' of discourses around expectations of nurturing, caring and sacrifice; creating the conditions for guilt and feelings of being overwhelmed.

All of my participants talked about workload, both at home and work, and in many examples they positioned themselves as accepting of overwork and systems that entail overwork. The 'second shift' of home working after the paid working day (Hochschild and Machung, 2003) was referred to in other terms by the participants (and by theorists; Adkins, 2002; Blackmore, 1999; O'Brien Hallstein and O'Reilly, 2013) and described; the cooking, cleaning, organising of the family, and then in some cases, a return to school work once domestic duties had been attended to. Sian describes her need to be constantly prepared for every eventuality; embodying the discourse of intensive mothering, devotion and self-sacrifice (Graybill-Ellis, 2014; Hays, 1996) and suggesting that she sees this as part of 'being a mother'. When this is combined with the expectations she has of maintaining high standards at work, even in a new staff team and year group, it is apparent that this idea of self-sacrifice and devotion has

replicated in the discourses around EYFS and Primary teachers (Conley and Jenkins, 2011; Page, 2013). The teacher as mother made conscious (Steedman, 1985) is expected to have intense empathy, limitless care and now produce outstanding results for Ofsted.

It seems that a discourse of overwork for my participants is leading to an acceptance of working hours well beyond those contracted, which fits with recent national survey data (DfE, 2019b, 2019c; NASUWT, 2019; NEU, 2019a, 2019b). It is also leading to an acceptance that mitigation of overwork, for example by asking for help, sharing workload with a partner or job share, arranging alternative childcare is seen as the responsibility of the teacher-mother, too. Potentially, as part of the gender performativity of being a mother.

Becoming a mother means taking on a time commitment that cannot be easily reduced at will. In the absence of adequate support, there is a sticking point in the revolution: taking care of the kids. (Craig, 2006, p.126).

For my teacher-mother participants, taking 'care of the kids' full-time is not an option, so the organisation of care falls upon them. As Bell points out, 'I have that proverbial village to raise a child, but I put that village together, it was not a random act.'

The work of organising their own support is an unseen part of their workload, not interrogated in recent research.

Sian talks about the expectation that she will perform at the same level at work with her new baby, yet the workload at home is unrecognisable in comparison to her life before children. In her positioning around this discourse of the 'motherload'

(O'Brien Hallstein and O'Reilly, 2012), asking her husband to help with his children is framed as 'asking a favour'. It is Sian's responsibility and work to organise child care if she is not able to provide it herself. Unequal distribution of unpaid work in UK families is well documented (Fatherhood Institute, 2016; Park et al., 2013), but the ultimate responsibility for *organisation* of this unfairly distributed work is not often discussed. Possibly the normalisation of this aspect of workload has prevented these discussions from happening, even in the research. Aliyah feels the full responsibility for her family as a single parent (Horne and Breitzkreuz, 2016), and Charlie describes her first husband's decision to resign from the job that was their only income; it seems that across the participant stories, being responsible for organisation is a common discourse. Part of the performative role of the mother is to organise and to take on responsibility for home and children; requests for help are seen as failings or proof that one is not quite 'good-enough' as a mother.

Gender performativity may be adding further to the perfect storm, by ensuring that women feel unable to speak out publically or at work about their untenable situations. Complaining about motherhood and teaching would mark out the individual as subversive, disruptive and 'abnormal' in terms of the teacher-mother expectation. Identifying as 'feminist' or 'activist' in some schools may exacerbate this situation and potential ostracisation that follows (Jenkins & Finneman, 2018). Anna eludes to the difficulties of bringing politics into school, even though she feels supported by online communities. Participants reported tolerating situations in school that they knew were unfair, but did not tie these explicitly with the issue of their expected role and behaviour, and often did not raise these situations with employers or colleagues (for example, Sian's observation feedback, Anna's part-time request, Charlie's contract). It

seems that in some respects, the expectations of the teacher-mother as selfless, self-critical and suboptimal in terms of efficiency have been internalised. The expectations of self-sacrifice and self-improvement of primary and early years teachers, together with the expectations that mothers will be less efficient, contribute less to the team and need more support mean that participants may find it harder to name an individual as directing power:

And if pointing out these focal points of power, denouncing them as such, talking about them in a public forum, constitutes a struggle, it's not because people were unaware of them, it's because speaking up on this topic, breaking into the network of institutional information, naming and saying who did what, is already turning the tables on power, it's a first step for other struggles against power. (Foucault, 1977b, p.5).

Women 'naming and saying' is unsurprisingly absent in the interview stories, but is a potential area for activism in the future.

Governmentality in school systems constitutes a range of strategies and tools for control of conduct (Perryman, Ball, Braun & Maguire, 2017). Part of the toolkit of control is translation of policy from the wider world into the context of individual schools, for example, when interpretations of national part-time working policy were translated into local unwritten rules of who can request flexible working and what conditions they must secure for themselves before even considering it (section 5.4).

Translation is a process of invention and compliance. As teachers engage with policy and bring their creativity to bear on its enactment, they are also captured by it. They change it, in some ways, and it changes them (Ball, Maguire, Braun & Hoskins, 2011, p.630)

The missing leadership figures in the stories of the participants suggest that this 'translator' role is masquerading as a simple unfiltered passing along of rules, rather

than an interpretation of the policy to fit with local requirements for compliance and control (Foucault, 1988). It would seem that there is a major issue to be addressed in how policy from government is interpreted in schools, often to accommodate budgetary and accountability considerations rather than that of the individual or team.

The idea of school as a business where the profits are academic outcomes also feeds into the idea that teaching is a job that can be measured in terms of output and performance (Courtney, McGinty and Gunter, 2018), and that underperformance is a failing of the employee, not the corporation or the system (Raffo and Gunter, 2008). For teacher-mothers, this is an acute issue, as demonstrated in the positionings of my participants towards a discourse of heavy workload expectations and guilt. Sian explains her treatment as a necessary part of working in a business.

Originally, I had thought about workload as a microsystem issue when considered against the framework of ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979.) However, the blame for normalisation of overwork and performativity should not fall upon the teachers who suffer because of it; 'the teaching profession will pay the price of uneven role expansion with teacher overwork, stress, and increased teacher attrition rates.' (Bartlett, 2002, p.19). Whilst in the mesosystem (section 5.5) I discuss the issue of school leaders not identified by participants as having power over local decisions on flexible working, the normalisation of overwork is a wider issue and not confined to individual school communities. As Butler points out, 'under what conditions do the theories of finance produce impossible scenarios that are bound to backfire and fail? They are not bound to do this for causal or dialectical reasons, but because they seek

to derive endless possibilities from limited resources.’ (Butler, 2010, p.153). There are school leaders and communities who defend staff rights and well-being, but the norm is that teachers work full-time to be effective, sacrifice their well-being and time and manage their own workload.

The discourse around overwork being a normal expectation, not just at school but at home and in other caring roles means that teacher-mothers position themselves as unable to change this; they can take an orientation of subversion, as Bell does, but the belief in overwork as normal is still evident in her story. Performativity has made the overwork part of who the teacher is, not just part of the job, and gender performativity, that inescapable gender expectation within us, means that rebelling against norms leads to ostracisation (Jenkins & Finneman, 2018). It seems unlikely, therefore, that initiatives such as the DfE workload reduction materials (2018c) will be enough to tackle the issues of overwork in schools, perhaps particularly for teacher-mothers who have an overall expectation of overwork being a normal part of their life experience.

Finally, gender performativity more generally sets up an expectation in society that women are self-sacrificing, devoted, caring and nurturing (Butler, 1990). These expectations perhaps explain why the demands placed on teacher-mothers are not seen as excessive or unrealistic by others (or to themselves), because women will find these roles ‘natural’ to them, and require no support or reward for doing what is just part of them, and their normal routine. It may also explain why the teacher-mothers I interviewed are not angry about the amount of care and work they are expected to do

for the benefit of others or the lack of care shown to them in some instances. Part of their own gender performativity is to expect this role in society and to be able to manage it 'naturally' – so any admission of failing, of not being able to cope with the hours, the burden of care, the responsibility for organisation, is a failing at being a woman.

Acceptance of the norms around overwork, and the sense that these are believed to be a part of teaching and motherhood can also be theorised to underpin other discourses that have emerged in the analysis. Discourses underpinned (or perhaps infiltrated) in this way include the acceptance that being 'good enough' does not merit reward or recognition and that school leaders have no responsibility in changing the situation. Untenable workload is to be expected and those who cannot manage it, either by taking on the 'fourth shift' or by finding dodges, will suffer. In the following sections, other discourses from the findings are explored in relation to the overarching issues of work and gender performativity.

## 5.4: Exosystem: Part-time work as panacea

At the time that the interviews were carried out for this study, the government were championing the idea that part-time working could solve the teacher retention crisis (DfE, 2019a; Greening, 2017).

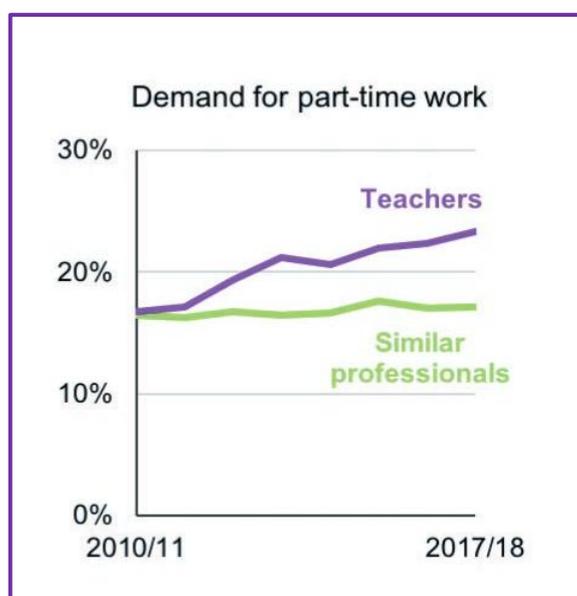


Figure 24: Demand for part-time work (NFER, Worth & van der Brande, 2019).

Demand for part-time work has been increasing amongst the teaching population since 2011 (see figure 24), whilst demand for part-time work in other professions has remained stable (Worth & van der Brande, 2019), suggesting that overwork in the teaching profession is affecting work patterns (NASUWT, 2017). It is thought that ‘teacher retention is likely to be improved by incorporating greater flexibility into the teaching career offer.’ (Worth & Van Der Brande, 2019, p.11), suggesting that for many, full time teaching is not a viable lasting career option.

The discourses forming around part-time work seemed to involve taking some position towards a governmental or national discourse, something of a grand narrative about

what would work for a large, diverse group of people who were currently either withdrawing from work, or very difficult to engage with a return to work. The Department for Education in recent years have signposted part-time and flexible working as ways to retain teachers, particularly the 25% of teachers who leave every year who are women in their 30s (Simons & Policy Exchange, 2016), and the 57% of teachers who leave because of caring responsibilities and never return to the profession (Simons & Policy Exchange, 2016). Anna, Charlie and Aliyah have all worked or are working part-time and comment on this arrangement; Sian would have liked to work part-time and feels this may have 'saved' her teaching career. Their positions towards part-time working reflect some of the discourses covered in the literature review (see section 2.5).

Participants described different situations in which senior leaders have the power either to refuse a flexible working request or to foster a culture of suspicion around these ways of working. The continuation and proliferation of this discourse in schools and the wider community of educators seems likely to have a negative effect on women who would benefit from flexible working. A belief that requests for flexible working will be turned down without fair consideration (breaking the law) and the parallel discourse around part-time teachers being less valuable and an encumbrance to the rest of the team would seem to be enough to put some teacher-mothers off requesting or considering this option.

Regardless of whether part-time working is the panacea for working mothers that it is touted to be, if women do not feel they can access this they will be unable to find out;

and like Sian, may decide to leave teaching all together. Part-time work can sometimes mean more than part-time hours (McNamara et al., 2008), Anna talks about the part-time role as difficult in this regard – she comments on the awkward timetabling of the week with her job share partner. Charlie positions herself differently to the discourse of part-time workload, in that she describes this arrangement fitting in well with her responsibilities as a new mother who had to find work relatively urgently. She talks about being flexible with work so she could go home at lunchtimes to breastfeed her baby; but also describes being left to plan, resource and deliver a whole languages curriculum across the school; a significant project in terms of responsibility and workload, the flexible working arrangement seemingly benefitting the employer more than the employee (Women’s Budget Group, 2005). Charlie positions herself as lucky to have been offered the position, which is also in the geographical area she has to be in because of her husband’s career move. Perhaps like many teacher-mothers in this situation, she is accepting of the excessive workload because being granted flexible-working is perceived to be more of a favour than a right. Given the lower priority of her career in the family, there is perhaps an element of settling for any post that is in the right postcode and this represents one of many factors that are at play in the career decisions of teacher-mothers.

Leadership and progression also appear in the discourse around flexible working. Some women do not seek flexible work because of a perceived impact on their career (NUT, 2002) and Anna certainly raises this issue, echoing the discourse from her own school, where part-time workers are seen as ineligible for leadership positions; their contribution and dedication to the school is also perceived as a part-time affair. Recent

schemes from government (DfE, 2019a; Greening, 2017; Morgan, 2015) emphasise the need to encourage women into senior positions in schools and that more should be done to celebrate the potential of women teachers. In the participant stories collected here, none of the participants talk about future ambitions for school leadership. Anna shares her worries about applying for jobs in other schools, where her commitments and part-time pattern may not be understood or respected; Sian and Bell have left primary teaching; Charlie reports being happy with her class teacher role; Aliyah is ambitious but exhausted by her single-parent responsibilities and is in the early stages of her teaching career.

The positioning to any discourse around female leadership is hard to discern and it seems to be a gap in the participant stories; Anna acknowledges the unlikely scenario of a part-time member of staff being considered for a leadership role, but does not suggest she is seeking this for herself. Given the multiple discourses at work in their lives, from being just 'good enough', to overwork being inevitable and part-time work being both curse and cure, it is not surprising that none of these women, even with their diversity of background, support, age and experience are striving to take on more responsibility.

Societal expectations of mothers prioritising their own children, and media representations of career and motherhood being a precarious position, only attainable by the exceptional (Sorensen, 2017), fuel the issue here; the simplistic solution of advocating part-time roles as a cure-all misses the complexity of the role of performativity in motherhood and teaching young children.

## 5.5: Mesosystem: The strange situation of school leaders

Within the stories of all five participants are situations where as a listener and reader, I find myself questioning why the storyteller is not identifying the seemingly obvious source of their different challenges. This has come about through the use of ecological systems discourse analysis, where a 'gap' became apparent in the maps for each participant, in the interplay of the wider world exo/macrosystem and the school/local community microsystem. This is an area Bronfenbrenner called the mesosystem, where discourses ideas are filtered through to local level and aspects of the microsystem interact (for example, home and school). The school leadership; governors, head teachers and other senior staff are the conduits for dissemination of national policies, but they are also responsible for the interpretation of these in their school. The discourse identified in the mesosystem was one of school politics, which Anna picks up on at several points in the interview as being linked to her concerns about securing part-time work and the views of school leadership affecting her broader rights and responsibilities. As discussed in the literature review (section 2.4), over half of teachers reported that workload pressure was driven by senior leadership, and that Ofsted, daily expectations and feedback were 'mixed messages' (DfE, 2018b).

On closer analysis, it seems that participants are reluctant to identify, or do not perceive, the school leadership team and individuals as having power to restrict action. Sian talked about feelings of guilt at home and work; the way Sian describes her guilt over not being able to manage an unmanageable workload suggests that to some extent, the prevailing discourse is that somehow the teacher-mother should be able to cope with multiple shifts of work, every day. Sian isn't quite describing a personal

failing, but nor does she suggest this is anyone else's fault, or point to policies that are creating the situation. She does mention the school leadership team in terms of their high expectations of performance, which she feels guilty about not meeting. Moreau et al. (2005) suggest that teachers' lives are now controlled by headteachers and governors, who may not have the same priorities; it seems that some teacher-mothers avoid identifying individuals who may be responsible or influential in maintaining this discourse.

Charlie describes her struggles with obtaining a mortgage on a rolling temporary contract, which had not been addressed by her employers. She does not identify her employers as the cause of this struggle, though – it was an oversight. Likewise, when Sian, Charlie and Bell described situations in school when returning from maternity leave, with no support, no reduction in workload or pressure, they do not identify the head teacher as derelict in their safeguarding duty to them as members of staff; Sian points out that school is a 'business', and staff members are units of output production where the output should be constant and consistent.

It seems likely that a number of discourses around teacher-motherhood are creating this gap; and performativity of education is evident here too. First, the teacher-mothers in my study and in the wider literature are likely to hold themselves to very high (and some would say unobtainable) standards, and recognise their role as fundamentally based on care (Nias, 1999; Vogt, 2002). Aliyah talks about coming to terms with the fact that she cannot be perfect, that satisfactory is acceptable sometimes. Their identification of themselves as being 'satisfactory' or 'requiring

improvement' feeds discourses of guilt (Sullivan, 2015) and the idea that they are letting down the team and their children. Sian also talks about letting down her colleagues when she cannot contribute the same hours after school as they do.

School leadership teams and individuals within them are perhaps seen as guardians of the standards in the microsystem, with the distant Department for Education and Ofsted driving the macrosystem discourse, with various translations and misinterpretations of these discourses filtering through (DfE, 2018b). This may add to the likelihood of teaching staff seeing school leaders as unaware or uncaring of their opinions (NASUWT, 2019), and potentially unable to be flexible or sympathetic as local enactors of a national regime, as supported by teachers reporting that senior leaders were powerless (DfE, 2018b). This would explain the positioning of my participants in terms of being reluctant to identify school leaders as responsible. This reluctance or inability to view systems and individuals as responsible for an untenable situation has been described as bounded imagination (Holmes, 2019), and certainly there seems to be a gap in the ESDA around the interface between micro and macro discourse.

Clearly there are school leaders who do use their power and influence to create positive discourses in their schools – as all teacher-mothers are unique individuals, so are school leaders. There are also many senior leaders who are mothers, and are under increased pressure from performative measures themselves (Guihen, 2018). Sikes (1998) found that some of her senior leadership participants took account of the practical difficulties of parenting and teaching, because they were parents themselves and understood how they could make life easier for their employees. It is possible that

in the intervening decades, some of the flexibility that some school leaders felt they had has been eroded by increasing accountability (Cheng, Ko & Lee, 2016; Neeleman, 2019; OECD, 2012), resulting in school leaders and the teams they work with having a tacit understanding about what is actually possible in their school; despite what official policies and wider discourses may suggest (for details, see section 2.7).

Of course, there are school leaders who use bullying, intimidation and abuse (Harris and Jones, 2018), and Neves (2014) found that 'submissive' employees, with weaker relationships with other members of staff, were more likely to receive abuse than others. It is arguable that teacher-mothers sometimes fit this 'submissive' employee role, particularly when working part-time or returning after maternity leave when relationships may not be as strong. Anna talked about being an encumbrance and Bell positions herself as an activist but still accepted the challenges of teaching as her own problem.

Governmentality in school systems constitutes a range of strategies and tools for control of conduct (Perryman, Ball, Braun & Maguire, 2017). Part of the toolkit of control is translation of policy from the wider world into the context of individual schools, for example, when interpretations of national part-time working policy were translated into local unwritten rules of who can request flexible working and what conditions they must secure for themselves before even considering it (section 5.4).

'Translation is a process of invention and compliance. As teachers

engage with policy and bring their creativity to bear on its enactment, they are also captured by it. They change it, in some ways, and it changes them' (Ball, Maguire, Braun & Hoskins, 2011, p.630)

The missing leadership figures in the stories of the participants suggest that this 'translator' role is masquerading as a simple unfiltered passing along of rules, rather than an interpretation of the policy to fit with local requirements for compliance and control (Foucault, 1988). There is a major issue to be addressed in how policy from government is interpreted in schools, often to accommodate budgetary and accountability considerations rather than that of the individual or team.

The idea of school as a business where the profits are academic outcomes also feeds into the idea that teaching is a job that can be measured in terms of output and performance (Courtney, McGinty and Gunter, 2018), and that underperformance is a failing of the employee, not the corporation or the system (Raffo and Gunter, 2008). For teacher-mothers, this is an acute issue, as demonstrated in the positionings of my participants towards a discourse of heavy workload expectations and guilt.

It is possible methodological issues prevented open reporting of circumstances (Mallozzi, 2009); perhaps participants would not have felt comfortable to 'point the finger' during an unstructured interview with a stranger. However, it is interesting to note that Sian, the insider participant, who has worked for the same school leader as me, did not identify the leadership of the school as problematic. Despite the report that leaving teaching all together was her only option at that point; because of the impossibility of flexible working, the undesirable status of motherhood, the attitude in

school to requests for part-time work, Sian does not identify the individuals concerned as having any power to change this.

## 5.6: Microsystem: The Guilt of the ‘Good Enough’ Mother

I have theorised this major point of coalescence in the interviews as belonging in the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), as it concerns an emotional reaction that the participants are describing to their work and home worlds, and their position in relation to this emotional response. Discourses identified within the microsystem were:

- being ultimately responsible for work and home
- being ‘good enough’
- feeling guilty
- being set up to fail
- expecting to be ‘bottom of the pile’

Clearly, the overarching discourses of gender and work performativity lead to inevitable outcomes in the workforce, including guilt, burn-out and leaving the profession, but here I will discuss guilt as a separate theme of analysis and the different ways participants talked about guilt and being good enough.

All five participants in my study talked about guilt, but positioned themselves in different ways in relation to discourses of guilt. In the literature addressing parent teachers and teacher mothers in particular, guilt is a common theme in findings (Kell, 2016; Sikes, 1998; Smith, 2007), and as such this element of the findings does not represent a new claim to knowledge, but analysis of the discourse from several standpoints does provide novel insights. What is also new here is the positioning to the discourse of being ‘good enough’ (in the language of UK education, ‘requires

improvement') which suggests that compromising performance at work and home means abandoning career ambitions or hope of praise or reward.

Aliyah describes her feelings of guilt; particularly in relation to 'fairness' between her own children and her school children. She is positioning herself as guilty of failing to meet an expectation – the expectation that the teacher-mother can be all things to all children and that not doing so constitutes an unfairness, a selfishness perhaps. Again, like Sian, Aliyah does not directly identify an external cause of the issues that have led to her feelings of guilt. The unreasonable workload and expectations of motherhood are accepted as part of this positioning. It seems that claims around 'having it all' not being a legitimate and normalised discourse (Murphy and Cloutier-Fisher, 2002) do not apply to all working graduate mothers.

Anna described feeling the same way when she saw photos on social media of mothers making salt dough with their toddlers. The discourse around the good enough mother (Winnicott, 1953) is not a new construct. The idea that women could manage a career, home life, leisure and children has been questioned for decades (Wall, 2013) and well before the tidal wave of mothers joining the workforce in the 1980s and 90s (ONS, 2011). Pressure on women to be increasingly responsible (e.g. for finances, organisation of family, career) and discourses that normalise intense mothering (Wall, 2013) echo through the interviews with my participants, although again how they position themselves towards or against this discourse varies.

Aliyah describes a rejection of the discourse in some respects; she is trying to fight the pressure to be the 'perfect' teacher. Teacher-mothers construct images of what they perceive to be the expectations of society (Knowles et al, 2009), and whilst Aliyah describes her need to do some things for herself, she also describes this as selfish. The position taken is that she is being unkind or unfair in her attempt to have some time for herself and this is a worrying discourse – one that is not replicated in media portrayals of fatherhood (Evans, 2015; Kuo and Ward, 2016; Wadsworth, 2015).

Bell describes her conscious decision to not feel guilty about her decision to pursue her career, suggesting that as teacher-mothers we can be a sort of 'own worst enemy' when it comes to allowing the discourse of blame and shame to inscribe us. Kell (2016) discussed this tendency to blame ourselves as a major issue for the teaching workforce, which is in conflict with the work of many theorists and researchers (Blackmore, 1999; Moreau et al. 2005; Troman and Woods, 2000) who would suggest that the systems we work and live in create these conditions and the discourses that encourage us to identify weaknesses in ourselves. Certainly in the descriptions given by participants of their feelings of guilt and high expectations of themselves in terms of workload and availability to care for their own and other children, there is an issue in who we are comparing ourselves to (Bailey, 2000) and whether those teacher-mothers actually exist outside of the discourse.

Finally, Sian talks about how a pregnant woman would always be seen as 'lesser' or lacking, as research on motherhood penalties (Baker, 2010; Berggren and Lauster, 2014; Correll, Benard and Paik, 2007) would appear to support. Sian's positioning here

is that simply being a mother entails that you are not good enough – unless there is no childless woman or a man that can take the job. This position that Sian takes was a major driver in the continuation of my project; that this discourse persists and is an influence on the way Sian presents herself (or not) in the workplace and potential workplaces is a reason to try to change that discourse, even if it can only be done locally, for a limited period of time.

It seems clear that a discourse of ‘the good enough mother’ can be helpful to some, in giving licence to not be the perceived perfect carer of all children at all times that portrayals of motherhood and teaching may have had attached to them since the profession became feminised in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the collective analysis from this study would suggest that there is a worrying orientation around being ‘good enough’ in terms of lower expectations of reward and recognition. Positioning this discourse in the microsystem, which seems to tie with the stories of the participants (these narratives occurred in school settings and at home, rather than in discussion of wider discourses or influences) also suggests that this is a discourse that is difficult to escape.

## 5.7: Individual System: Intersectionality

### Pride and Resilience

In the individual realm of the analysis, many discourses were identified which seemed to be about how the participants saw themselves, in terms of their personality and purpose. These discourses appeared to be the way participants were using something like a technology of self, an inscribing of themselves, to represent what they are really like, what they believe about themselves and what personal qualities they draw upon.

These discourses were identified for individuals (see figure 22):

- A history of resilience
- Being a pioneer
- Being a role-model
- Ethic of self care
- Single motherhood
- Happy accidents

The participants had very different positions towards these discourses and they were diverse in terms of what they identified with. This confirmed for me the postmodern feminist approach to individual stories, and highlighted intersectionality as key to understanding the uniqueness of each account of teacher-motherhood.

Intersectionality is the interaction of multiple identities and experiences (Davis, 2008).

Aliyah's story and the discourses identified within it are troubling for me as a researcher, because of the intersections of religion, culture, community and status that Aliyah brings. This makes her story fascinating; but brings some uncomfortable reflexivity (Pillow, 2003). As a white western woman researching predominantly white, western participants in most of my work in education research, retelling Aliyah's story has been ethically challenging. I have little understanding of how her community and family operate, or knowledge of what may be different in a Muslim woman's life in a UK primary school; the interpretation risks the presumption of 'whiteness' of a person of colour (Risman, 2004). Whilst the literature on intersectionality and research with 'outsider' groups is extensive (Corlett and Mavin, 2014) the research on parent teachers has not explored intersectionality, particularly in primary and early years, where the majority of staff are female, white and regarded as middle-class (Gazeley and Dunne 2007; Hall and Jones, 2013; Reay 2004, 2010).

Furthermore, when discourses identified are brought together in a collective analysis (see section 5.2) the particular intersections of Aliyah's life experience are difficult to represent and highlight the benefits of a postmodern approach to this study. Each participant story should stand alone, with the intersections of faith, gender, sexuality, status, age and class represented and celebrated, rather than flattened and homogenised. Whilst postmodernism affords this appreciation of the 'special situation', it also brings with it the difficulty in mobilising and activating change in a community of teacher-mothers, when everyone's experience is separate, as discussed previously (section 2.7, 3.2.i). There is a danger that this appreciation of intersectionality becomes ornamental (Bilge, 2011), deployed superficially; disarticulated, through my lack of understanding of Aliyah's identity (Bilge, 2013); or overly academic, a 'disciplinary feminism' that is not transformative, apart from to the career of the researcher (Bilge, 2011, p.409).

Given the recent attempts to create policy for women on a simplistic, broad standpoint approach (section 2.3), for example; suggesting that flexible working is a solution to issues that teacher-mothers may face when returning to teaching, contemplating career progression or just coping with everyday life, considerations from intersectionality and individual stories of teacher-mothers shines a light on how problematic broad pronouncements are. The promises of support in speeches by Nicky Morgan (2015) and Justine Greening (2017) may suggest solutions that are relevant to many teacher-mothers, but when other barriers, challenges and circumstances are not even alluded to in these statements they become something that applies to 'others'.

Individuals position themselves as unable to take advantage of national schemes and policies, their actions are limited, and their own discourse then can have the same effect on others in their communities. Consideration of the individual, of the intersections that may support or hinder their engagement, could change the discourse and make policy relevant to more teachers.

Aliyah's individual account reveals her own special circumstance. She is proud of what she has accomplished in her life and speaks about her resilience and capability in terms of her teaching and mothering roles. Her cultural and community norms do not always support this pride that she feels for her own achievements – traditionally, her community are not supportive of divorce and other decisions Aliyah has made (details of these have been omitted to protect anonymity), and she acknowledges the challenges she has presented to her parents in her choices, as she feels they are more involved in the religious community than she is.

Aliyah's pride seems to come from her past experiences and the expectations on her as a Muslim refugee coming to the UK over ten years ago. Her community, family and husband did not expect her to become the independent professional she is today, and she takes pride in having achieved so much, beyond expectations. Whilst there are many overlaps in the discourses she is positioning herself towards and those of the other participants, her sense of pride in what she has managed to achieve seems to come in part from her current status and professional identity not being something that is 'taken for granted' for women in her community.

## 5.8: Conclusion

In the methodology chapter, my research journal extracts were called 'tales from the fourth shift', and this is part of the issue for teacher-mothers. Whilst Hochschild and Machung (2003) described their women participants as working a second shift, my participants worked many more shifts, in different ecological systems of their lives. They attend to their children, partners, families and homes; they also put in a long shift at school, supporting children and colleagues. They also have a shift spent organising how the first two shifts can fit together and accommodate the needs of others. Then they have various and special shifts; care of elderly and disabled relatives, study, teaching union and other activist roles, supporting homework with their own children and going back to planning and marking for school, often late at night. Performativity helps to explain why teacher mothers attempt to fit multiple shifts of work into their days.

The synthesis of findings followed an ecological systems discourse analysis framework, breaking down the experiences of teacher-mothers in to systems and also highlighting the overarching discourses of gender and work performativity that help to explain some of the stubborn questions around this special situation; why do my participants accept an unmanageable workload? Why do they expect little reward or praise for their work? Why do they accept the majority of responsibility for child care and organising the family? Why do they overlook the role of school leaders in making conditions better? A perfect storm of gender expectations, both external and internalised, together with work expectations around the dedicated teacher of young children mean that their positions are limited.



## 6: Conclusion

---

### 6.1: Introduction

In this chapter, I will first summarise the study, particularly the findings, analysis and synthesis (6.2). I will recap on the research questions and summarise how these have been answered (6.3), as well as how the overarching aims of the study have been addressed (6.4). I will then move on to discussing the significance and implications of the findings (6.5) and the contribution to knowledge that this study (findings and methodology) makes (6.6). Finally, I will consider the limitations of the study, which have been discussed throughout the thesis, and suggest future lines of inquiry for myself and others who are researching in this area (6.7).

### 6.2: Answers to the research questions

#### **1. What do the life history stories of teacher mothers suggest about this special circumstance?**

The life history stories of teacher-mothers suggest that their worlds are not only unique, but also complex and their identification and orientation to the discourses around teaching and motherhood are diverse. However, in collective analysis using ESDA, some coalescences can be found between their stories.

First, the unique position of each teacher-mother must be remembered; it is so easily lost in the literature where large-scale data is used, as explored in the literature review (chapter 2), and also overlooked when policies are drawn up that claim to solve issues for a wide range of people in complex and diverse situations.

Second, that a perfect storm of work and gender performativity is manifested in discourses of the 'good enough' teacher and mother. It is not a realistic expectation that women can meet the ideals and expectations that these discourses suggest, particularly in the way mainstream and social media portray them (Orgad, 2016a, 2016b). Performativity in terms of gender, teaching and mothering clash when self-sacrifice, overwork and devotion are expected at home and work, and because these traits are perceived as 'natural' to women, these demands are not seen as exceptional or unrealistic. Some women are in a position where complaining or highlighting the unfairness and impossibility of the expectations puts them at further risk of unfair treatment, ostracisation and negative feedback.

Thirdly, individual school leaders were not described as part of the problem by my participants, creating a gap in the collective ESDA model between school and government policy. As school leaders are not described as being in a position of power and able to affect change, participants put poor decisions, inconsistent workforce planning and school culture issues down to broader problems in society, or rationalized them as to be an expected part of teacher work performativity. School leaders themselves, very often women in early years and primary settings, are potentially subject to the same unrealistic gender and work expectations that my teacher mother stories highlighted.

Fourthly, the normalization of overwork in school, which is well documented in the literature about teaching (see 2.4), was identifiable in all five participant stories; what was different to the recent literature was the underlying discourses around additional

roles that are normalized for teacher-mothers and in many cases could be considered overwork. Participants described their responsibility for organizing any activities or support that may mitigate their overwork, with a discourse of helping themselves to work harder creating a loop of responsibility and further commitment to overworking.

Fifthly, part-time and flexible working were explored by most of the participants with varying positionings. What became clear was that in some cases, access to part-time and flexible work was impossible, due to financial constraints at home or more often, a perception that a flexible working request would be turned down, despite the legal entitlement for an employee to have their request considered fairly. Participants talked about the benefits of part-time work, but as the discourse filtered through local government and individual school culture, the possibilities were limited.

## **2. To what extent does analysis of ‘ecological systems’ and discourses illuminate the life of a teacher mother?**

Using ecological systems and discourse analysis to illuminate the lives of my teacher-mothers has had benefits; it has allowed some analysis of where power is perceived to be (for example, with the government, or with school leaders). Having a framework for organizing discourses then made it possible to identify gaps in the system. For example, when participants did not discuss school leaders (part of the mesosystem in my interpretation of the model) as being responsible or powerful in making decisions about work patterns, contracts and school culture. As a tool for analysis, ESDA was helpful to a large extent, and particularly for an early career researcher trying to

grapple with complex issues and a burden of guilt around interpreting valuable stories that had been entrusted to me. Other models for analysis would perhaps not have helped me to the same extent, as thinking about organizing the discourses across a system did provide some distance and objectivity in a study where potentially there was an issue with subjectivity and insiderness (see section 3.5.iv).

**3. What (if any) are the points of coalescence and convergence that groups of teacher mothers may relate to, that could be potential sites of new policy and activism?**

In the synthesis chapter, points of coalescence from the stories were identified and discussed, and many more were pinpointed in the collective ESDA diagram (see figure 22). The points discussed in this thesis were: the perfect storm of gender and work performativity, the guilt of the good enough mother, the strange situation of school leadership not being perceived as powerful, normalizing overwork and organization of overwork mitigation and a challenge to the idea of part-time work being a panacea for teacher-mothers in primary and early years settings. However, the participant interviews raised many other potential themes and ideas that teacher mothers may relate to and could form allegiances around, so as a researcher my focus now will be to disseminate these stories and findings as widely as possible, so that teacher-mothers have opportunities to discuss them and potentially be motivated, comforted or enabled to act by them.

### 6.3: Significance and implications of findings

This study took a postmodern feminist approach to collecting and analysing data, holding the idea of the unique teacher-mother as paramount. Much of the literature discussed in the Introduction and Literature Review chapters refers to large-scale

quantitative work on the wider teaching workforce and union members, so any qualitative study that adds to what we know about individual stories has a significant role to play in contributing to knowledge and understanding. I would caveat this by stating that to be significant, any research, be it large-scale or small-scale must serve the people whose experience could be improved by it.

Within the individual stories, there were points of coalescence in discourses, which have led to the identification of implications that could be significant for many teacher-mothers and others who wish to support them at home, school and in local and national policymaking. Whilst broad themes around guilt, school leadership, overwork and flexible working are well-known and often discussed in education at all ecological system levels, what this study adds is the identification of performativity as being instrumental in all of these themes, demonstrated by the 'fourth shift'. Individual stories in this thesis add nuance that is missing from sweeping surveys where frustratingly, the right questions may not be asked at all.

Policy recommendations for swathes of women are not appropriate implications to follow from this small-scale study, but changes to discourses locally and nationally can be shifted by studies like this one, if relevant individuals and groups are made aware. With that in mind, what happens next in terms of dissemination, network building and impact on individuals and groups of teacher-mothers will be important in terms of significance.

## 6.4: Contribution to knowledge

This study makes a number of contributions to knowledge; teacher-mothers who engage with this work, through the thesis (but much more likely through social media, teacher publication articles and teacher networks) will probably find claims to knowledge in the interviews with my participants that I have not identified yet. Here I will outline three claims to knowledge from the study, taking into account the points I have already made about significance and implications in section 6.3.

### Claim 1: Context

Primary and early years mothers are in a special situation; a claim that I made in the Introduction (section 1.2iii) and has been borne out by the findings of the study. There is a gap in the literature here, as much of the work on teachers does not differentiate by age phase, and much of the work on teacher parents does not differentiate mothers and fathers. Research data is often large-scale and survey based, where 'pick an answer' questions sometimes fail to address the issues that my participants face, or cannot reflect the nuances of complex situations. For example, when a teacher-mother would like to request flexible working, but is restricted by the cultural norms of the school setting yet a survey question just asks if they have ever made a request. Where the particular challenges of teaching and mothering the youngest children have been pointed out, for example in Page (2013), some of the focus has been on how the women wish their children to be loved in their settings, rather than a full focus on the women themselves.

The performative expectations of women, particularly women who are in the ultimate nurturing an self-sacrificing roles of teacher and mother concurrently, mean that their

stories are perhaps even harder to tell, and their perceived 'failings' much more difficult to admit. The methodology aided greatly with the openness of the stories (see Claim 3).

### Claim 2: Findings

The findings from the study take two forms; the individual findings in Chapter 4 and the collective analysis and synthesis in Chapter 5. From these two datasets, new claims to knowledge have emerged; some that are local and specific to my participants, but may 'chime' with other teacher-mothers, and some which through collective analysis would appear to be issues for teacher-mothers that may apply to larger groups of women. Whilst this study took a postmodern feminist approach, valuing the individual stories of women without assuming a shared understanding or experience, it was hoped that some points of coalescence could be found which would be a basis for activism in the future. The claims to knowledge that constitute a basis for future activism include:

- The overarching issues of work and gender performativity, which reinforce the expectations of self-sacrifice, quiet and unchallenging behaviour and overwork as standard in the roles of mother and teacher. Discourses of performativity ensure that many women will continue to try to fit four shifts of work into each day; their daytime school job, their housework and childcare shifts, followed by more school work and additional caring and organisational roles they undertake as part of being a mother and a 'natural carer'. In the literature on teacher-parents and teacher-mothers in particular, there have been findings suggesting that overwork is a factor in recruitment and retention issues.

However, some of my participants also highlighted an additional position to the

discourse of overwork being normal. A further point of coalescence with other teacher-mothers in the UK and beyond is the additional workload of organising support and cover so that the normalised over-workload can be managed.

Teacher-mothers in my study talked about having to ask for favours of childcare from their own partners, of organising additional childcare, having to think far ahead so that school work could be covered around their own children. The organisational work of teacher-mothers has not been featured in the recent research literature.

- Part-time working models could be the panacea for teacher-mothers is challenged. Again, there is literature about part-time work and the unintended negative effects that part-time and flexible contracts can cause. However, what is not captured in the recent literature is the way school cultures, senior leaders and discourses from the wider system can prevent teacher-mothers from even requesting part-time work, assuming that this will be rejected, a source of negativity, or further evidence of being just 'good enough'. Data has not been captured about how many women (and men) would request flexible and part-time work if 'no one was watching', but I would suggest that several of my participants would have taken further steps to reduce their hours if they had felt this was a viable option. This may suggest that there is a wider issue that could be addressed. The Department for Education elude to this in their own flexible working guidance for schools (DfE, 2017).
- The strange situation of school leaders and responsibility: During analysis of the findings, it became apparent that in the discourses identified, participants were

not identifying school leaders as in positions of power or responsibility in terms of being able to assist or support their special situation. FDA does not set out to point the finger of blame at anyone; Foucauldian theories of power in systems do not have power being centrally contained in an individual or group. However, it was striking that my teacher-mothers did not, or did not want to, identify school leaders as being able to improve things for them. As an example, participants did not identify leaders as responsible for temporary contracts not being made permanent over many years, or for publically suggesting that part-time teaching does not work, or for putting teachers returning from maternity leave into a new year group with new colleagues and no support for the transition. This tendency away from holding leaders to account for decisions and cultures could account for dissatisfaction, acceptance of overwork and eventually, teacher-mothers leaving the profession. To date, I have not found recent research literature about teacher-mothers or parents avoiding the identification of leaders as responsible or as agents of potential change.

- The guilt of the 'good enough' mother. There are examples in the literature where the idea of being 'good enough' are discussed and the guilt that accompanies this phenomenon, particularly in research on teachers and the specific use of language such as 'satisfactory' and 'requiring improvement' that have been used in UK school inspections over the last few decades. However, the findings from this study point to a further issue at work here, in that the sense of being just 'good enough' as a teacher and mother not only gives rise to feelings of guilt for some, but also an assumption and acceptance that your

work will not, and perhaps should not be valued or praised. A teacher-mother's contribution to the community, family and school would never be as worthy as those of someone who was not in the special situation of the teacher-mother. Of course, not all teacher-mothers feel this way, and my participants positioned themselves in different ways when this discourse was identified by them in their interviews, some very fiercely defiant about their value.

- The continued need to consider the individual in research data, as evidenced by Aliyah's story and the intersections of her life experience, status, culture, community and religion that gave rise to a unique perspective on teacher-motherhood. In the policies and national schemes to encourage mothers to stay/return to teaching, it is likely that Aliyah would not see messaging that applied to her or felt relevant to her situation. Consideration of the individual and their experience is vital if teacher-mothers are to thrive in the education system; at a national level in policy and discourse, but also at a local level when leadership teams are considering how they shape the culture of their schools.

### Claim 3: Methodology

Use of life-history interviews and a flexible approach to conducting these meant that hard to reach participants were able to take part and have their voices heard in this study. Whilst life-history has been used with teacher parents in the past (Page, 2010, Sikes, 1998; Smith, 2007), using this method to support teacher-mother participants is a contribution to knowledge. The flexibility in the method and methodology which

allowed participants to be interviewed at work or in a public place of their choice, at a time of their choice, together with the option of having their children present meant that participants such as Aliyah could contribute her story, which in normal circumstances she would not have been able to do.

Ecological systems discourse analysis (ESDA) was designed during the data analysis process of the study, between the first formative study data analysis and the main study data collection. The model brings together two previously separate tools for analysis; Willig's six-stage process for Foucauldian discourse analysis (2008), and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model (1979). The new model enabled me to map discourses across the ecological systems of the teacher-mother's world, to highlight where issues are occurring, and how orientations to those discourses may influence the future. Willig suggests this is an outcome of the subjectivity stage of her model, and ESDA means that this can be represented in a visual way. For example, mapping Sian's discourse of being set up to fail in the microsystem, because she talked about this as being specific to her school setting, helps to explain why Sian may have felt that leaving her current post was the best course of action. She did not place the discourse in wider systems which may have meant she would believe her opportunities in any school would be the same. Conversely, talking about pregnancy and interview chances as a wider societal issue might prevent her from ever being confident about job prospects whilst pregnant.

Using aspects of Foucauldian discourse analysis gave the opportunity to explore the way each participant described her experience, but also to look for the descriptions

she could not give, the boundaries of acceptable talk about teacher mothers that may constrain the narrative. FDA turns attention to the macro-level discursive constructions, giving an opportunity to challenge and resist these constructions when they are illuminated (McNay, 1992, p.4). With further refinements, (see section 6.7.iii) this model of analysis may prove useful for other qualitative research that aims to explore in depth the narratives of individuals within a wider system of discourses.

## 6.5: Limitations of the study

### 6.5.i: Ethics and positionality

Whilst efforts have been made in this thesis to reflect the thought that went into the ethical implications of this study, it would be fair to suggest that many of the implications only became apparent during or after the data collection period. Of course, ethical considerations such as the relevant checks, authorisation and resubmission of the ethics approval when changes were made have all be carried out, following the university procedures. Considerations around the consent, anonymity and sharing of information with participants had also been rigorously discussed and challenged by my supervisors and ethics committee. Where I feel that ethics and positionality present a limitation of the study, and would certainly advise other researchers not to replicate if possible, is in the self-care aspects of the ethics that I did not consider fully. Whilst prompted to consider my health and safety by the ethics approval process (appendix 15), I did not fully consider or appreciate my mental health and safety around the use of unstructured interviews with women in challenging (and in some respects, very familiar) situations. At times I felt emotionally impacted for weeks after the interviews, and wonder how the study might have affected my outlook as a researcher and also my interpretation of the data and use of the interview

transcripts, given that at times I felt very emotional about the 'work' of collecting the data and also about the research relationships formed during those interviews. To mitigate the impact of this, I have discussed my experiences with other researchers and my supervisors, I have thought carefully about how my relationships with the participants should be, and I have tried to bear in mind my own emotional experience whilst analysing the data.

Whilst I feel that the emotional impact on me as a researcher is worthwhile, in telling the stories of these amazing women and making connections around coalescences in the findings which may inspire further activism amongst teacher-mothers, I would (and have) cautioned other early career researchers against making their ethical considerations and deliberations all about 'doing no harm' to others. Of course, this is of paramount importance, but we need to include ourselves in the group of research participants to be protected.

#### 6.5.ii: Analysis

Ecological Systems Discourse Analysis stands as one of my contributions to knowledge from this study, yet I acknowledge that this is a first trial of using the model. Whilst I have been critical of my use of it during the analysis of the data, it has been unexplored by peers and the wider research community to date, and has flaws that will need to be addressed in future use.

As discussed in the methodology chapter (see section 3.6.v) Antaki, Billig, Edwards and Potter (2003) theorise six weaknesses commonly found when discourse analysis is used:

- Under-analysis through summary
- Under-analysis through taking sides
- Under-analysis through over-quotation or through isolated quotation
- The circular identification of discourses and mental constructs
- False survey
- Analysis that consists of simply spotting features

ESDA certainly suffers from some of these weaknesses, as used in this study. The clearest weakness is the circularity of identification of discourses, given that in ESDA, the discourses are not only identified by me, the researcher, but the boundaries of the ecological systems are also chosen by me. Where discourses sit and hence where power may be theorised, and what future actions these discourses may lead to, is driven by the analyst, not the model. In future uses of ESDA, it may prove to be useful to go back to participants to discuss the identified discourses and where they think these sit within the system; also to ask participants to construct their own boundaries in the ecological systems model (for example, where school may sit could be different in individual models). For this study, drawing upon the stories and therefore the time and energy of teacher-mothers, repeated requests for interaction and involvement in building the model would not have felt comfortable ethically, particularly as ESDA was developed during the data analysis stage. Consent had not been gained for contacting participants about exploring or discussing a model of analysis for their data. Asking participants to consider their personal reflections in this way may not have been appropriate, particularly given some of the content of the interviews and potentially very personal and emotional topics. In future participants could be recruited for the purpose of exploring or constructing an improved model, with clear guidelines and information about the commitment required; or, taking forward a more individual approach to the stories of participants, the researcher and participant could co-create

an ecological system model before the interview took place, discussing where different aspects of life might fit, and if the systems model was appropriate at all.

In terms of identifying discourses in unstructured interview transcripts, I feel that the circularity of the identification works in a similar way to thematic analysis and suffers from the same weakness. Particularly when working alone on data analysis, the researcher biases and positions make the act of distilling out a set of discourses or themes feel precarious. Whilst I have enjoyed my doctoral study immensely, working with other researchers on this data would have given different insights and added some challenge to the distillation and identification of discourses. Some recent literature signposting common discourses in UK education and UK parent/motherhood would also have been helpful in challenging my decisions on identification, but discourse analysis is not popular in education research currently and much of the data being collected in the UK is large-scale and survey based.

#### [6.5.iii: Postmodern feminism and activism](#)

Some concerns remain about the decision I took early on to use a postmodern feminist approach to the design of the study, and how this would affect on the potential for activism using the findings of the study. Whilst there is already interest in the findings on social media and in academic networks, there is a concern that the focus on individual and unique stories and the small-scale nature of the study will make the findings more difficult to disseminate widely. However, given the current tendency for 'big data' and statistics to be the only widely shared information about teacher well-being, workload and retention, it is hoped that this study can add to the depth of understanding by sharing stories of women. The addition of the collective analysis of

discourses can also help to signpost where change can be made, at personal, local and national levels.

## 6.6: Future research

### 6.6.i: Part-time work – quantitative data enriched by more qualitative accounts

After discovering the discourse around part-time and flexible working amongst some of my participants, which added depth to the large-scale survey data from the DfE, ONS and teaching unions, it seems that further interrogation of the gap between policy (which supports these measures, and makes actions to block requests within reason illegal) and the experiences and beliefs of teachers in school would be beneficial in understanding why part-time work is still much desired, but failing to be deployed. Further and in depth research in this area may also add 'colour' to the statistics from the DfE (2016 and 2019) about part-time teachers and their comparatively high levels of reported hours working at home. Additional data about part-time teachers' experiences of expectations from school leaders, coupled with what I have already found out about being 'good enough' and the normalisation of overwork would potentially help school leaders and policy makers understand the ongoing retention issues caused by barriers to part-time work, and also barriers to career progression for part-time teachers, particularly mothers.

### 6.6.ii: Perceptions of self-care and how this is manifested in teacher-mother lives

A painful part of writing a thesis was deciding what would need to be cut from the final draft to meet the regulations for submission, and an area of interest throughout this study has been the ethic of self-care. In the discourse analysis of the interviews, following the process I had chosen, the idea of an ethic of care often occurred to me as a part of what was manifested in the transcripts, but the clearer discourses had to be

prioritised for this thesis. In future research it would be interesting to gain an understanding of how individual ethics of care towards others and an ethic of self-care for themselves are related and also how much a strong ethic of care may impact on ability to reject overwork and feelings of guilt.

#### 6.6.iv: Intersectional accounts

Aliyah's story and her position towards many of the discourses of teacher motherhood raise interesting questions about cultural expectations of women in the UK and how religious, cultural and community based discourses may change not only the position a woman takes to the discourse, but also the 'action orientation' that follows; what behaviour, choices and actions she feels are opened or closed to her because of this discourse. Aliyah's pride in her teaching career and professional status seem to come in part from this not being part of the expectations of her community; further research with a diverse set of participants, using intersectionality, ESDA and life-history interviews may help to highlight how expectations from family and local community affect discourses and positions to discourses.

## References

---

- Abele, A.E. & Spurk, D. (2011). The dual impact of gender and the influence of timing on parenthood on men's and women's career development – longitudinal findings. *International Journal of Behaviour Development*, 35:3, 225 – 232.
- Acker, S. (2001). In/out/side: positioning the researcher in feminist qualitative research. *Resources for Feminist Research*, 28:3/4, 153 - 172.
- Acker, S., Barry, K. & Esseveld, J. (1983). Objectivity and Truth: problems in doing feminist research. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 6:4, 423 - 435.
- Adkins, L. (2002). *Revisions: gender and sexuality in late modernity..* Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Adriensen, H.K. (2012). Timeline interviews: A tool for conducting life history research. *Qualitative Studies*, 3(1): 40 – 55.
- Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (2014). *Code of Practice on handling in a reasonable manner requests to work flexibly*. Accessed via: <https://www.acas.org.uk/acas-code-of-practice-on-flexible-working-requests/html>.
- Ainsworth, S. & Hardy, C. (2004). Critical discourse analysis and identity: why bother? *Critical Discourse Studies*, 1:2, 225 – 259.
- AKERJORDET, K., & SEVERINSSON, E. (2010). Being in charge - new mothers' perceptions of reflective leadership and motherhood. *Journal of Nursing Management*, 18(4), 409–417. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2834.2010.01108.x.
- Alcoff, L. (1988). Cultural Feminism Vs. Post-Structuralism: the identity crisis in feminist theory. *Signs*, 13:3, 405-421.
- Allen, K. & Baber, K. (1992). Ethical and Epistemological Tensions in Applying a Postmodern Perspective to Feminist Research. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 16, 1 – 15.
- Alvesson, M., & Kärreman, D. (2000). Varieties of discourse: On the study of organizations through discourse analysis. *Human relations*, 53(9), 1125-1149.
- Amigot, P. & Pujal, M. (2009). On Power, Freedom and Gender: A Fruitful Tension between Foucault and Feminism. *Theory & Psychology*, 19:5, 646 – 669.
- Andersen, N.A. (2003). *Discursive analytical strategies: Understanding Foucault, Koselleck, Laclau, Luhmann*. Bristol, UK: Policy.

- Antaki, C., Billig, M., Edwards, D. & Potter, J. (2003). Discourse Analysis Means Doing Analysis: A Critique of Six Analytic Shortcomings. *Discourse Analysis Online*, 1. Viewed via <https://extra.shu.ac.uk>.
- Aveling, N. (2002). 'Having it all' and the discourse of equal opportunity: reflections on choices and changing perceptions. *Gender & Education*, 14:3, pp. 265 – 280.
- Bailey, L. (2000). Bridging home and work in the transition to motherhood: a discursive study. *The Journal of Women's Studies*, 7, 53-70.
- Baker, M. (2010) Motherhood, employment and the "child penalty" *Women's Studies International Forum* 33 p. 215 – 224 accessed online 11<sup>th</sup> February 2016.
- Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination: four essays by M.M. Bakhtin* (C. Emerson & M. Holquist, eds.). Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Ball, S. (2003) The teacher's soul and the terrors of performativity, *Journal of Education Policy*, 18:2, 215-228, DOI: [10.1080/0268093022000043065](https://doi.org/10.1080/0268093022000043065).
- Ball, S. (2008). *The Education Debate*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Ball, S., Maguire, M., Braun, A. & Hoskins, K. (2011). "Policy Actors; Doing Policy Work in Schools." *Discourse* 32 (4): 625–639.
- Banks, J. (1998). "The Lives and Values of Researchers: Implications for Educating Citizens in a Multicultural Society." *Education Researcher*, 27:7, 4 - 17.
- Bartlett, L. (2002). "No room. No pay. No time." : Teachers's work in a time of expanding roles: A contribution to overwork theory. Working Paper No. 47 May 2002, Center for Working Families, University of California, Berkeley. Accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 via <http://hdl.handle.net/2345/4133>.
- Bates, J., Lewis, S., & Pickard, A. (2011). *Education policy, practice and the professional*. London: Continuum International Publishing.
- Baxter, J. (2003). *Positioning gender in discourse*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Becker, H. & Greer, B. (1957). Participant observation and interviewing: a comparison. *Human Organisation*, 16: pp. 28 - 32.
- Benveniste, E. (1966). *problemes de linguistique generale*. Paris: Gallimard.
- BERA (British Educational Research Association) (2011). *Ethical guidelines for educational research*. Available at: <https://www.bera.ac.uk/researchers-resources/publications/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2011> (Accessed: 12th February, 2017).

Berger, K.S. (2012). *The Developing Person Through Early Childhood* (6<sup>th</sup> Ed). New York: Worth.

Berger, R. (2015). Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 15:2, 219 – 234.

Berggren, C., Lauster, N. (2014) The motherhood penalty and the professional credential: Inequality in career development for those with a professional degree *International Studies in Sociology of Education*. Vol. 24, Issue 1.

Bhavnani, K. (1993). 'Tracing the Contours: Feminist Research and Feminist Objectivity.' *Women's Studies International Forum*, 16: 2, 95 - 104.

Biesta, G., Field, J., & Tedder, M. (2010). *A time for learning: Representations of time and the temporal dimensions of learning through the lifecourse*. *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, 56(3), 317-327.

Bilge, S. (2010). Recent feminist outlooks on Intersectionality. *Diogenes*, 57(1), 58–72. doi:10.1177/0392192110374245.

Bilge, S. (2013). INTERSECTIONALITY UNDONE. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, 10(02), 405–424. doi:10.1017/s1742058x13000283.

Billig, M. (1991). 'Stacking the cards of ideology: The History of The Sun Souvenir Royal Album', *Discourse & Society*, 1(1): 17 – 35.

Blackmore, J. (1989). Educational leadership: A feminist critique and reconstruction . In J. Smyth (Ed.), *Critical Perspectives on Educational Leadership* . London : The Falmer Press.

Blackmore, J (1999) *Troubling Women: Feminism, leadership & educational change* Open University Press: Buckingham.

Bluteau, P., Clouder, L. & Cureton, D. (2017). Developing interprofessional education online: An ecological systems theory analysis, *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 31:4, 420-428, DOI: [10.1080/13561820.2017.1307170](https://doi.org/10.1080/13561820.2017.1307170)

Blythe, S., Wilkes, L., Jackson, D. & Halcomb, E. (2013). The challenges of being an insider in storytelling research. *Nurse Researcher*, 21:1, 8 - 13.

Bold, C. (2012). *Using narrative in research* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Bologh, R. (1992). The promise and failure of ethnomethodology from a feminist perspective, *Gender and Society*, 6 (2), 199 – 206.

- Bolton, S., Muzio, D. (2008) The paradoxical processes of feminization in the professions: the case of established, aspiring and semi-profession Work, *Employment and Society*, 22:2, 281 – 299.
- Bordo, S. (1986). The Cartesian Masculinization of thought. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 11(3), 439–456. doi:10.1086/494250.
- Bordo, S. (1990). Feminism, postmodernism, and gender-skepticism. In L.J. Nicholson (ed.), *Feminism/postmodernism* (p. 133 - 156). New York: Routledge.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and Symbolic Power*. G. Raymond & M. Adamson (trans.), Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bourke, B. (2014) Positionality Reflecting on the Research Process *The Qualitative Report* vol. 19, article 13, p.1-9.
- Bradbury, L., & Gunter, H. (2006). Dialogic identities: The experiences of women who are headteachers and mothers in English primary schools. *School Leadership & Management*, 26(5), 489–504. doi:10.1080/13632430601007956.
- Brailsford, I. (2010). Motives and Aspirations for Doctoral Study: Career, Personal, and Inter-personal Factors in the Decision to Embark on a History PhD. *International Journal of Doctoral Studies*, 5, 2010.
- Braithwaite, R., Cockwill, S., O’Neill, M., & Rebane, D. (2007). Insider participatory action research in disadvantaged post-industrial areas: The experiences of community members as they become Community Based Action Researchers. *Action Research*, 5(1), 61–74.
- Brannick, T. & Coghlan, D. (2007). in Defence of Being ‘Native’. The case for insider academic research. *Organisational Research Methods*, 10:1, 59 - 74.
- Briggs, C. (2000). Interview. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 9:1-2, pp. 137 -140.
- Brinkmann, S. (2016). Methodological breaching experiments: Steps toward theorising the qualitative interview. *Culture & Psychology*, 22:4, 520 - 533.
- British Sociological Association (2010). ‘Parents spend treble the amount of time on childcare now than in 1975, research shows.’ (press release), *British Sociological Association*, 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2010.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist*, 32, 513 – 531.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1988). Interacting systems in human development. Research paradigms: Present and future. In N. Bolger, A. Caspi, G. Downey, & M. Moorehouse (Eds.), *Persons in context: Developmental processes* (pp. 25 – 49). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1993). The ecology of cognitive development: Research models and fugitive findings. In R. Wozniak & K. Fischer (Eds.), *Development in context: Acting and thinking in specific environments* (pp. 3 – 44). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological models of human development. In T. Husen & T. N. Postlethwaite (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of education* (2nd ed., Vol. 3, pp. 1643 – 1647). Oxford, UK: Pergamon Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1995). Developmental ecology through space and time: A future perspective. In P. Moen, G. H. Elder, Jr., & K. Luscher (Eds.), *Examining lives in context: Perspectives on the ecology of human development* (pp. 619 – 647). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2005). The bioecological theory of human development. In U. Bronfenbrenner (Ed.), *Making human beings human: Bioecological perspectives on human development* (pp. 3 – 15). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (Original work published in 2001).
- Brown, S. (2019). Part-time women teachers and their career progression: A life history approach. Doctoral, Sheffield Hallam University. Accessed (abstract only) via <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/25597/> (Full thesis not released until November 2020).
- Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of Meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Budds, K., Locke, A. & Burr, V. (2013). "Risky Business", *Feminist Media Studies*, 13:1, 132-147, DOI: [10.1080/14680777.2012.678073](https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2012.678073)
- Bullough, R. & Pinnegar, S. (2001). Guidelines for quality in autobiographical forms of self-study research. *Educational Researcher*, 30:3, 13-22.
- Burgess, H. (2008) *Primary Workforce Management and Reform Primary Review Interim Reports Primary Review Research Survey*.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (1997). Sovereign Performatives in the Contemporary Scene of Utterance. *Critical Inquiry*, 23 (2) 350 - 377.
- Butler, J. (2010). PERFORMATIVE AGENCY, *Journal of Cultural Economy*,

3:2, 147-161, DOI: 10.1080/17530350.2010.494117.

Butt, G, Lance, A (2005) Secondary teacher workload and job satisfaction: Do successful strategies for change exist? *Educational Management Administration and Leadership* 33(4):401–422.

Caelli, K., Ray, L., & Mill, J. (2003). 'Clear as Mud': Toward Greater Clarity in Generic Qualitative Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690300200201>.

Carers UK (2019). Evidence Submission to Women's Budget Group Commission on a Gender-Equal Economy. Accessed on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2019 via: <https://www.carersuk.org/for-professionals/policy/policy-library/carers-uk-wbg-commission-2019>.

Cheng, Y. C., Ko, J., & Lee, T. T. H. (2016). School autonomy, leadership and learning: A reconceptualisation. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 30(2), 177–196. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEM-08-2015-0108>.

Cixous, H.(1976). The laugh of the Medusa. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 1(4), 875. doi:10.1086/493306.

Clandinin, J. & Connelly, M. (2000). *Narrative inquiry: Experience and story in qualitative research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Clandinin, J. & Rosiek, J. (2007). Mapping a Landscape of Narrative Inquiry. In Clandinin, J. (Ed.), *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry*, Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Clandinin, J. (2007). *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Clarke, A. E. (2005) *Situational Analysis: Grounded Theory After the Postmodern Turn*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Coe, R., Waring, M., Hedges, L. & Arthur, J. (2017). *Research Methods and Methodologies in Education* (2nd Edition). London: Sage.

Coghlan & Brannick (2005). *Doing Action Research in Your Own Organization*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research Methods in Education*. London: Routledge.

Cole, A. & Knowles, J. (2001). *Lives in Context: the art of life history research*. Oxford: AltaMira.

Conley, H., Jenkins, S. (2011) Still 'a good job for a woman?' Women Teachers' Experiences of Modernization in England and Wales *Gender, Work and Organization* vol. 18 no. 5

Cooper, L. & Rogers, C. (2015). Mothering and 'insider' dilemmas: Feminist Sociologists in the Research Process. *Sociological Research Online*, 20:2, 5.

Corlett, S. and Mavin, S. (2014). "Intersectionality, identity and identity work: Shared tenets and future research agendas for gender and identity studies", *Gender in Management*, Vol. 29 No. 5, pp. 258-276. <https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-12-2013-0138>

Correll, S. J., Benard, S., & Paik, I. (2007). Getting a job: Is there a motherhood penalty? *American Journal of Sociology*, 112(5), 1297–1339. doi:10.1086/511799.

Cortazzi, M. (1993). *Narrative analysis*. London: Falmer Press.

Cotterill, P. (1992). Interviewing women: Issues of friendship, vulnerability and power. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 15:5, 593 - 606.

Courtney, S., McGinity, R., & Gunter, H. (Eds.). (2018). *Educational leadership : Theorising professional practice in neoliberal times* (Critical studies in educational leadership, management and administration). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Cousins, M. & Hussain, A. (1984). *Michel Foucault*. London: Macmillan.

Couture, A., Zaidi, A. & Maticka-Tyndale, E. (2012). Reflexive accounts: an intersectional approach to exploring the fluidity of insider/outsider status and the researcher's impact on culturally sensitive post-positivist qualitative research. *Qualitative Sociology Review*, VIII:1, 86 - 105.

Coy, M. (2006). This morning I'm a researcher, this afternoon I'm an outreach worker: ethical dilemmas in practitioner research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 9:5, 419 - 431.

Craig, L. (2006). Children and the revolution: A time-diary analysis of the impact of motherhood on daily workload. *Journal of Sociology*, 42(2), 125–143. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1440783306064942>.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into practice*, 39(3), 124-130.

Crittenden, A. (2010). *The price of motherhood: Why the most important job in the world is still the least valued*. New York: Picador USA.

Cronin, C. (1996). Bourdieu and Foucault on power and modernity. *Philosophy & social criticism*, 22(6), 55-85.

Cronin, P., Ryan, F. & Coughlan, M. (2008). Undertaking a literature review: a step-by-step approach. *British Journal of Nursing*, Vol. 17, No. 1.

Crowe, M. (2005). Discourse Analysis: Towards an understanding of its place in nursing. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 51, 55 - 63.

Cuddy, A.J., Fiske, S.T., & Glick, P. (2004). When professionals become mothers, warmth doesn't cut the ice. *Journal of Social Issues*. 60:4, 701-718.

Cunnison, S., (1994) Women teachers career identity and perceptions of family constraints - changes over a decade *Research Papers in Education* Vol. 9, Iss. 1 1994.

Curti, L. (1998). *Female stories, female bodies: Narrative, identity and representation*. New York: New York University Press.

Daiute, C. (2014). *Narrative inquiry: A dynamic approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA:SAGE.

Darling, N. (2007) Ecological Systems Theory: The Person in the Center of the Circles, *Research in Human Development*, 4:3-4, 203-217, DOI: [10.1080/15427600701663023](https://doi.org/10.1080/15427600701663023).

Davies, B. & Harre, R. (1990). Positioning: The Discursive Production of Selves. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 20(1), 43 – 63.

Davis, K. (2008). "Intersectionality as Buzzword: A Sociology of Science Perspective on What Makes a Feminist Theory Successful." *Feminist Theory* 9 (1) 67-85.

Deleuze, G. (1988). *Foucault*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Deleuze, G. 1992). What is a dispositif? In TJ. Armstrong (trans.), *Michel Foucault, Philosopher: Essays Translated from the French and German*. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (2005). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2010). *Maternity Rights at Work*. DBEI: London. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/maternity-rights-at-work-employers>.

Department for Education (1993a). *Initial Training of Primary School Teachers: New Criteria for Course Approval*. DfE: London.

Department for Education (1993b). *Patten outlines Primary Teacher Training Reforms* DfE News. DfE: London.

Department for Education and Morgan, N (Rt. Hon) (2016a) *Educational Excellence Everywhere*. DfE: London.

Department for Education (2016b). *Plan to make teaching a more flexible long-term career for women* press release published 6<sup>th</sup> March 2016 accessed online via [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

Department for Education (2017a). Increasing flexible working opportunities in schools (policy paper). DfE: London. Accessed on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017 via <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/increasing-flexible-working-in-schools/increasing-flexible-working-opportunities-in-schools>.

Department for Education (2017b). *Teacher Voice Omnibus Survey: Research Report*. DfE: London.

Department for Education (2017c). Teacher Workload Survey 2016. DfE: London. Accessed via: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teacher-workload-survey-2016>

Department for Education (2018a). *Exploring teacher workload: qualitative research report*. DfE: London accessed online on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2019 via [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/686733/Exploring\\_teacher\\_workload\\_-\\_Research\\_Brief.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/686733/Exploring_teacher_workload_-_Research_Brief.pdf).

Department for Education (2018b). *Teacher Voice Omnibus Survey: Research Report*. DfE: London.

Department for Education (2018c). Workload Reduction Toolkit. Published online 21<sup>st</sup> July 2018, accessed on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2018 via <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/school-workload-reduction-toolkit>

Department for Education (2019a). *Flexible working in Schools*. DfE: London. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flexible-working-in-schools>

Department for Education (2019b). School Workforce Survey 2018. DfE: London. Accessed online on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2019 via <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-workforce-census-2019-guides>.

Department for Education (2019c). *Teacher Workload Survey: Research Brief*. DfE: London.

Department for Education (2019d). *The School Snapshot Survey Winter 2018: Research Report*. DfE: London.

Department for Education (2019e). Initial Teacher Training Core Content Framework. DfE: London. Accessed online on 3<sup>rd</sup> November via: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-itt-core-content-framework>

Department for Education and Skills (1998). *Teachers: meeting the challenge of change*. DfEE: London.

Department for Education and Skills (2003). *Every Child Matters*. DfES: London.

Department for Education and Skills (2005). *Children's Workforce Strategy*. DfES: London.

Department for Trade and Industry (2005). *Work and Families*. DTI: London.

Derrida, J. (1978). *Writing and Difference*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Derrida, J., Bass, A., & Derrida, P. J. (1982). *Margins of philosophy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dhunpath, R. (2000). Life history methodology: 'narradigm' regained. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 13:5, 543 – 551.

Dick, P. (2010). The transition to motherhood and part-time working: mutuality and incongruence in the psychological contracts existing between managers and employees. *Work, Employment and Society*, 24(3), 508–525.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017010371648>.

Dillabough, J. (1999) Gender Politics and Conceptions of the Modern Teacher: Women, Identity and Professionalism *British Journal of Sociology of Education* Vol. 20 (3) p.373 – 394.

Dow, D. M. (2015). Integrated motherhood: Beyond hegemonic ideologies of motherhood. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 78(1), 180–196.  
doi:10.1111/jomf.12264.

Drake, P. (2010). Grasping at methodological understanding: a cautionary tale from insider-research. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*. 33:1, 85 – 99.

Dumez, H. & Jeunemaitre, A. (2010). Michel Callon, Michel Foucault and the 'despositif'. *Le Libello a AEGIS*, Vol. 6, No. 4, pp. 27 - 37.

Dumont, C. (1998). The analytical and political utility of poststructuralism: Considering affirmative action. *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 23(2-3), pp. 216 - 237.

Dunne, M., Pryor, J. & Yates, P. (2005). *Becoming a Researcher*. Buckinghamshire: Open University Press.

Dwyer, C., Buckle, J. (2009). The space between: On being an insider-outsider in qualitative research. *International Journal for Qualitative Methodology*, 8:1, 54 - 63.

Edwards, D. (1995). Sacks and psychology. *Theory and Psychology*, 5(4), pp. 579 - 596.

- Edwards, D., Ashmore, M. & Potter, J. (1995). Death and furniture: The rhetoric, politics and theology of bottom like arguments against relativism. *History of the Human Sciences*, 8(2), pp. 25 - 49.
- Elbaz-Luwisch, F. (2005). *Teachers' voices: Storytelling and possibility*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age.
- Elder-Vass, D. (2012). Towards a realist social constructionism. *Sociologia, Problemas E Práticas*, 5-24.
- Ely, M. (2007). In-forming re-presentations. *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology*, 567598.
- Esping-Andersen, G. (2009). *The Incomplete Revolution: Adapting to Women's New Roles*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Etter-Lewis, G. (1996). Telling From Behind Her Hand. *Ethics and process in the narrative study of lives*, 4, 114.
- Evans, J. (2015). Defining Dad: Media depiction of the modern father in print advertising. *Louisiana State University Electronic Thesis Collection*. Accessed via <http://etd.lsu.edu/docs/available/etd-07132015-124330>.
- Evans, T. (2002) Part-time Research Students: Are they producing knowledge where it counts?, *Higher Education Research & Development*, 21:2, 155-165.
- Fairclough, N. (1995). Discourse and text: Linguistic and intertextual analysis within discourse analysis. *Discourse & Society*, 3 (2), 193 – 217.
- Fatherhood Institute (2016). *Fairness in Families Index 2016*. Accessed on December 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 via [www.fatherhoodinstitute.org](http://www.fatherhoodinstitute.org).
- Faulkner and Coates (2013). Early childhood policy and practice in England: twenty years of change. *International Journal of Early Years Education*, September 2013, 1-20.
- Finch, J. (1984). It's great to have someone to talk to: The ethics and politics of interviewing women. In C. Bell & H. Roberts (Eds.), *Social research: Politics, problems and practice* (pp. 70-87). London: Routledge.
- Foucault, M. (1972). *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (A.M. Sheridan Smith, trans.). New York: Pantheon Books.
- Foucault, M. (1975). *Discipline and punish: The birth of a prison* (A. Sheridan, trans.). New York: Vintage.
- Foucault, M. (1976). *History of Sexuality: Vol. 1. An Introduction*. New York: Pantheon.

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage.

Foucault, M. (1977). Intellectuals and Power (Foucault in conversation with Gilles Deleuze) in, D. Bouchard & and S. Simon (eds.) *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Foucault, M. (1978). *I, Pierre Rivière, Having Slaughtered My Mother, My Sister and My Brother...* Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Foucault, M. (1980a). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972 - 1977*. London: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1980b). Questions of Method. In J.D. Faubion (Ed.), *Michel Foucault: Power* (Vol. 3, pp. 223 - 238). New York: The New Press.

Foucault, M. (1980). The confession of the flesh: A conversation. In C. Gordon (ed.), *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Foucault, M. (1988). *Technologies of the Self*. London: Tavistock Publications.

Foucault, M. (1984/1994). *The Birth of the Clinic*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books.

Foucault, M. (1994). An Interview with Michel Foucault. In J.D. Faubion (Ed.), *Power* (Vol. 3 pp. 239 - 297). New York: The New Press.

Foucault, M. (1998). What is an author? In P. Rabinow (ed.), *Michel Foucault, Aesthetics, Method and Epistemology, the Essential Works of Michel Foucault, 1954 - 1984*, Vol. II. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Foucault, M. (2010) *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the College de France 1982 – 1983* edited by Davidson, A., translated by Burchell, B. Palgrave Macmillan: New York.

Fraser, H. & MacDougall, C. (2016). Doing narrative feminist research: Intersections and challenges, *Qualitative Social Work*, 16:2, 240-254.

Frost, N. & Elichaooff, F. (2014). Feminist Postmodernism, Poststructuralism, and Critical Theory. In S. Hesse-Biber (ed.), *Feminist Research Practice: a primer*. (Pp. 42 - 72). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Frostenson, M. (2015). Three forms of professional autonomy: de-professionalisation of teachers in a new light, *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy*, 2015:2, DOI: 10.3402/nstep.v1.28464.

Gagnier, R. (1990). Feminist postmodernism: the end of feminism or the ends of a theory. In D. Rhode (ed.), *Theoretical perspectives on sexual difference* (p.21 - 30). New Haven: Yale University Press.

Gair, S. (2002). In the Thick of it: A Reflective Tale from an Australian Social Worker/Qualitative Researcher. *Qualitative Health Research*, 12(1), 130–139. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732302012001010>

Gair, S. (2012), Feeling their stories: Contemplating empathy, insider/outsider positionings, and enriching qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 22, 134 - 145.

Galton, M., MacBeath, J., Page, C., & Steward, S. (2002). *A Life in Teaching?: The Impact of Change on Primary Teachers' Working Lives*. London: National Union of Teachers.

Gannerud, E. (2001). A gender perspective on the work and lives of women primary school teachers. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 45(1), 55–70. doi:10.1080/00313830020023393.

Gash, V. (2009). Sacrificing their careers for their families? An analysis of the penalty to motherhood in Europe. *Social Indicators Research*, 93(3), 569–586. doi:10.1007/s11205-008-9429-y.

GASH, V., MERTENS, A., & GORDO, L. R. (2011). THE INFLUENCE OF CHANGING HOURS OF WORK ON WOMEN'S LIFE SATISFACTION. *The Manchester School*, 80(1), 51–74. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9957.2011.02255.x.

Gavey, N. (1989). *Feminist poststructuralism and discourse analysis*. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 1989,13,459-475.

Gečienė, I. (2002). *The notion of power in the theories of Bourdieu, Foucault and Baudrillard*. *Sociologija. Mintis ir veiksmas*, (2), 116-125.

Geiger, T., & Pivovarova, M. (2018). The effects of working conditions on teacher retention. *Teachers and Teaching*, 24(6), 604-625.

Gergen, K. (2001). *Social Construction in Context*. London: Sage.

Gibbs, G. R. (2007). Thematic coding and categorizing. In *Analyzing qualitative data*. London: Sage, 38-56.

Gilligan, C. (2014). Moral injury and the ethic of care: Reframing the conversation about differences. *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 45(1), 89–106. doi:10.1111/josp.12050.

Goodson, I. (2013). *Developing Narrative Theory (1<sup>st</sup> ed.)*. Abingdon: Routledge.

- Goodson, I. (2017). The Rise of Life Narrative in Goodson, I., Antikainen, A., Sikes, P. & Andrews, M. (Eds.) *The Routledge International Handbook of Narrative and Life History*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Goodson, I. & Sikes, P. (2001). *Life history research in educational settings (1<sup>st</sup> ed.)*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Gorelick, S. (1991). Contradictions of feminist methodology. *Gender & Society*, 5(4), 459-477.
- Gorelick, S. (2010). Contradictions of feminist methodology. In Atkinson, P. & Delamont, S. (Eds.), *SAGE qualitative research methods* (pp. 460-477). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: 10.4135/9780857028211.
- Graham, L. (2005). Discourse analysis and the critical use of Foucault. Paper presented at *Australian Association for Research in Education 2005 Annual Conference 27th Nov - 1st December, 2005*.
- Grant, L., Yeandle, S. & Buckner, L. (2005). *Working below potential: women and part-time work*. London: Equal Opportunities Commission and Sheffield Hallam University.
- Graybill-Ellis, E. (2014). *You Must be Superwoman*. (PhD thesis) University of Texas.
- Green, M. (2017). Tackling Workload Reports: An ITT Provider's Response. DfE Blogpost, DfE: London. Accessed in September 2017 via <https://teaching.blog.gov.uk>.
- Green, M. (2018). Supporting your workload as an early career teacher. Impact: Journal of the Chartered College of Teaching, June 2018. Accessed April 2019 via <https://impact.chartered.college/article/green-supporting-workload-early-career-teacher/>
- Greening, J. (2017). *News story: Flexible Working in Schools Summit (30<sup>th</sup> October 2017)*. Department for Education accessed on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2017 via <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-support-for-flexible-working-in-schools-pledged-at-summit>.
- Griffith, A. (1998). Insider/Outsider: Epistemological privilege and mothering work. *Human Studies*, 21, 361 - 376.
- Grimes, J. (1975). *The Thread of Discourse*. New York: Mouton.
- Grumet, M.R. (1988) *Bitter Milk: Women and Teaching* The University of Massachusetts Press.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2(163-194), 105.

- Gubrium, J. & Holstein, J. (2009). *Analysing Narrative Reality*. London: Sage.
- Guihen, L. (2017). *The Career Histories and Professional Aspirations of Women Deputy Headteachers: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*. Doctoral Thesis, University of Leicester. Accessed via: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/8f8e/5764e8bc4835b6b8f8169628fdb5b586857f.pdf>
- Gumus, S., Bellibas, M. S., Esen, M., & Gumus, E. (2018). A systematic review of studies on leadership models in educational research from 1980 to 2014. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 46(1), 25–48. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741143216659296>
- Hacking, I. (1986). Making Up People. In *Reconstructing Individualism*, ed. T. Heller, M. Sosna, and D. Wellberry. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Hall, C. & Schulz, R. (2003). Tensions in Teaching and Teacher Education: Professionalism and professionalisation in England and Canada, *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 33:3, 369-383, DOI: 10.1080/03057920302588
- Hall, D. & Jones, L. (2013). Social class (in)visibility and the professional experiences of middle-class novice teachers, *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 39:4, 416-428, DOI: [10.1080/02607476.2013.782121](https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476.2013.782121).
- Hall, R. & Pulsford, M. (2019). Neoliberalism and primary education: Impacts of neoliberal policy on the lived experiences of primary school communities. *Power and Education*, 11(3), 241–251. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1757743819877344>
- Hall, S. (1997). The Work of Representation. In S. Hall (Ed.), *Representations: Cultural representations and signifying practices*. London: Sage.
- Hall, S. (2001). Foucault, Power, Knowledge and Discourse in (eds.) M. Wetherell, S. Taylor and S. Yates, *Discourse Theory and Practice*. London: Sage. pp.72 – 92.
- Halliday, M. (1970). *The Linguistic Sciences*. London: Longman.
- Hammersley, M. (1992). On Feminist Methodology. *Sociology*, 26:2, 187 - 206.
- Haraway, D. (1991). *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge.
- Harding, S. (1987). *Feminism and Methodology*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Harding, S. (1993). Rethinking standpoint epistemology: what is 'strong objectivity'? In Alcoff, L. & Potter, E. (Eds). *Feminist Epistemologies*. London: Routledge.
- Harding, S. (2004). *The feminist standpoint theory reader: Intellectual and political controversies*. New York, NY: Routledge Member of the Taylor and Francis Group.

- Hardy, S. (2016). 'Teaching, for many, is not a family career.' Times Educational Supplement, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016, accessed on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2016 via [www.tes.com](http://www.tes.com).
- Harris, A. & Jones, M. (2018). The dark side of leadership and management, *School Leadership & Management*, 38:5, 475-477, DOI:10.1080/13632434.2018.1509276.
- Harnett, P. (2010). Life-history and narrative research revisited in Bathmaker, A., & Harnett, P. (Eds.). *Exploring learning, identity and power through life history and narrative research*. ProQuest Ebook Central <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>
- Hartsock, N. (2003). 'The feminist standpoint: developing the ground for a specifically historical materialism', in Harding, S., & Hintikka, M. *Discovering reality: feminist perspectives on epistemology, metaphysics, methodology and philosophy of science* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), London: Kluwer.
- Hartsock, N. (2004). Women and/as commodities: a brief meditation. *Canadian Woman Studies*, Spring/Summer 2004. 23:3/4, 14-17.
- Harvey, R., Brown, K., Miller, B., Williams-Reade, J., Tyndall, L., Murphy, M. (2016). Theory into Research Practice: Reflections and Recommendations on Collaborative Feminist Research. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*, 28:4, 136 - 158.
- Harwood, V. (2000). *Truth, Power and the self: A Foucauldian analysis of the truth of Conduct Disorder and the construction of young people's mentally disordered subjectivity*. Doctoral thesis, University of South Australia, Adelaide. Accessed via [www.unisa.edu.au](http://www.unisa.edu.au).
- Hauver-James, J. (2010). Teachers as mothers in the elementary classroom: negotiating the needs of the self and the other. *Gender and Education*, 22:5, 521 – 534.
- Hawkes, D. (2016). Why do a professional doctorate?: Evidence from prospective EdD students. *International Journal of Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning*. 8:2. 34 - 46.
- Hawkesworth, M. (1989). Knowers, knowing, known: Feminist theory and claims of truth. *Signs*, 14, 533 - 557.
- Hays, S. (1996). *The cultural contradictions of motherhood*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Held, V. (2006). *The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political and Global*. Oxford: OUP.
- Henderson, M., Johnson, N. & Auld, G. (2013). Silences of ethical practice: dilemmas for researchers using social media. *Education Research and Education*, 19:6, pp.546 – 560.

Henwood, K. & Pidgeon, N. (1995). Remaking the Link: Qualitative Research and Feminist Standpoint Theory. *Feminism & Psychology*, 5:1, 7 - 30.

Her Majesty's Stationery Office (1988). *Education Reform Act*. Volume 1/2. [online] London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, p.Chapter 40. Available at: <[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/pdfs/ukpga\\_19880040\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/pdfs/ukpga_19880040_en.pdf)> [Accessed 18 March 2017].

Hesse-Biber, S., Leavy, P. & Yaiser, M. (2004). Feminist approaches to research as a process: Reconceptualising epistemology, methodology and method. In S. Hesse-Biber & M. Yaiser (eds.) *Feminist perspectives on social research* (pp. 3 - 26). New York: Oxford University Press.

Hill Collins, P. (1986). Learning from the outsider within: The sociological significance of Black feminist thought. *Social problems*, 33(6), s14-s32.

Hill Collins, P. (2009). *Black feminist thought: knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment*. New York: Routledge.

Hoare, C. (2009). Models of adult development in Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory and Erikson's biopsychosocial life stage theory: Moving to a more complete three-model view. In M. C. Smith & N. DeFrates-Densch (Eds.), *Handbook of research on adult learning and development* (p. 68–102). Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Holmes, J. (2019). *'I love teaching but I hate being a teacher': how can effective teachers flourish?* Doctoral thesis (Ed.D), UCL (University College London).

Hochschild, A. R., & Machung, A. (2003). *The second shift*. New York, NY: Penguin Group (USA).

hooks, b. (1984). *Feminist theory: from margin to center*. Boston: South End Books.

Horne, R.M. & Breitreuz, R.S. (2016). The motherhood sacrifice: maternal experiences of child care in the Canadian context.. *Journal of Family Studies*.

Hume, W. & Bryce, T. (2003). Post-structuralism and policy research in education. *Journal of Educational Policy*, 18:2, 175 – 187.

Humphrey, C. (2012). Dilemmas in doing insider research in professional education. *Qualitative Social Work*, 12:3, 572 - 586.

Hussain, B. & Zada Asad, A. (2012). A Critique on Feminist Research Methodology. *Journal of Politics and Law*, 5:4, 202 - 207.

- Hutchings, M (2015) *Exam Factories? The Impact of Accountability Measures on Children and Young People* NUT: London.
- Hymes, D. (1981). *In Vain I Tried to Tell You: Essays in Native American Ethnopoetics*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Intemann, K. (2010), 25 Years of Feminist Empiricism and Standpoint Theory: Where Are We Now?. *Hypatia*, 25: 778-796.
- Jaworski, A. & Coupland, N. (1999). *The Discourse Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Jenkins, J. & Finneman, T. (2018). Gender trouble in the workplace: applying Judith Butler's theory of performativity to news organisations. *Feminist Media Studies*, 18:2, 157 – 172. DOI: 10.1080/14680777.2017.1308412.
- Johnstone, B. (2001). Discourse analysis and narrative, in (Eds.) Schiffrin, D., Tannen, D. & Hamilton, H. *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Josselson, R. (1996a). *Ethics and Process in the Narrative Study of Lives*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Josselson, R. (1996b). *The space between us: Exploring the dimensions of human relationships*. Sage.
- Joy, A., Belk, R. & Bhardwaj, R. (2015). Judith Butler on performativity and precarity: exploratory thoughts on gender and violence in India, *Journal of Marketing Management*, 31:15-16, 1739-1745, DOI: 10.1080/0267257X.2015.1076873.
- Juritzen, T., Grimen, H. & Heggen, K. (2011). Protecting vulnerable research participants: A Foucault inspired analysis of ethics committees. *Nursing Ethics*, 18:5, 640 - 650.
- Kell, E. (2016). *Shifting Identities: A mixed methods study of the experiences of teachers who are also parents* (EdD thesis). Middlesex University.
- Kendall, G. & Wickham, G. (1999). *Using Foucault's Methods*. London: Sage.
- Khatri, C., Chapman, S. J., Glasbey, J., Kelly, M., Nepogodiev, D., Bhangu, A., Fitzgerald, J. & STARSurg Committee. (2015). Social media and internet driven study recruitment: evaluating a new model for promoting collaborator engagement and participation. *PloS one*, 10(3).
- Kleres, J. (2011). Emotions and Narrative Analysis: A Methodological Approach. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 41(2), 182–202. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5914.2010.00451.x>.

- Klett-Davies, M., & Skaloutis, E. (2009). What do mothers feel about their ability to balance work and family life? . In S. A. Hunt (Ed.), *Family Trends: British families since the 1950s*. . Family and Parenting Institute.
- Knowles, M., Nieuwenhuis, J. & Smit, B. (2009). A narrative analysis of educators' lived experiences of motherhood and teaching. *South African Journal of Education*, 29, 333-343.
- Krumer-Nevo, M. (2002). The arena of Othering: A narrative study of women living in poverty and social marginality. *Qualitative Social Work*, 1:3, 303-318.
- Kuo, P., & Ward, L.M. (2016). Contributions of television to beliefs about fathers and gendered family roles among first time expectant parents. *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*, 17:4, 352 – 362.
- Labov, W. & Waletzky, J. (1997). Narrative and analysis: oral versions of personal experience. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7, pp. 3 - 38.
- Lenihan, E. (2017). *Postmodernism is Killing Social Sciences*. Blogpost on [eoinlenihan.weebly.com](http://eoinlenihan.weebly.com), accessed 27<sup>th</sup> August 2017.
- Lennon, K. (1997). Feminist epistemology as a local epistemology. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, Supplementary Volumes*, 71, 19-54.
- Letherby, G. (2003). *Feminist Research in Theory and Practice*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Levi-Strauss, C. (1962/1966). *The Savage Mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Levitt, D. H. (2010). Women and leadership: A developmental paradox? *Adultspan Journal*, 9(2), 66–75. doi:10.1002/j.2161-0029.2010.tb00072.x.
- Lewis, P. & Adeney, R.(2014). Narrative Research. In Mills, J. & Birks, M. (eds.). *Qualitative Methodology* (pp. 160 -179). London: Sage.
- Litosseliti, L. (2006). *Gender & Language: Theory and Practice*, New York: Hodder Arnold.
- Local Government Association (2016) *Conditions of service for school teachers in England and Wales (Burgundy book)* accessed online via [www.local.gov.uk/workforce/-/journal\\_content](http://www.local.gov.uk/workforce/-/journal_content) on 16th March 2016.
- Locke, K. (2015). Performativity, performance and education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 47 (3), 247 – 259. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2013.857287>.

- Longino, H. (2002). *The Fate of Knowledge*. Princeton University Press.
- Loots, G., Coppens, K. & Semijn, J. (2013). Practising a rhizomatic perspective in narrative research. In M. Andrews, C. Squire and M. Tamboukou (eds.) *Doing Narrative Research* (pp. 88 - 107). London: Sage.
- Luke, A. (1999). Critical Discourse Analysis. In J.P. Keeves & G. Lakomski (Eds.), *Educational Research*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Lynch, (2008). Love labour as a distinct and non-commodifiable form of care labour. *Sociological Review*, 55:3, 550-570.
- Lyonette , C., Atfield , G., Behle , H., & Gambin , L. (2015). *Tracking student mothers higher education participation and early career outcomes over time: initial choices and aspirations, HE experiences and final career destinations* . London : Nuffield Foundation.
- Mallozzi, C. (2009). Voicing the Interview: A Researcher's Exploration on a Platform of Empathy. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 15:6, pp. 1042 - 1060.
- Malpass, A., Sales, K. & Feder, G. (2016). Reducing symbolic - violence in the research encounter: Collaborating with a survivor of domestic abuse in a qualitative study in UK primary care. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 38:3, 442 - 458.
- Margolis, J., Hodge, A., & Alexandrou, A. (2014). The teacher educator's role in promoting institutional versus individual teacher well-being. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 40(4), 391-408.
- Marmon Silko, L. (1997). *Yellow woman and a beauty of the spirit*. New York: Touchstone.
- Maternity Teacher Paternity Teacher Project (2019). Survey of maternity/paternity leave. Accessed via: <https://www.mtpt.org.uk/>
- May, T. (2001). *Social Research: issues, methods and process*. Berkshire: Open University Press.
- Maynard, M. & Purvis, J. (1994). *Researching Women's lives from a feminist perspective*. London: Taylor & Francis.
- McCulloch, A., Guerin, C., Jayatilaka, A., Calder, P., & Ranasinghe, D. (2017). Choosing to study for a phd: A framework for examining decisions to become a research student. *Higher Education Review*, 49(2), 85-106.
- McGuire, H. L. (1984). Opting for part-time, or combining motherhood with teaching. *The English Journal*, 73(4), 38. doi:10.2307/816578.

- McLennan, G. (1995). Feminism, Epistemology and Postmodernism: Reflections on Current Ambivalence. *Sociology*, 29:2, 391 - 409.
- McNamara , O., Howson, J., Gunter, H., Sprigade, A., & Onat-Stelma, Z. (2008). *Women Teacher's Careers* . Birmingham : NASUWT.
- McNamara, O., Howson, J., Gunter, H., & Fryers , A. (2010). *No Job for a Woman? The impact of gender in school leadership* . Birmingham : NASUWT .
- McNay, L. (1992). *Foucault and feminism: Power, gender, and the self*. Cambridge, England: Polity Press.
- McRae, S. (2003). Constraints and choices in mothers' employment careers: A consideration of Hakim's preference theory. *British Journal of Sociology*, 54(3), 317–338. doi:10.1080/0007131032000111848.
- Measor, L. & Sikes, P. (1992). Visiting lives: ethics and methodology in life history research, in I. Goodson (ed.). *Studying Teachers' Lives*, pp.209 - 233. London: Routledge.
- Mercer, J. (2007). The Challenges of Insider Research in Educational Institutions: Wielding a Double-Edged Sword and Resolving Delicate Dilemmas. *Oxford Review of Education*, 33, 1, 1-17.
- Merrill, B. & West, L. (2009). *Using Biographical Methods in Social Research*. London: Sage.
- Millen, D. (1997). Some methodological and epistemological issues raised by doing feminist research on non-feminist women. *Sociological Research*, 2:3.
- Miller, L. (2000). The Poverty of Truth Seeking: Postmodernism, Discourse Analysis and Critical Feminism. *Theory & Psychology*, Vol. 10 (3), pp. 313 - 352.
- Miller, T. & Bell, L. (2002). Consenting to what? Issues of access, gate-keeping and 'informed' consent. In Mauther, M., Birch, M., Jessop, J & Miller, T. (Eds). *Ethics in qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Moore, B. (2007). Original sin and insider research. *Action Research*, 5:1, 27 - 39.
- Moosa, S., & Bhana , D. (2016). Men managing, not teaching Foundation Phase: teachers, masculinity and the early years of primary schooling . *Education Review*.
- Moreau, M.P., Osgood, J. & Halsall, A. (2005). *The Career Progression of Women Teachers in England: a study of barriers to promotion and career development* . London Metropolitan University : IPSE.

Morgan, N. MP (2015) *Empowering Women in Education* Leadership Conference speech given at Newton Prep School, London on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015 and accessed online via [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

Morris, M. (1988). *The Pirate's fiancée: feminism, reading, postmodernism*. Verso.

Munro, P. (1998). *Subject to Fiction: Women Teachers' Life History Narratives and the Cultural Politics of Resistance*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Murphy, & Cloutier-Fisher (2002). Balancing act: graduate school and motherhood. *Great Lakes Geographer*, 9:1, 37-47.

Murphy, E., & Dingwall, R. (2001). The ethics of ethnography. *Handbook of Ethnography*, 339-351.

National Association of School Teachers and Women Teachers (2017). *Flexible Working: The Experiences of Teachers*. NASUWT: London. Accessed March 2018 via <https://www.nasuwat.org.uk/advice/conditions-of-service/flexible-working.html>.

National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT). (2019). *The Big Question 2019 Survey Report*. Accessed online on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2019 via <https://www.nasuwat.org.uk/uploads/assets/uploaded/981c20ce-145e-400a-805969e777762b13.pdf>.

National Education Union (2019a). Response to the DfE workload survey 2019. Accessed December 2019 via <https://neu.org.uk/workload/dfe-workload-survey-2019>.

National Education Union (NEU) (2019b). The State of Education: Workload (press release). Accessed via [www.neu.org](http://www.neu.org) on 12th April 2019.

Neeleman, A. (2019). The scope of school autonomy in practice: An empirically based classification of school interventions. *Journal of Education Change* 20, 31–55 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-018-9332-5>.

Newton, T. (1998). Theorising Subjectivity in Organisations: The Failure of Foucauldian Studies. *Organisation Studies*, 19:3, 415 – 447.

Nias, J. (1999). Primary teaching as a culture of care, in: J. Prosser (Ed.) *School Culture*. London: Paul Chapman.

Noddings, N. (2013). *Caring: a feminine approach to ethics and moral education*. California: University of California Press.

Nussbaum, M. (2003). *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

O'Brien, E. (2018). *Perspectives on the Pursuit of Professional Learning: Insights from Teachers who are Mothers*. Doctoral thesis (Ed.D), UCL (University College London).

O'Brien Hallstein, L. & O'Reilly, A. (2012). Academic motherhood in a post-second wave context: Framing the conversation. In L. O'Brien Hallstein & A. O'Reilly (editors) *Academic motherhood in a post-second wave context: Challenges, strategies, and possibilities*. Toronto: Demeter Press.

O'Connor, K. E. (2008). "You choose to care": Teachers, emotions and professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(1), 117–126.  
doi:10.1016/j.tate.2006.11.008.

Oakley, A. (1979). *From Here to Maternity: Becoming a Mother*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Office for National Statistics (2011). *Mothers in the Labour Market*. Accessed December 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 via [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk).

Office for National Statistics (2015a). *Labour Force Survey*. Accessed December 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 via [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk).

Office for National Statistics (2015b) *School Workforce in England*. Published November 2015 Accessed December 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 via [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk).

Office for National Statistics (2017). *Births by parents' characteristics in England and Wales: 2016*. Published November 2017, accessed March 2019 via [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk).

Office for National Statistics (2018). *Families and the Labour Market; England and Wales 2018*. Published October 2018, accessed March 2019 via [www.ons.gov.uk](http://www.ons.gov.uk).

Ofsted (2016) *Ofsted inspections: myths*. Online guidance document, accessed on 6<sup>th</sup> December via [www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015/ofsted-inspections-mythbusting](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015/ofsted-inspections-mythbusting).

Orgad, S. (2016a). Incongruous encounters: media representations and lived experiences of stay-at-home mothers. *Feminist Media Studies*, 16:3, accessed on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2016, via <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/65588/>.

Orgad, S (2016b). Why Does The Media 'Love Stay At Home Mums'? an LSE blog post accessed online at [blogs.lse.ac.uk](http://blogs.lse.ac.uk) on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2012). *Education at a glance 2012: OECD indicators*. OECD Publishing.

Page, J. (2010). *Mothers, work and childcare : choices, beliefs and dilemmas*. PhD thesis, University of Sheffield.

Page, J. (2011). Do mothers want professional carers to love their babies? *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 9, 310 – 323.

Page, J. (2013). Will the 'good' (working) mother please stand up? Professional and maternal concerns about education, care and love *Gender and Education* vol. 25 issue 5 p.548 – 563

Park, A., Bryson, C., Clery, E., Curtice, J. & Phillips, M. (2013). *British Social Attitudes: the 30<sup>th</sup> Report*. London: NatCen Social Research.

Parker, I. (1992). *Discourse Dynamics: Critical Analysis for Social and Individual Psychology*. London: Routledge.

Parker, I. (1998). *Social Constructionism, Discourse and Realism*. London: Sage.

Pasque, P. A. (2013). (Re) membering and (re) living: A methodological exploration of postmodern and constructivist feminist approaches to interviewing women leaders in higher education. *NASPA Journal About Women in Higher Education*, 6(1), 99-126.

Patai, D. (1994). (Response) When method becomes power. In A. Gitlen (ed.), *Power and method* (pp.61 - 73). New York: Routledge.

Patel, GA. (2016) *Hello baby, goodbye teaching: how to get mums back into the classroom* in *The Guardian* Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016, accessed via [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com) on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

Perryman, J. (2011). The return of the native: the blurred boundaries of insider/outsider research at an English secondary school. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*. 24:7, 857 - 874.

Perryman, J., Ball, S., Braun, A. & Maguire, M. (2017). *Translating policy: governmentality and the reflective teacher*, *Journal of Education Policy*, 32:6, 745-756, DOI: 10.1080/02680939.2017.1309072

Perryman, J., & Calvert, G. (2020). What motivates people to teach, and why do they leave? Accountability, performativity and teacher retention. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 68(1), 3-23.

Phillips, D., Curtice, J., Phillips, M. and Perry, J. (eds.) (2018). *British Social Attitudes: The 35<sup>th</sup> Report*, London: The National Centre for Social Research.

Pillay, V. (2005) Narrative style: the inseparability of self, style and text, *Reflective Practice*, 6:4, 539-549, DOI: 10.1080/14623940500300723

Pillow, W. (2003). Confession, catharsis or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*. 16:2, pp.175 - 196.

- Pinnegar, S. & Daynes, G. (2007). Locating Narrative Inquiry Historically. In J. Clandinin (Ed.), *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Pinnegar, S., Dulude-Lay, C., Bigham, S. & Dulude, C. (2005). Teaching as highlighted by mothering: a narrative inquiry. *Studying Teacher Education*, 1(1), 55 – 67.
- Piper, H. & Sikes, P. (2015). Education, neoliberalism, and ‘truths.’ *Power and Education*, 7(1), 3–6. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1757743814567378>
- Plummer, K. (2001). *Documents of Life 2: An Invitation to Critical Humanism*. London: Sage.
- Polyani, L. (1985). What stories can tell us about their teller’s world. *Poetics Today*, 97 - 112.
- Potter, J. (1996). *Representing Reality: Discourse, Rhetoric and Social Construction*. London: Sage.
- Propp, V. (1968). *Morphology of the Foktale*. Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press.
- Quickfall, A. (2018). 'Insiderness' in my pilot study research. *Hillary Place Papers*, 4, 11-21.
- Radley, A. (1995). The elusory body and social constructionist theory. *Body and Society*, 1:2, 3 – 23.
- Raffo, C. & Gunter, H. (2008). Leading schools to promote social inclusion: Developing a conceptual framework for analysing research, policy and practice. *Journal of Education Policy*, 23(4), 397-414.
- Ramazanoglu, C. (1993). *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions Between Foucault and Feminism*. London: Routledge.
- Ramazanoglu, C., & Holland, J. (2002). *Feminist methodology: Challenges and choices*. London: Sage.
- Reay, D. (2004). “Social Class and Initial Teacher Education.” Paper presented at European Conference on Educational Research, Dublin, September. Accessed August 27, 2010. <http://multiverse.ac.uk/attachments/afc1cf08-3a83-4967-802f-121a916901a9.pdf>. [Google Scholar]
- Reay, D. (2010). Finding or losing yourself?: working- class relationships to education. *Journal of Education Policy*, 16:4, 333-346.
- Reed, M. (2000). The Limits of Discourse Analysis in Organisational Analysis. *Organisation*, 7:3, 524 – 530.

- Rees Edwards, M. (2012). A temporal multifaceted adaptation approach to the experiences of employed mothers. *Marriage & Family Review*, 48(8), 732–768. doi:10.1080/01494929.2012.700911
- Ribbens McCarthy, J. & Edwards, R, (2011). *Key concepts in family studies*. London: Sage.
- Richardson, R., Goodman, P., Flight, S., & Richards, G. (2018). *Reducing teacher workload*. Institute of Education (UCL) digital education resource archive. Accessed via: [https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/31209/1/Flying\\_High\\_-\\_Reducing\\_teacher\\_workload.pdf](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/31209/1/Flying_High_-_Reducing_teacher_workload.pdf).
- Ridgeway, C., Correll, S. (2004) Motherhood as a Status Characteristic *Journal of Social Issues* Vol. 60, Issue 4, p.683 – 700
- Riessman, C. (1988). Worlds of Difference: Contrasting Experience in Marriage and Narrative Style. In A. Dundas Todd and S. Fishr (Eds.) *Gender and Discourse: The Power of Talk* (pp. 151 – 173). Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex.
- Riessman, C. (2008). *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Roberts, J. (2006). The personal and social meaning of becoming a qualified teacher: Participants voices. *English Language Teacher Education and Development*, 9, 9–20.
- Robertson, A. (2018). *DfE fails to hit female leadership coaching target*. Schoolsweek, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2018. Accessed March 2018 via <https://schoolsweek.co.uk/dfе-fails-to-hit-female-leadership-coaching-target/>.
- Robinson, F. (2011). *The Ethics of Care: A Feminist Approach to Human Security*. Philadelphia: Temple.
- Roffey, S. (2012). Pupil wellbeing—Teacher wellbeing: Two sides of the same coin?. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 29(4), 8.
- Rooney, P. (2005). Researching from the inside - Does it compromise validity? A discussion. *Level3*, number 3.
- Ross, (2016). *Interrogating Motherhood*. Athabasca University: AU Press.
- Rudd, T. & Goodson, I. (2017). *Negotiating neoliberalism: Developing alternative educational visions*, Sense: Rotterdam.
- Rumschlag, K. E. (2017). Teacher burnout: A quantitative analysis of emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment, and depersonalization. *International management review*, 13(1), 22-36.

- Ryan, L., Kofman, E. and Aaron, P. (2011). Insiders and outsiders: Working with peer researchers in researching Muslim communities. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 14: 49-60. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2010.481835>.
- Saidin, K. & Jaacob, A. (2016). Insider Researchers: Challenges and Opportunities. *Proceedings of the ICECRS International Seminar on Generating Knowledge Through Research*, 25 – 27<sup>th</sup> October 2016.
- Samuel, G. (2017). “The Danger of Lurking”: Different Conceptualizations of “User Awareness” in Social Media Research. *American Journal of Bioethics*, 17:3, pp. 25 – 26.
- Sands, R. & Krumer-Nero, M. (2006). Interview Shocks and Shockwaves. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12:5, pp. 950 - 971.
- Sanger, T. (2010). *Trans people’s partnerships: towards an ethics of intimacy*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Scheurich, J. (1997). *Research Method in the Postmodern*. London: Farmer Press.
- Schober, P. & Scott, J. (2012). Maternal employment and gender role attitudes: Dissonance among British men and women in the transition to parenthood. *Work, Employment & Society*, 26:3, 514-530.
- Schwan, A., & Shapiro, S. (2011). *How to read Foucault's Discipline and Punish*. Pluto Press.
- Scott, J. (1990). Deconstructing equality versus difference: Or, the uses of poststructuralist theory for feminism, In M. Herschel & E. Fox Keller (eds.), *Conflicts in Feminism*. London: Routledge.
- Sellen, P. (2016). *Teacher workload and professional development in England’s secondary schools: insights from TALIS*. Education Policy Institute. Accessed on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016 via [epi.org.uk/wp=content/uploads/2016/10/teacherworkload\\_EPI.pdf](http://epi.org.uk/wp=content/uploads/2016/10/teacherworkload_EPI.pdf)
- Shamir, B. & Eilam, G. (2005). “What's your story?” A life-stories approach to authentic leadership development. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16:3, 395 - 417.
- Sheffield Hallam University (2020). Lone Working. Sheffield Hallam University Ethics Policy, accessed via: <https://www.shu.ac.uk/research/quality/ethics-and-integrity/guidance-and-legislation>.
- Sheriff, M & Weatherall, A. (2009). A Feminist Discourse Analysis of Popular-Press Accounts of Postmaternity. *Feminism & Psychology*, 19, pp.89 - 108.

Sholar, M. (2016). Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton both support paid family leave. That's a breakthrough. *The Washington Post*, online edition, accessed on December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016 via <https://www.washingtonpost.com>.

Sikes, P. (1998). Parent teachers: reconciling the roles. *Teacher Development*, 2:1, 87 – 105.

Sikes, P. (2006) On Dodgy Ground? Problematics and ethics in Educational Research *International Journal of Research & Method in Education* vol. 29, no. 1 p.105 - 117

Sikes, P. (2010). 'The ethics of writing life histories and narratives in education research' in Bathmaker, A., & Harnett, P. (Eds.). *Exploring learning, identity and power through life history and narrative research*. ProQuest Ebook Central <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>

Sikes, P & Hall, M. (2020). Too close for comfort?: ethical considerations around safeguarding the emotional and mental wellbeing of researchers using auto/biographical approaches to investigate 'sensitive' topics, *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 43:2, 163-172, DOI:10.1080/1743727X.2019.1636025

Sikes, P. & Potts, A. (2008). *Researching education from the inside: Investigations from within*. London: Routledge.

Sikkens, E., van San, M., Sieckelinck, S., Boeije, H., & De Winter, M. (2017). Participant recruitment through social media: Lessons learned from a qualitative radicalization study using Facebook. *Field Methods*, 29(2), 130-139.

Simons, J. (2016) *The Importance of Teachers* Policy Exchange: London accessed online via [www.policyexchange.org.uk](http://www.policyexchange.org.uk) on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

Sims-Schouten, W., Riley, S. & Willig, C. (2007). Critical Realism in Discourse Analysis. *Theory & Psychology*, 17:1, pp. 101 - 124.

Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2010). Teacher self-efficacy and teacher burnout: A study of relations. *Teaching and teacher education*, 26(4), 1059-1069.

Skinner, B., Leavey, G. & Rothi, D. (2019). Managerialism and teacher professional identity: impact on well-being among teachers in the UK, *Educational Review*, DOI: 10.1080/00131911.2018.1556205.

Smith, J. (1983). Quantitative versus qualitative research: an attempt to clarify the issue. *Educational Researcher*, 12:3, 6 - 13.

Smith, J. (2007). *Life Histories and career decisions of women teachers*. (EdD thesis) The University of Leeds. Accessed via <http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk>

- Smith, J. (2011). Agency and female teachers' career decisions: A life history study of 40 women. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 39 (1), 7 – 24.
- Smith, J.M. (2014). Gendered trends in student teachers' professional aspirations. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 43(6), 861–882.  
doi:10.1177/1741143214543200
- Smith, J. (2016). 'Motherhood and Women Teachers' Career Decisions: A Constant Battle'. In K. Fuller and J. Harford (Eds), *Gender and Leadership in Education* (pp. 83-114). Bern: Peter Lang AG, International Academic Publishers.
- Smythe, W. E., & Murray, M. J. (2000). Owning the story: Ethical considerations in narrative research. *Ethics & Behavior*, 10(4), 311-336.
- Sorensen, S. (2017). The Performativity of Choice: Postfeminist Perspectives on Work–Life Balance. *Gender, Work and Organization* Vol. 24 No. 3 May 2017,  
doi:10.1111/gwao.12163.
- Southgate, E. & Shyling, K. (2014). Researchers as dirty workers: cautionary tales on insider-outsider dynamics. *Qualitative Research in Organisations and Management: An International Journal*. 9:3, 223 – 240.
- Souto-Manning, M. (2014). Critical narrative analysis: the interplay of critical discourse and narrative analyses. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*. Vol. 27, Issue 2.
- Speer, S. (2007). On Recruiting Conversation Analysis for Critical Realism Purposes. *Theory & Psychology*, 17:1, pp. 125 - 135.
- Squire, C. (2013). From experience-centred to socioculturally-oriented approaches to narrative. In M. Andrews, C. Squire and M. Tamboukou (eds.) *Doing Narrative Research* (pp. 47 - 71). London: Sage.
- Squire, C., Andrews, M. & Tamboukou, M. (2013). Introduction: What is narrative research? In M. Andrews, C. Squire and M. Tamboukou (eds.) *Doing Narrative Research* (pp. 1 - 26). London: Sage.
- Stanley, T. (2001). Wheat from Chaff: Meta-Analysis as Quantitative Literature Review. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 15(3), 131-150. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2696560>.
- Steedman, C. (1985). Prisonhouses. *Feminist Review* 7. doi:10.2307/1394665
- Steedman, C., Urwin, C., & Walkerdine, V. (1987). Language, gender and childhood. *Labour / Le Travail*, 19, 256. doi:10.2307/25142832
- Stevenson, C. (2004). Theoretical and methodological approaches in discourse analysis. *Nurse Researcher*, 12:2, pp. 17 – 29.

- Stone-Mediatore, S. (2000). Chandra Mohanty and the revaluing of 'experience', In U. Narayan & S. Harding (Eds.), *Decentering the Center: Philosophy for a multicultural, postcolonial and feminist world*, pp. 110 - 127. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Sullivan, C. (2015). 'bad mum guilt': The representation of 'work-life balance' in UK women's magazines. *Community, Work & Family*, 18(3), 284-298.  
doi:10.1080/13668803.2014.970128
- Sylva, K., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P., Siraj-Blatchford, I., Taggart, B., Elliot, K. (2003) *The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project: Findings on the Pre-School Period* EPPE Office: London accessed online via [www.ioe.ac.uk/projects/eppe](http://www.ioe.ac.uk/projects/eppe) on 9th February 2016.
- Tamboukou, M. (2003). *Women, Education and the Self: A Foucauldian Perspective*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tamboukou, M. (2013). A Foucauldian approach to narratives. In M. Andrews, C. Squire and M. Tamboukou (eds.) *Doing Narrative Research* (pp. 88 - 107). London: Sage.
- Tang, N. (2002). Interviews and informant relationships between women. *Sociology*, 36:3. 703 - 721.
- Taylor, C. A., & Adams, G. (2020). Reconceptualizing doctoral students' journeyings: Possibilities for profound happiness? *International Journal of Educational Research*, 99, 101425.
- Taylor, J. (2011). The Intimate Insider: Negotiating the ethics of friendship when doing insider research. *Qualitative Research*, 11, 3 - 22.
- Teacher Support Network (2015). *Experienced teacher exodus survey: 34% expect to leave in the next 5 years*. Accessed 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016 via [www.teachersupport.info](http://www.teachersupport.info)
- The Secret Teacher (2016). I'm being punished for working part-time. *The Guardian*, 17th September, 2016. Accessed via: <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2016/sep/17/secret-teacher-im-being-punished-for-working-part-time>
- Thomas, G. (2013). *How to do your research project*. London: Sage
- Thomson, R., Kehily, M.J. (2011) Troubling Reflexivity: the identity flows of teachers becoming mothers *Gender and Education* vol. 23 issue 3 p.233 – 245.
- Tong, R. (1989). Postmodern feminism. *Feminist Thought*, 217-233.
- Troman, G. & Woods, P. (2000). Careers Under Stress: Teacher Adaptations at a Time of Intensive Reform. *Journal of Educational Change*, 1:3, 253-275.

Tronto, S. (2011). A Feminist Democratic Ethics of Care and Global Care Workers: Citizenship and Responsibility. In Mahon, R and Robinson, F. (Eds). *Feminist Ethics and Social Policy: Towards a New Global Political Economy of Care*. Vancouver: UCB Press.

Tudge, J., Hatfield, I. & Karnik, A. (2009). Uses and Misuses of Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Theory of Human Development, *Journal of Family Theory and Review*, 1 (Dec 2009), 198 – 210.

Valiquette-Tessier, S.C., Vandette, M.P. & Gosselin, J. (2016). Is family structure a cue for stereotyping? A systematic review of stereotypes and parenthood. *Journal of Family Studies*, 22:2, 162-181.

Van Dijk, T. (1977). *Text & Context: Explorations in the semantics and pragmatics of discourse*. London: Longman.

Van Leeuwen, T. (1996). 'The Representation of Social Actors' In C. Coulthard and M. Coulthard (Eds.) *Texts and Practices: Readings in Critical Discourse Analysis*, London: Routledge.

Van Ness, N., McInnes Miller, M., Negaash, S. & Morgan, M. (2017). Embracing Our Eroticism: A Foucauldian Discourse Analysis of Women's Eroticism. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*, 29:3, pp. 103 – 126.

van Teijlingen, E. & Hundley, H. (2001). The importance of pilot studies. *Social Research Update*, Issue 35, Winter 2001.

Vickers, M. (2002). Researchers as storytellers: Writing on the edge—And without a safety net. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 8(5), 608-621.

Visweswaran, K. (1994). *Fictions of feminist ethnography*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Vogt, F. (2002). A caring teacher: Explorations into primary school teachers' professional identity and ethic of care. *Gender and Education*, 14(3), 251-64.

Wadsworth, J. (2015). 'Reject or Redemptive Fathers? A Content Analysis of Father Portrayals in Top Box Office Family Films'. *All Theses and Dissertations*, 5818. Accessed via <http://scholar.archive.byu.edu/etd/5818>.

Walford G., Ed. (1998) *Doing Research about Education* Falmer Press: London

Wall, G. (2013). "Putting family first": Shifting discourses of motherhood and childhood in representations of mothers' employment and child care. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 40, 162–171. doi:10.1016/j.wsif.2013.07.006

Wallbank, J. (2001). *Challenging Motherhood(s)*. Harlow:Pearson.

- Welch, Happell & Edwards (2010). Getting That Piece of Paper: Mental Health Nurses' Experience of Undertaking Doctoral Studies in Victoria, Australia. *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing*, published online 16th October, 2009. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.apnu.2009.04.005>
- Wetherell, M., Taylor, S. & Yates, S. (2001). *Discourse Theory and Practice*. London: Sage.
- Wharton, A. S. (2011). The sociology of Arlie Hochschild. *Work and Occupations*, 38(4), 459–464. doi:10.1177/0730888411418921
- White, S. (2009). Mothers becoming teachers. What motivates them? What doesn't? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 13(1), 79–92. doi:10.1080/13603110701284474
- Wiggins, K. (2016) Exclusive: Three-quarters of teachers are thinking of quitting The *Times Educational Supplement* accessed online via [www.tes.com](http://www.tes.com) on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2016.
- Wilkinson, S., Kitzinger, C. (2013). Representing Our Own Experiences: Issues in 'insider' research. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 37:2, 251 - 255.
- Williams, Y. (2017). Rather than asking why teachers leave the profession, we should wonder that they remain. *Times Educational Supplement*, Accessed January 2018 via <https://www.tes.com/news/school-news/breaking-views/rather-asking-why-teachers-leave-profession-we-should-wonder-they-remain>.
- Willig, C. (2008). Discourse Analysis. In J.A. Smith (Ed.), *Qualitative Psychology: A practical guide to research methods* (2nd ed.), pp. 160 - 187. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Willinsky, J. (1989). 'Getting personal and practical with personal practical knowledge', *Curriculum Inquiry*, 3 (19), 247 - 264.
- Wilson, H. (2016). *Is the DfE's Women Leading in Education Coaching Pledge working?* Blogpost on LinkedIn, published on October 29, 2016. Accessed in March 2018 via: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/dfes-women-leading-education-coaching-pledge-working-hannah-wilson>
- Wilson, S. (2017). *Women, work and caring: unspoken expectations and stifled careers*. Blogpost for the Institute of Employment Studies. Published March 2017, accessed March 2018 via [www.employment-studies.co.uk](http://www.employment-studies.co.uk).
- Winnicott, D.W. (1953). Transitional objects and transitional phenomena. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 34:2 89-97.
- Wittgenstein, L. (1981). *Zettel* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.
- WomenEd* (2020). *WomenEd Events*. Accessed via: <https://www.womened.org/events>.

Women's Budget Group (2005). *Women's Budget Group Response to Department for Trade and Industry's Consultation: Work and Families*. London: Women's Budget Group.

Wood, P. (2019). Rethinking time in the workload debate. *Management in Education*, 33(2), 86–90. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0892020618823481>

Worth, J. & Van Der Brande, J. (2019). *Teacher Labour Market in England – Annual Report 2019*. Berkshire: NFER.

Young, E. (2016). Pregnant women and mums 'losing out' in workplace. *BBC News*. Accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2016 via [www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-37152959](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-37152959)

Young, R. (1997). Comparative Methodology and Postmodern Relativism, *International Review of Education* (1997) 43: 497. <https://doi.org.hallam.idm.oclc.org/10.1023/A:1003046206585>

Yow, V. (2006). 'Do I like them too much?' effects of the oral history interview on the interviewer and vice-versa.. In P. Atkinson and S. Delmont (Eds.) *Narrative Methods, Vol. 1*. London: Sage.

Yuan, Y. (2014). Turning Friends into Research Participants: Rationale, Possibilities and Challenges. *Cambridge Open- Review Educational Research e-journal*, 1:1. Accessed via [www.corerj.educ.cam.ac.uk](http://www.corerj.educ.cam.ac.uk) on 12th August, 2017.

Yuval-Davis, N. (2011). *The politics of belonging: Intersectional contestations*. Sage.

Zinn, M.B. (1979). *Field Research in Minority Communities: Ethical, Methodological and*

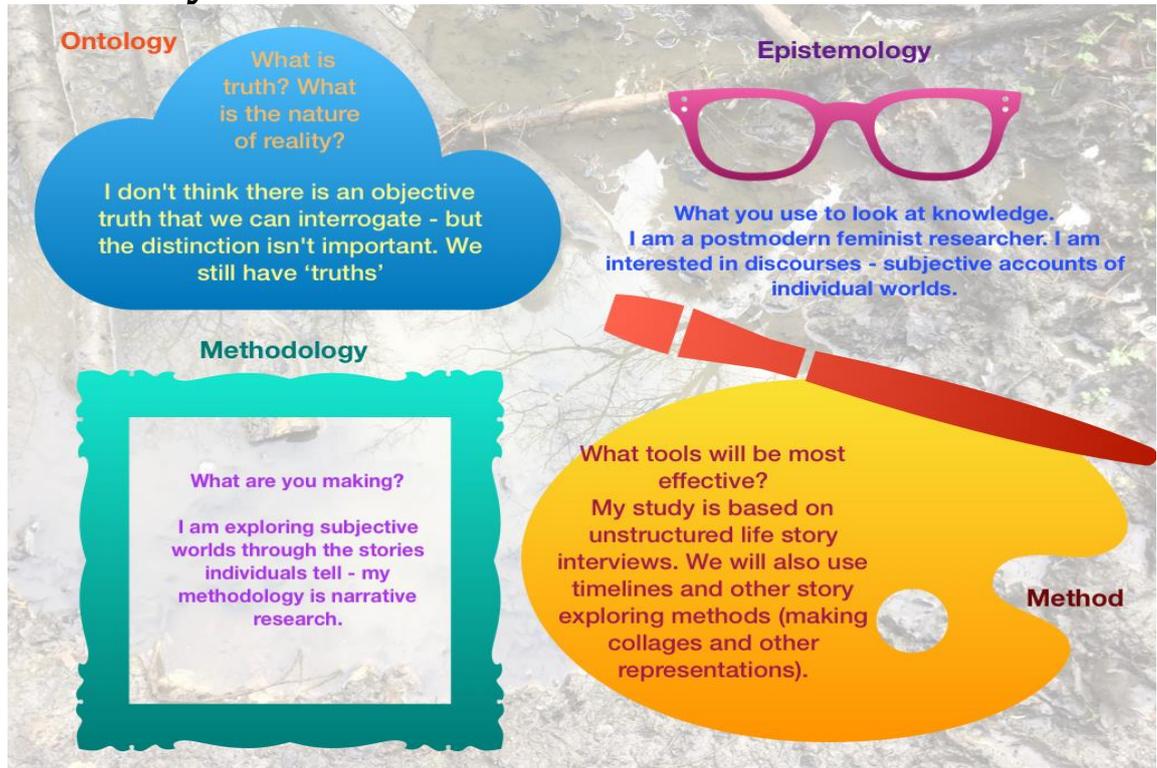
# Appendices

---

## Table of Appendices

Appendix 1	Glossary of some terms used in this thesis	Page 2
Appendix 2	Literature review initial exploration	Page 6
Appendix 3	Literature search – research studies in the area	Page 7
Appendix 4	Policy Discourse Review	Page 9
Appendix 5	Google News Alerts analysis	Page 10
Appendix 6	The narrative and discourse analysis family tree	Page 12
Appendix 7	Useful terms from Foucauldian Discourse Analysis	Page 13
Appendix 8	Despotif of teacher-mother	Page 14
Appendix 9	Participant recruitment poster	Page 15
Appendix 10	Participant initial questionnaire	Page 16
Appendix 11	Participant information sheet	Page 17
Appendix 12	Participant consent form	Page 18
Appendix 13	Participant debrief sheet	Page 19
Appendix 14	Data management plan	Page 21
Appendix 15	Research risk assessment	Page 23
Appendix 16	Responses to potential participants on twitter	Page 25
Appendix 17	Aimee’s timeline	Page 26
Appendix 18	Charlie’s Timeline	Page 27
Appendix 19	Further information on Willig’s FDA Model	Page 28
Appendix 20	Examples of Willig’s FDA analysis of findings	Page 33
Appendix 21	Individual ESDA examples	Page 38
Appendix 22	Sheffield Hallam Ethics Approval Form	Page 43

## Glossary of Terms



Aimee's own definitions, based on references cited in the assignment.

In keeping with my postmodern stance, I reserve the right to redefine these terms in the future. The hope is that this glossary will help the reader have some insight into my own understanding of the terms.

**Constructionism** - an idea that the development of socially constructed understandings of the world form the foundation for shared knowledge about reality.

**Constructivism** - an idea that individuals create their 'reality' internally using their experiences, and that knowledge is therefore constructed, rather than created.

**Deconstructionism** - an approach that suggests breaking down any issue, problem, structure, definition down to its most basic parts, thus illuminating assumptions and traditions that have become part of 'the truth', and otherwise unquestioned.

**Despositif** - Foucault's word for the framework of discourses, political situation, social phenomena, law, etc. that are influencing the stories told by narrators. Foucault suggests that we build a despositif for discourse analysis, as discourses are difficult, if not impossible to identify without careful analysis of the time.

**Discourse** - when referred to in this assignment, the discourse is the shared stories that we tell each other in our societies. These vary within a society, for example, a teacher may have a different discourse accessible to them than a non-teacher, when thinking and talking about education. An example of a change in the discourse which particularly influenced my thinking, is the difference in the stories and knowledge

shared in the UK regarding refugees, after Alan Kurdi, a 3 year old Syrian boy, drowned.

**Discourse Analysis** - this method of analysis looks for the social discourses in a narrative, the common 'stories' of society at the time (and at the time when the story is set).

**Empiricist Feminism** - feminist research or theory that is based on the 'scientific method' of testing a hypothesis.

**Epistemology** - a theory of how we know; which may also suggest how we can find out.

**Foucauldian Discourse Analysis** - this is a form of discourse analysis, particularly focused on the movements of power and knowledge in society.

**Generalisability** - a measure of rigour in research findings, which is a measurement of how widely the findings apply.

**Insider/outside position** - an idea that a researcher can be either an outsider from the participant group, as either an objective observer or someone who has no connection with the sample group; or an insider, with intersections in the experiences and status of the researcher and participant group, who may be known to the participants and the community being researched.

**Interpretivist approach** - looks at the social realm as requiring a different way of knowing to that of the natural sciences. There may be more than one way of knowing about a social phenomenon, and the 'scientific method' may not be as appropriate for investigating or questioning these realities as intuitive, interpretative approaches.

**Life History Method** - this method builds upon the life story, but the researcher (or participants and researchers cooperatively) add contextual information to the account, such as the political and social situations of the time the story is situated within.

**Narrative Research** - research that has narratives as a central feature of the data collection and analysis. Narratives may be written, spoken or visual representations. Two schools emerge from narrative research, the first; which treats the narrative as a true account of a world, and the second; which views the narrative as a story told about a world.

**Life Story Method** - Life story method simply involves collecting a story from a participant about their life or a period of their life.

**Objectivism** - the opposite of subjectivism - that it is possible to experience reality directly. This may also refer to knowledge; an objective truth is true in all situations.

**Ontology** - what exists; what the nature of reality is.

**Positionality** - a researcher's positionality is their biases, experiences, preferences and attitudes, as well as intersections in their identity (such as race, class, gender, age). Knowing your position does not improve the quality of your research, unless you can use the knowledge in the process of reflexivity.

**Positivist approach** - regards the social realm as operating using the same laws and rules as the natural sciences. Therefore, the 'scientific method' is appropriate for testing a hypothesis about social phenomena.

**Postmodern Feminism** - an approach to feminist research that does not assume women have common experiences or a common oppressor. Postmodern feminism questions the nature of gender and gender roles in society as constructed, rather than biological.

**Postmodernism** - a misty concept that covers a general suspicion of what is 'known', a rejection of dichotomies or at least, a questioning of the need for a division; a research approach that allows the researcher to cross boundaries in terms of epistemology.

**Qualitative research** - see quantitative research for my thoughts on the distinction. Qualitative research usually refers to research which collects narrative, text and visual data, not easily reduced to numerical data.

**Quantitative research** - the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research can be considered a false dichotomy, when deconstructionism is applied; it is difficult to find a distinct 'line' between them, when considering examples from research. Quantitative research (which I will accept as a useful term to use as shorthand) usually refers to research which collects numerical data, or data that can easily be translated into numerical data.

**Reflexivity** - a skill or practice of considering one's own positionality and position (in the study) as a researcher when planning, carrying out, analysing and reporting findings of research. A reflexive researcher will be aware of their own biases, experiences, preferences and attitudes throughout the process (as much as is possible), and will take appropriate action to prevent these factors from tainting the research.

**Reliability** - a measure of rigour in research findings, which is a measurement of how repeatable the study is, preserving the same findings.

**Standpoint Feminism** - a feminist approach that assumes a level of shared experience amongst women, commonly associated with an objective, realist view. Harding (2003) advocates that standpoint feminism should privilege the aims of feminist research and the view of women as a previously oppressed perspective.

**Subjectivism** - an ontological position that suggests that experience is individual; reality is in the mind and we cannot 'plug in' directly to an objective, true world. This may also refer to truth - a subjective truth is not true in all situations or to all knowers.

**Thematic Analysis** - this method of analysis looks for themes in the narratives of participants, within one account or across many. Themes may be identified in advance or discovered through readings of the narratives.

**Validity** - a measure of rigour in research findings, based on how 'true', logical and sound they are. Validity may also be the measurement of how well the research answered the question or supported the hypothesis.

**Verisimilitude** - Bruner's word for a sense of familiarity and truth in findings or ideas; which may be of use when validity, reliability and generalisability are not appropriate for the study.



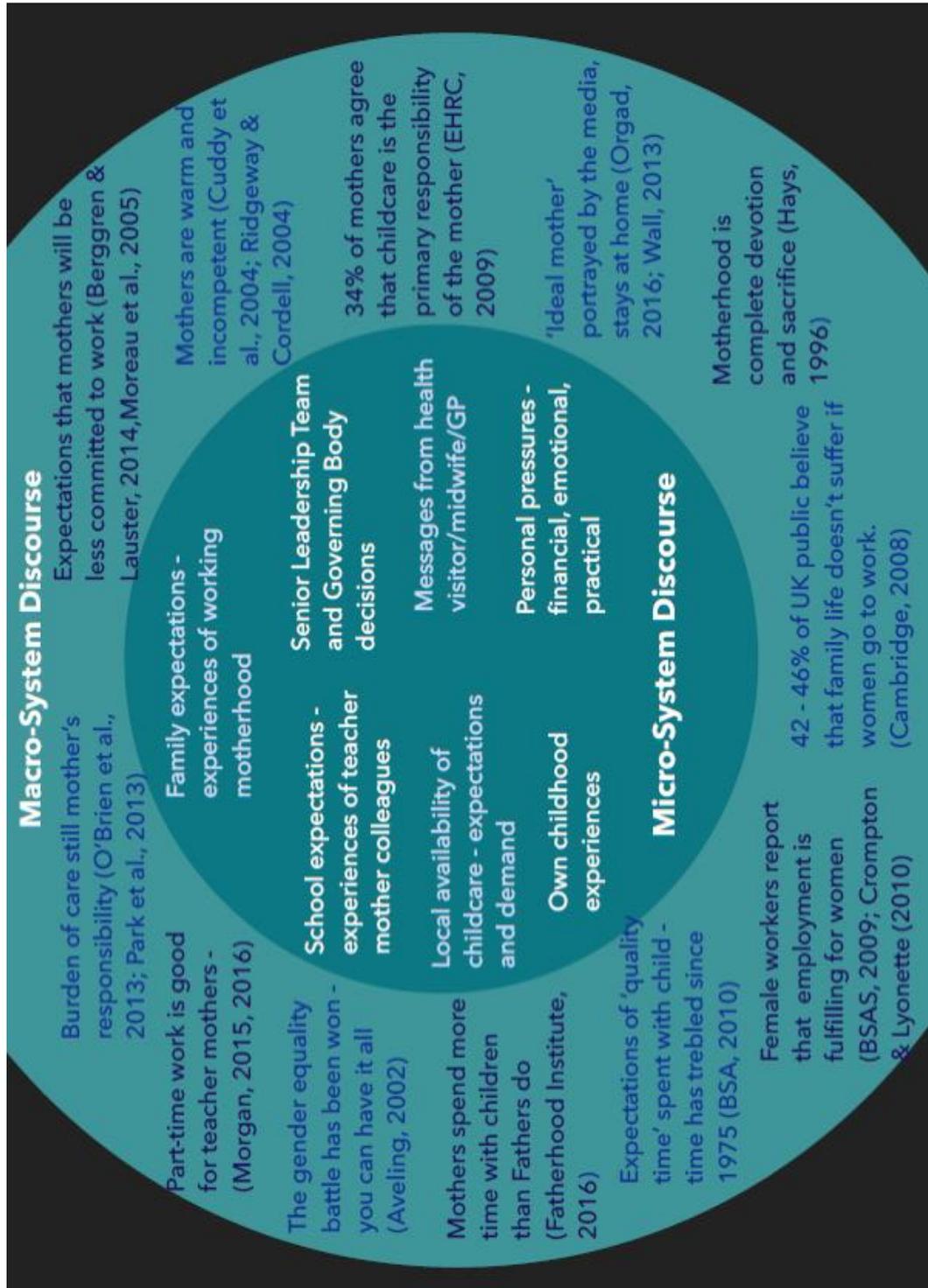
Appendix 3: Literature search – research studies in the area, with year of publication

Hadfield et al	Hebson	Hauver-James		Lovejoy & Stone	O'Brien et al			<b>Kell</b>
O'Connor			Gash et al			Kahn et al		
<b>Gannerud</b>			Beauchamp & Thomas	Gash				Moosa & Bhana
Cuddly et al		MacNamara et al	Smith			Braun		
Correll	Klett-Davies & Skaloutis	Levitt	<b>Thomson &amp; Kehily</b>	Smith	<b>Page</b>	Berggren & Lauster		Valiquette-Tessier et al
Gazeley & Dunne			Aveling		Rizzi		Dow	Horne & Breikreuz
<b>McGuire</b>	Beauchamp & Thomas	Ross	Reay	Farouk	Wall	Gilligan		Riaz et al
<b>Pinnegar</b>	Gash		Orgad	Sullen			Green	
<b>Bradbury &amp; Gunter</b>		Burgess	<b>Conley &amp; Jenkins</b>	Edwards	Spencer		<b>Lyonette Et al</b>	Ross
<b>Dillabough</b>	<b>White</b>	Akerjordet	Abele & Spurk					
Bolton & Muzio								
Hargreaves								
McRae								
Pre 2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016

**Research dates, by year published - teaching, mothering, caring**  
 Bold type denotes correspondence with teaching and mothering in main aims and findings

## Literature Search History

Dates	Keywords	Databases/ Hand Searches	Notes
February 2016	Maternity and/or motherhood	Google News Alerts	See appendix 5
July 2016	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Second shift</li> <li>2. Teacher mother</li> <li>3. Mothering work</li> <li>4. Women career</li> <li>5. Teacher career</li> <li>6. Mother career</li> <li>7. Women leadership</li> <li>8. Women teaching leadership</li> <li>9. Teacher workload</li> <li>10. Women choice</li> </ol>	Google Scholar Alerts	Second shift removed in Sept – many articles relating to physics!
September 2016 onwards - monthly	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Teacher mother</li> <li>2. Mothering work</li> <li>3. Women career</li> <li>4. Teacher career</li> <li>5. Mother career</li> <li>6. Women leadership</li> <li>7. Women teaching leadership</li> <li>8. Teacher workload</li> <li>9. Women choice</li> </ol>	searches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SHU library search</li> <li>• Bishop Grosseteste WorldCat search</li> </ul>	
October 2016 onwards	Citation and reference search of key articles, eg: J.M. Smith (2007) E. Kell (2016) J. Page (2013) R. Thomson and M.J. Kehily (2011) C. Lyonette et al. (2015)		Also searched for other articles and work by these authors.
October 2016		Hand search of journals:  <i>Gender and Education</i>  <i>International Studies in Sociology of Education</i>	Searched from 2010 onwards.



## Media Content Analysis of Google Alerts

### Details of the process

Google news alerts search the news content of the internet for keywords. Alerts are sent daily (when there is relevant content to send) from anywhere around the world where the English keywords have been mentioned. This meant that the majority of news content was from English speaking countries, such as the USA, Australia and the UK, but also India and China.

The news items were 'coded' into categories based on the headlines of the item, and if this wasn't clear, then the content of the item was accessed. I assessed the focus of the piece, which was not very scientific and at times it was difficult to decide which category a news item should go into – this was a weakness of the content analysis but the overall aim, which was to find out what alerts like this would provide to a working mother.

### Findings

The majority of news items recorded were about hospitals and medical issues – 38% of the news items – the inclusion of the term 'maternity' meant that a lot of hospital ward closures and problems appeared. Second, were items that concerned government and corporation policies on maternity – 32%. Many items were about maternity policy in the USA, during presidential election campaigns; maternity benefits were, for a few weeks, central to the arguments of Clinton and Trump (Sholar, 2016). Some have argued that this media coverage is a benefit to women, by raising awareness (e.g. Sholar, 2016), and that these alerts could perhaps also be included in the 'work and career' bracket. I categorised the news items very simply, in a more in depth content analysis I would seek to tease out these issues of categorisation which are a flaw of this analysis.

Celebrity parents made up 15% of the news items – mainly Hollywood stars who were expecting babies this year, which had a strong crossover with the next largest group – fashion, at 11%. Often celebrity news items were fashion based also, focused on maternity wear trends. An example of this category is: 'Ready to pop and still in heels!' (Irish Independent, 2016). The items were almost entirely focused on the mother, especially if fashion was also mentioned – if I was to do this analysis again, I would look more closely at how often a mother and her choice of clothing were mentioned, as I do not recall a single instance of a father and his fashion choices making the headlines. Again, categorising these items was difficult, but essentially the two could have been made into one category of celebrity and/or fashion. The only items that caused a problem in terms of categorising between work/career and celebrity were about a Bollywood actress who was planning on taking no maternity leave after the birth of her child, reports on which did not have a focus on issues of work for mothers.

Work and career was the smallest category, at 4%, or 67 news items. News items typical of this category were 'Long Maternity Leave is Bad for

Mothers' (Judge, 2016) and 'New and expectant mothers face increased discrimination at work' (ITV News, 2016). Many items in this category had to be investigated more thoroughly to categorise them, as issues around mothers and work generally fitted into the rhizomatic writing pattern, touching on many aspects of life and society. Although I did not categorise items by positive/negative reporting, many of the items in Work/Career would have been straightforward to code, as the negative vocabulary such as 'bad' and 'discrimination' were in the headlines.

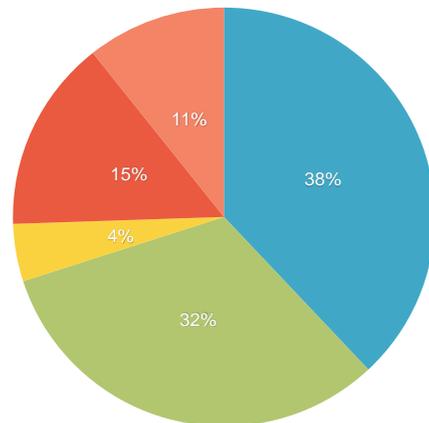
Media attention on the theme:  
**Google alerts for 'maternity and/or motherhood'**

6th April- 26th December 2016

BREAKDOWN OF ALERT CONTENTS

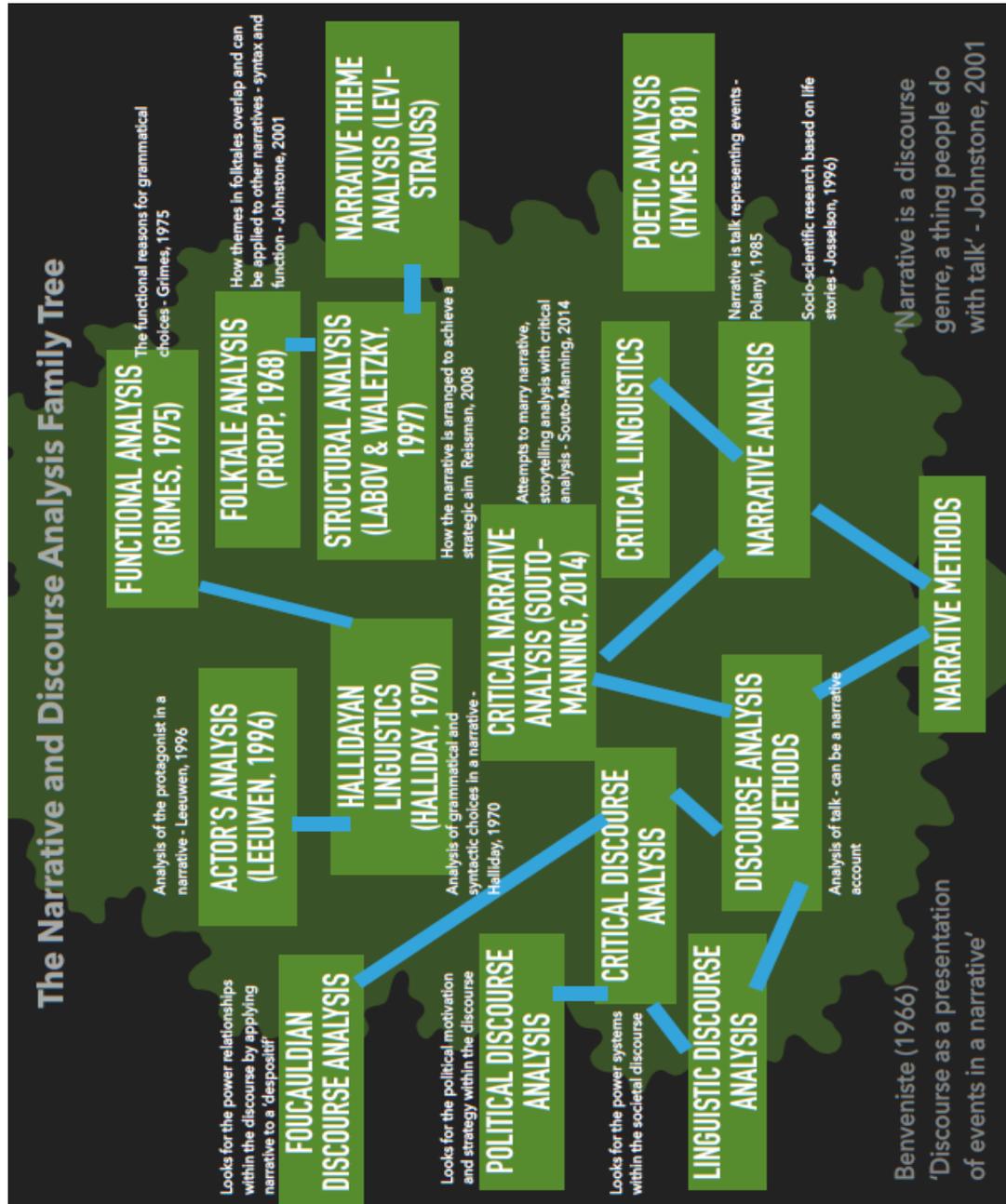
Description	Number of related articles
Hospital or medical news	573
Government policy, maternity leave, pay and conditions	483
Work and career	67
Celebrity mothers/fathers	224
Maternity fashion	161
	1,508

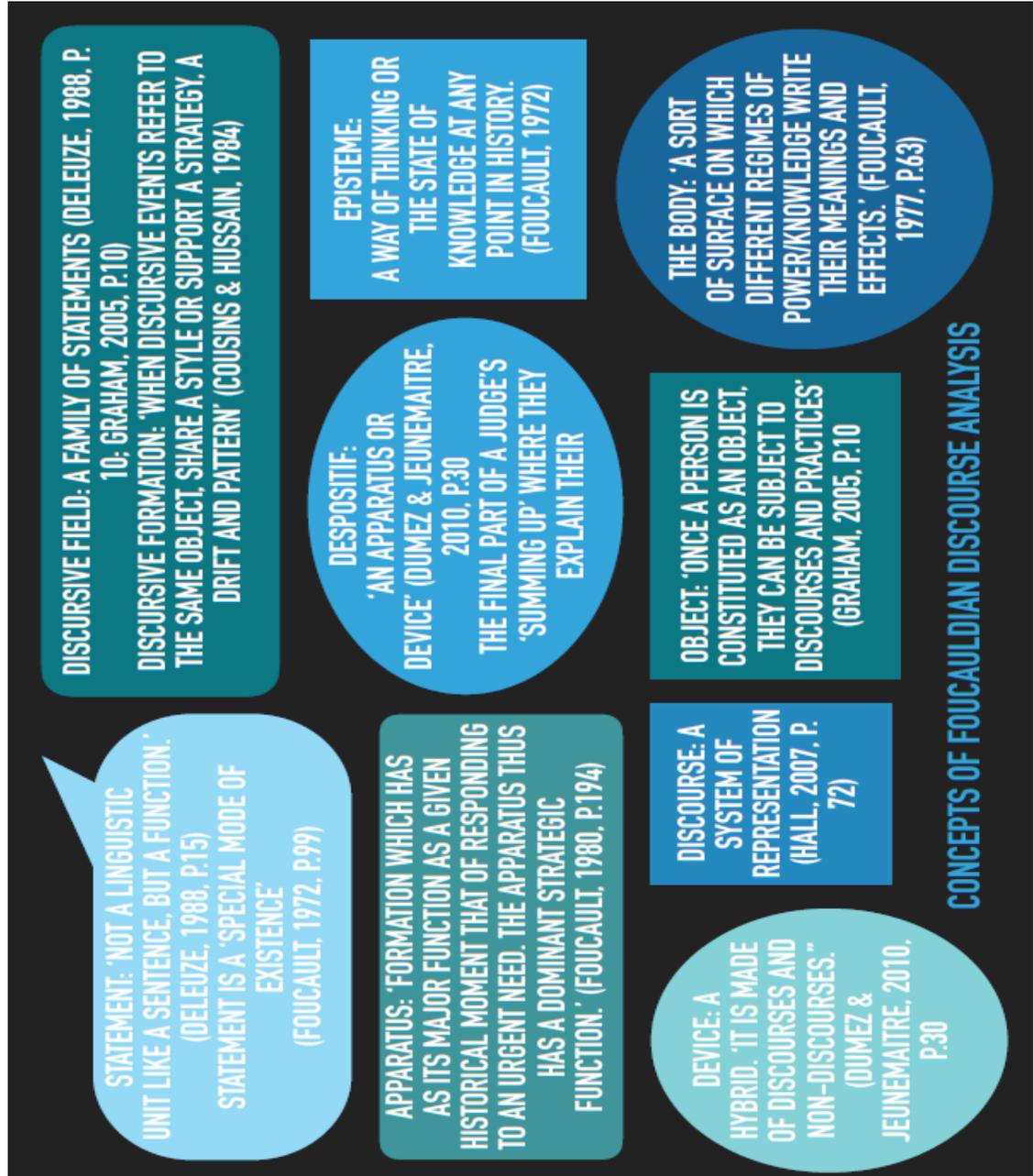
BREAKDOWN OF 197 ALERT CONTENTS



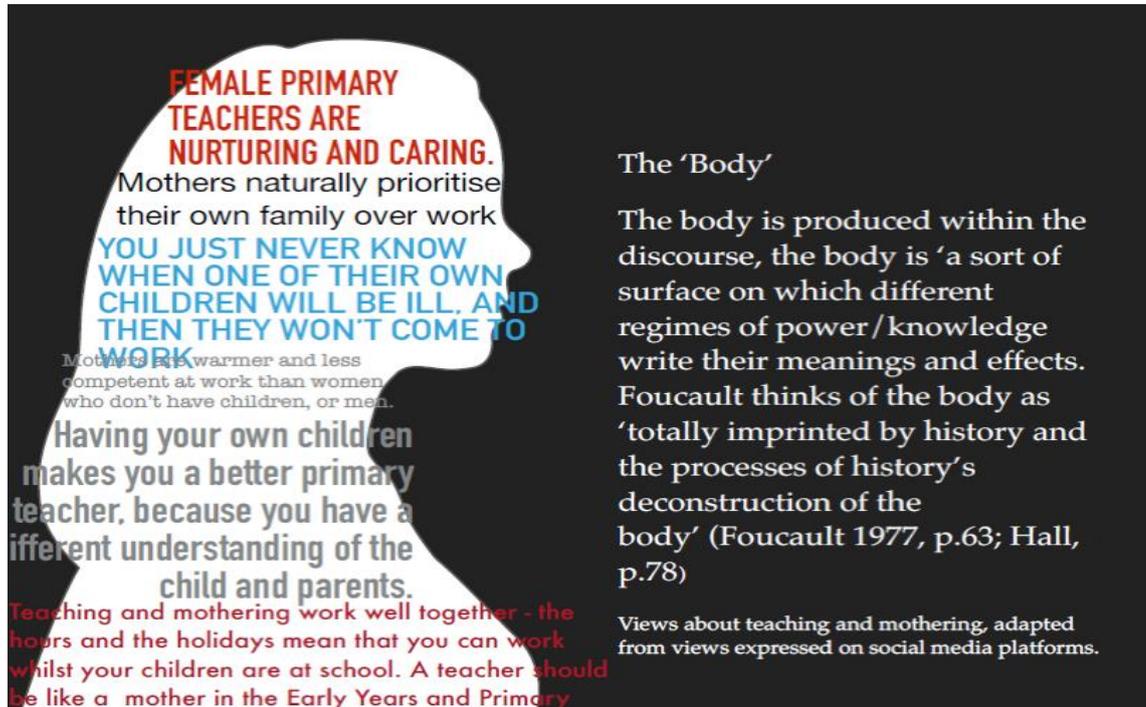
- Hospital or medical news
- Government policy, maternity leave, pay and conditions
- Work and career
- Celebrity mothers/fathers
- Maternity fashion

Appendix 6: The narrative and discourse analysis family tree





## Appendix 8: Despositif of Teacher-Mother explored



**FEMALE PRIMARY TEACHERS ARE NURTURING AND CARING.**  
Mothers naturally prioritise their own family over work

**YOU JUST NEVER KNOW WHEN ONE OF THEIR OWN CHILDREN WILL BE ILL, AND THEN THEY WON'T COME TO WORK.**  
Mothers are warmer and less competent at work than women who don't have children, or men.

Having your own children makes you a better primary teacher, because you have a different understanding of the child and parents.

Teaching and mothering work well together - the hours and the holidays mean that you can work whilst your children are at school. A teacher should be like a mother in the Early Years and Primary

### The 'Body'

The body is produced within the discourse, the body is 'a sort of surface on which different regimes of power/knowledge write their meanings and effects. Foucault thinks of the body as 'totally imprinted by history and the processes of history's deconstruction of the body' (Foucault 1977, p.63; Hall, p.78)

Views about teaching and mothering, adapted from views expressed on social media platforms.

# Are you a teacher and a mother?

*Would you like to take  
part in a research  
project?*

I am looking for EYFS and primary school teacher mothers to participate in my doctoral research. Interviews will explore your life experiences and choices; you will guide and control the pace and direction of the conversation. Initial interviews are expected to take 1 to 1.5 hours.

If you are interested in participating or finding out more, please contact:

[Aimee.f.quickfall@student.shu.ac.uk](mailto:Aimee.f.quickfall@student.shu.ac.uk)

## Appendix 10: Participant initial questionnaire



**Tell Me About You!**

If you are interested in being a participant in my study, please fill in this form. Please read the 'Participant Information Sheet' before completing this form.

You do not have to respond to all/any questions and your answers will be securely stored and viewed only by me and my research supervisors. If you decide to take part in the study, your answers will be kept securely under a code name. If you decide not to take part, your answers will be deleted on receipt of a notification from you, requesting to withdraw.

1. Which age group/s do you teach? (Year group or EYFS, KS1, KS2, KS3, etc.) If you are not currently in a teaching post, which age groups have you taught most recently?  
.....
2. How many children do you have parental responsibility for?  
.....
3. How old are your children?  
.....
4. Where do you live? (first half of postcode/ZIP, nearest town or city is fine)  
.....

The study participants will generate useful information about being a teacher mother, which will potentially be used in a research journal article and conference presentations. You should not be identifiable from the information you have given, as any personal details will be anonymised – you can choose your own pseudonym.

Participation is completely voluntary and if you change your mind about participating at any point before or during the interviews, you are free to withdraw without question. Once the interview is completed, if you decide you would prefer to withdraw your information from the research, you will have two weeks in which to contact me.

Do you have any other questions? Please feel free to contact me:  
[Aimee.f.quickfall@student.shu.ac.uk](mailto:Aimee.f.quickfall@student.shu.ac.uk) 07929 205442

## Appendix 11: Participant information sheet



### Participant Information Sheet

#### **How teacher mothers tell their stories: exploring a special situation**

Are you a teacher in Early Years Foundation Stage or Primary? Are you also a mother? If so, I would like to invite you to be part of my pilot research project. My name is **Aimee Quickfall** and I am investigating the life experiences of teacher mothers. Your participation in this study will contribute to my doctoral thesis and your involvement is greatly appreciated.

The study involves an **informal life history interview** with me, which should last **1 – 1.5 hours, followed a month later by a more structured, shorter interview of approximately 30 minutes.** A small number of teacher mothers will be participating in this study. During the first interview, you will have a choice of whether to record your thoughts using a timeline, which will be fully explained to you before we begin. The interviews will explore your life and choices, but you will guide and control the pace and direction of the conversation. Life history interviews can be very rewarding and also sometimes an emotional experience.

Interviews will be **digitally audio recorded**. We can meet for the interview at Bishop Grosseteste University, or other public venue, such as a library.

After the interview, you will be invited to comment via email, telephone or in person on the methods used and your experiences of the interview. You will also be given a copy of the transcript, you will also be invited to contribute and review the themes identified in your interview.

After each interview has taken place, you will have an opportunity to discuss your interview and any questions you may have. I will be responsible for all of the information you provide, which will be stored securely on the university data drives. Only my supervisory team and I will have access to the information collected during your interview, which will be kept securely until my doctoral studies have finished.

The study participants will generate useful information about being a teacher mother, which will potentially be used in a research journal article and conference presentations. You should not be identifiable from the information you have given, as any personal details will be anonymised – you can choose your own pseudonym.

Participation is completely voluntary and if you change your mind about participating at any point before or during the interviews, you are free to withdraw without question. Once the interview is completed, if you decide you would prefer to withdraw your information from the research, you will have two weeks in which to contact me.

Do you have any other questions? Please feel free to contact me:  
[Aimee.f.quickfall@student.shu.ac.uk](mailto:Aimee.f.quickfall@student.shu.ac.uk) 07929 205442



**Participant Consent Form**

**TITLE OF RESEARCH STUDY: How teacher mothers tell their stories: exploring a special situation**

*Please answer the following questions by ticking the response that applies*

	YES	NO
1. I have read the Information Sheet for this study and have had details of the study explained to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may ask further questions at any point.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study within two weeks of this date, as outlined in the Information Sheet, without giving a reason for my withdrawal or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study without any consequences to my future treatment by the researcher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I agree to provide information to the researchers under the conditions of confidentiality set out in the Information Sheet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I wish to participate in the study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I consent to the information collected (including transcripts of voice recordings) for the purposes of this research study, once pseudonymised (to protect my identity), to be used for any other research purposes – articles, research reports, conference presentations, for example.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I consent to audio recordings of the interview by the researcher, which will be transcribed and pseudonymised.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Participant's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant's Name (Printed):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact details:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher's Name:** Aimee Quickfall

**Researcher's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher's contact details:**  
[aimee.f.quickfall@student.shu.ac.uk](mailto:aimee.f.quickfall@student.shu.ac.uk) 07929 205442

**Researcher's Supervisor contact details:**  
[C.carter@shu.ac.uk](mailto:C.carter@shu.ac.uk)      [N.tang@shu.ac.uk](mailto:N.tang@shu.ac.uk)

**Please keep your copy of the consent form and the information sheet together.**

## Appendix 13: Participant debrief sheet

**Sheffield  
Hallam  
University**

Participant Debriefing Guide

**How teacher mothers tell their stories: exploring a special situation**

### **Thank you for taking part in this research interview!**

Your interview has been digitally recorded and will be transcribed (typed out) with your name and any identifying information (such as names of children, locations) changed to protect your identity. You will be sent a copy of your transcript once completed; this is usually within a month.

I will be responsible for all of the information you provide, which will be stored securely on the university data drives. Only my supervisory team and I will have access to the information collected during your interview, which will be kept securely until my doctoral studies have finished. The pseudonymised data may be used for journal articles, conference papers and other media outputs, such as social media pieces, articles in teacher interest magazines (such as *The Teacher* or *TES*). You should not be identifiable from the information you have given, as any personal details will be pseudonymised – you can choose your own pseudonym. Someone who knows you very well may be able to identify you, particularly if they know you have taken part in the study. The researcher will not disclose any identification details (such as name, location, school) to anyone else, however you are free to discuss your participation with others, if you wish.

Over the next two weeks I will contact you to ask for feedback on the interview process and the methods used for this study. This will be via email and you are under no obligation to respond. Within six weeks I will contact you again via email to invite you to a further, shorter interview which is an opportunity to discuss the transcript and to share the themes I have identified so far. Again, you are under no obligation to attend or take part in further research.

Participation is completely voluntary and if you change your mind about participating, you are free to withdraw without question. Once the interview is completed, if you decide you would prefer to withdraw your information from the research, you will have **two weeks** in which to contact me.

You have taken part in an **informal life history interview**. Life history interviews can be very rewarding and also sometimes an emotional experience. If you have experienced emotional distress during the interview, the researcher will have offered/suggested a pause/suspension of the interview. There are many sources of support that can be accessed, including:

**Victim Support (for anyone who has experienced crime, whether reported or not):**  
0808 16 89 111 (24/7)

**Education Support Partnership (for education workers suffering any kind of distress) 08000 562 561 (24/7)**

**Women's Aid (emotional support for domestic abuse survivors): 0808 2000 247 (24/7)**

The University undertakes research as part of its function for the community under its legal status. Data protection allows us to use personal data for research with appropriate safeguards in place under the legal basis of **public tasks that are in the public interest**. A full statement of your rights can be found at <https://www.shu.ac.uk/about-this-website/privacy-policy/privacy-notices/privacy-notice-for-research>. However, all University research is reviewed to ensure that participants are treated appropriately and their rights respected. This study was approved by UREC with Converis number ER6533713. Further information at <https://www.shu.ac.uk/research/ethics-integrity-and-practice>

Do you have any other questions? Please feel free to contact me:  
[Aimee.f.quickfall@student.shu.ac.uk](mailto:Aimee.f.quickfall@student.shu.ac.uk) 07929 205442]

## Data Management Plan

### *Aimee Quickfall – EdD Cohort 9 – Main Study*

1. What data will you collect or create?

**Physical Data:**

Voice recordings of life history unstructured interviews – audio files, which will then be transcribed and saved as Word files. Interviews will be 1 – 1.5 hours each, in the main study this will amount to 4.5 hours of recordings (estimated 50MB x 4.5hours = 225MB). Before the interview, participants will complete a short questionnaire to give basic details, which will be scanned and saved as PDFs. Transcribed interviews will be Word files, of approximately 1MB – but this is a very rough approximation.

Paper recordings of life histories, such as timelines. Digital data derived from the timelines will be photographic.

To cover photographs and voice recordings, I estimate that 32GB total maximum storage volume, taking into account multiple versions of files. Again, this is a very rough estimate.

2. How will your data be documented and described?

To put the data collected into context, it will be analysed using Foucauldian discourse analysis. This analysis will also be recorded in Word documents and photographs, initially, and stored with the transcripts, as notes within the transcript files and separate metadata documents as themes are identified from the text. . All documents pertaining to the project will be stored together, including the ethics proposal, information for participants and other documents used in the interviews.

3. How will you deal with any ethical and copyright issues?

Written consent will be obtained from participants for all data collected to be preserved and shared as part of this research project and eventual thesis.

As transcripts are created, data will be anonymised and participants given pseudonyms. Identifying words and phrases, such as school names, children's names, staff names, addresses will be anonymised in the same fashion.

As principal researcher, I will own the data generated in the study.

4. How will your data be structured, stored, and backed up?

Data will be structured into interview files, with a file for each participant. Files will be named using their chosen pseudonyms and then version number. Photographs will follow this format. Foucauldian discourse analysis will be done in the transcript files, then in Word documents within an Analysis file, named by date/version.

I understand that data stored on the Q drive is backed up every 24 hours, creating a secure copy of the data and is accessible from many platforms.

I will temporarily have copies of the data for photographs and audio files, before transferring them onto the university drive. These files will be deleted once transferred to the Q drive.

5. What are your plans for the long-term preservation of data supporting your research?

Transcripts of the interviews will be kept for at least the duration of my doctoral study, to inform the thesis. After this, a judgement will be made about whether the data is of future use, together with subsequent full transcripts. Data will be preserved on the Q drive throughout my EdD study.

6. What are your plans for data sharing after submission of your thesis?

The completed thesis will be available to access freely, and will refer to the study analysis and findings. Access to the study data is not anticipated to be required after completion of the EdD.

My supervisors will need access to the data throughout my research project.

There are no funding body requirements.

Appendix 15: Research risk assessment



GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT

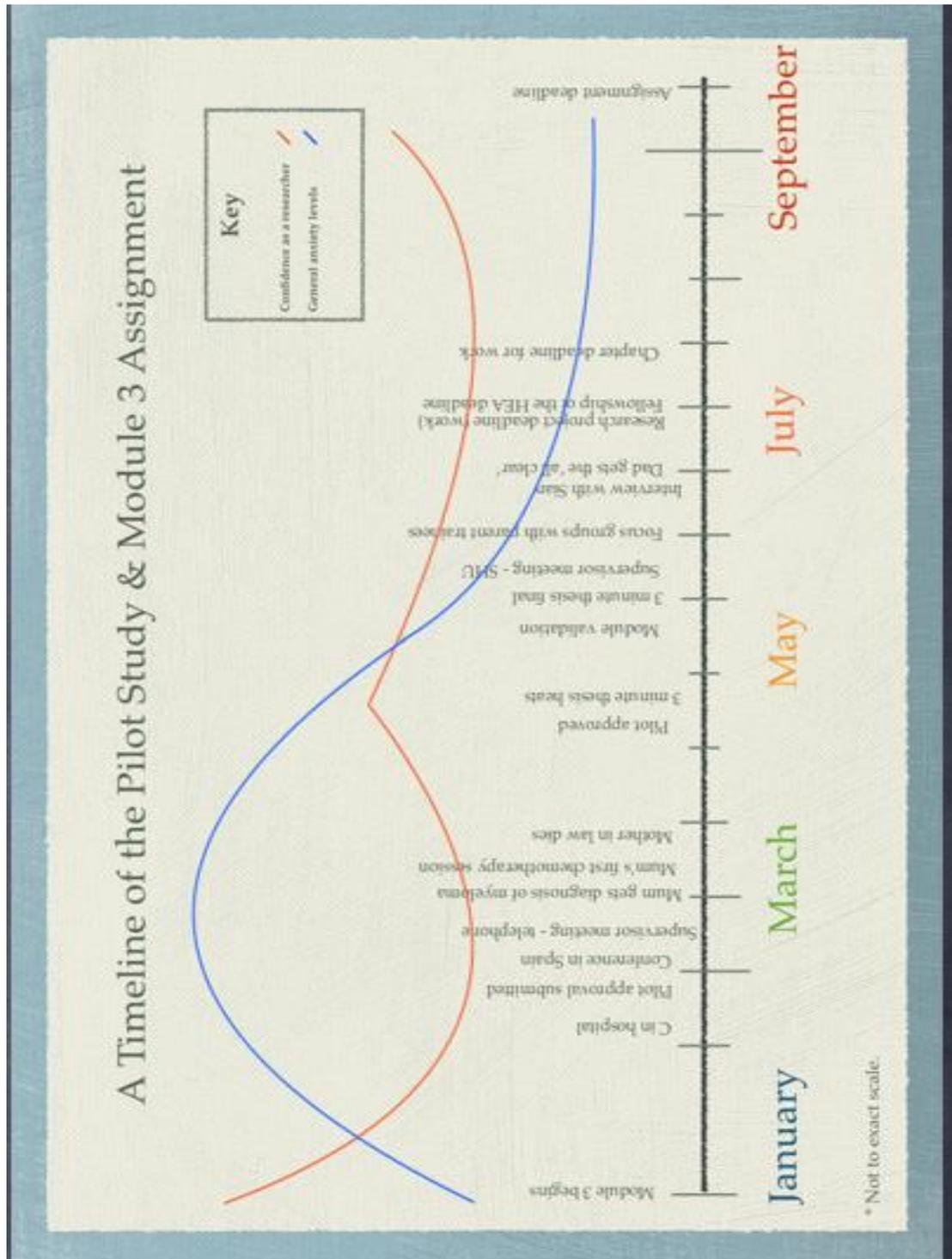
Description of the Process/Activity: Unstructured life-history interviews, drawing timelines in a public building (university/school/library)		Location(s): University campus or school campus or public library						
		RA Ref: <b>ER6533713</b> .						
Hazard	Who could be harmed?	Existing safety precautions	Risk level	Additional safety precautions needed to reduce the risk level?	Revised risk level	Action by whom?	By when?	Date completed
Actual or threatened violence, psychological harm, unwanted sexual advances	Researcher	Meeting in a public place Participants are teachers, so have been subject to an enhanced DBS check for their employer. Advising a trusted friend of whereabouts and time expected to return, participant name and contact details to be saved on the Q drive so accessible to supervisors if necessary.	3 x 1 = 3 Low	n/a	Low	AQ	Before interview takes place	
Injury or fatality travelling to/from research venue.	Researcher Participants	Researcher will offer to meet participants in a public space of their choice as appropriate. Researcher to ensure own car is in working order.	3 x 1 = 3 Low	n/a	Low	AQ	Before interview takes place	
Allegations that researcher acted violently/inappropriately (e.g. made sexual	Researcher	Participants are teachers, so DBS checked already. Researcher and participant will meet in a public space –	2 x 1 = 2 Low	n/a	Low	AQ	Before interview takes place	

**GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT**

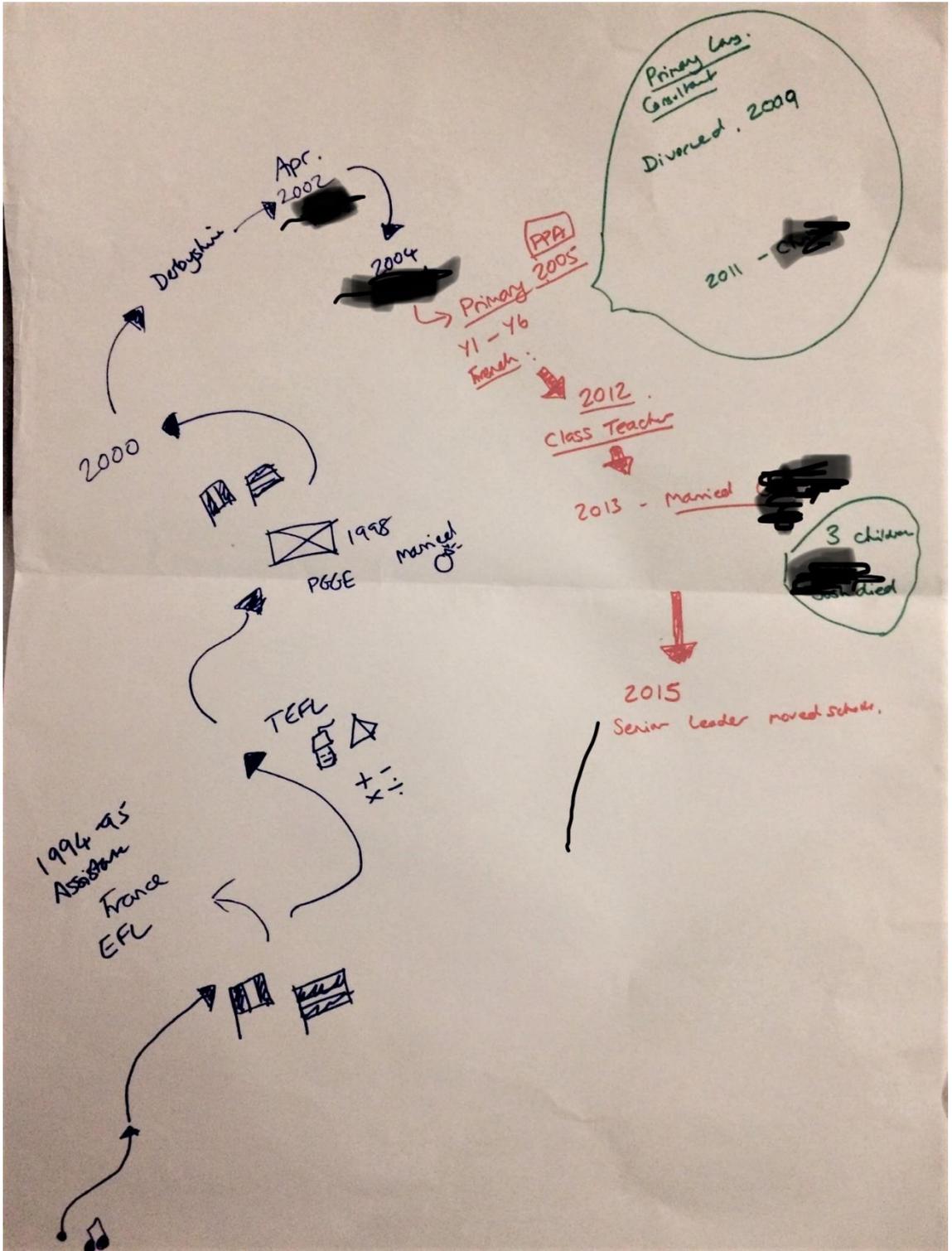
advances towards participant; threatened participant, etc).		e.g. university campus. Interviews will be digitally recorded.	2 x 1 = 2 Low	n/a	Low	AQ	At the start of the interview and info sheet also sent in advance.	
Being implicated in illegal activities.	Researcher	Participants will read the information sheet before the interview begins. Interviews will be recorded. If any illegal activity is disclosed, the researcher will report this to the relevant authorities.	2 x 1 = 2 Low	n/a	Low	AQ	At the start of the interview and info sheet also sent in advance.	
Emotional distress caused by disclosures or discussions of experiences.	Researcher Participants	Participants will be made aware in the information sheet and in discussion with the researcher before the interview that life-histories interviews are sometimes emotional experiences. Participants will be made aware that they are not expected to disclose any information that they are not comfortable with sharing.	2 x 2 = 4 Medium	Researcher will be prepared to signpost sources of support and counselling, and is aware of how to access these for herself if necessary. If the participant appears to be distressed, the researcher will offer to stop the interview. If the participant requests that it continues, the researcher will draw particular attention in the verbal debrief to	Medium	AQ	Throughout the process – info sheet, briefing and debrief, sources of support updated throughout	

## Appendix 16: Responses to potential participants in twitter threads





Appendix 18: Charlie's Timeline



## Appendix 19: Further information on Willig's FDA Model and use in this study

### Discursive constructions

Willig's (2008) Foucauldian Discourse Analysis Model, as applied to my research data

#### Stage Description of process

##### Stage 1: Discursive constructions

Willig's first step is to identify the discursive objects and the way they are constructed. Identifying the discursive objects should already have been done, in the phrasing of the research question (Willig, 2008, p.115).

The discursive objects are 'teaching' (denoted in the question by teacher and work) and 'motherhood' (denoted by mothers and mothering). The first stage of analysis involves the identification of different ways these objects are 'constructed' in the text (Kendall & Wickham, 1999). Willig urges the researcher not to simply look for keywords, as the objects may be referred to in subtle ways (2008, p.115).

##### Stage 2: Discourses

Willig (2008) describes stage 2 as a focus on the differences in constructions (in this case, of teacher-motherhood). I have organised some of the constructions of teacher-motherhood that were identifiable in the text in a table, together with examples of the transcribed interview and the discourses that these might represent. As in other examples of FDA in use (Crowe, 2005; Stevenson, 2004; Van Ness et al., 2017) the identification of these discourses can be problematic (Antaki, Billig, Edwards & Potter, 2003). I have followed the Willig model here, but with concern that identifying the discourses 'ad hoc', as seems to be the suggestion, could easily lead to the 'circular discovery of discourses' (Antaki et al., 2003; Stevenson, 2004). Acknowledging that my interpretation is one amongst many possible interpretations, highlights that the participant is not a 'thing in the world', whose meaning lies ready to be discovered (Miller, 2000, p.330).

##### Stage 3: Action Orientation

Willig (2008, p.116) describes this stage as a 'closer examination' of the discourses within the discursive construction that inscribe the 'object' or 'body' in different ways. Looking at the action orientation means thinking about the reasons why 'teacher mother' has been described in the way it has. Why does the participant talk about herself as ultimately responsible for the health and care of her child? How could this discourse be deployed, and for what reasons?

##### Stage 4: Positionings

Willig (2008) now suggests that we take a closer look at the subject positions offered by the discourses, to the 'object' - in this case, a person, so a 'subject'. Willig suggests that discourses 'make available positions within networks of meaning that speakers can take up (as well as place others within' (p.116). This is complicated by an idea that the subject position identified is not a role – they offer a position to speak and act from. As Willig points out, this has epistemological implications, as having a subject position may limit what can be thought and experienced by the speaker (p.117). From a subject position, ways of seeing and 'codifying certain practices' are privileged (Deleuze, 1988, p.11).

## Stage 5: Practice

This stage involves a systematic review of how the discursive constructions and subject positions open up or close down options for acting (Willig, 2008). 'Certain practices become legitimate forms of behaviour from within particular discourses.' (ibid, p.117). For example, in the pilot interview Sian blames herself for her perceived poor performance in teaching since she had her baby, whilst acknowledging that there are many factors that prevent her working at the same pace and for the same hours that she used to. Her behaviour is to become the guilty party, to 'keep her head down'; despite the legal position her employers are in, to safeguard her well-being and to support her with a transition back into the classroom.

## Stage 6: Subjectivity

In the final stage, Willig (2008) looks at the relationship with discourse and subjectivity (p.117). Having taken up subject positions, the participant's future actions are tied to a 'way of being in the world' (Davies & Harre, 1999, p.35; Willig, 2008, p.117).

Willig (2008) suggests a straightforward reading of the previous five stages, in order to identify the consequences for subjectivity, but metaphor and the positioning of 'I' in the text have also been suggested as tools for highlighting these relationships (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, p.5). Willig suggests that this stage of the analysis is the most speculative, but it is more that speculative – it is suggesting a direct link between what is said, and what is felt, thought, believed and done. There is a leap between the existence or availability of subject positions and the feelings and actions that are theorised as caused by these positions. There is dispute as to whether the postmodern position necessitates that this relationship is causally bound; it seems possible that although subject positions are likely to create conditions where some actions are more likely, for an individual, we could not claim that this is an inevitability (Willig, 2008).

Willig's first step is to identify the discursive objects and the way they are constructed. Identifying the discursive objects should already have been done, in the phrasing of the research question (Willig, 2008, p.115).

How do teacher mothers describe their experiences of work and mothering?

The discursive objects are 'teaching' (denoted in the question by teacher and work) and 'motherhood' (denoted by mothers and mothering). The first stage of analysis involves the identification of different ways these objects are 'constructed' in the text (Kendall & Wickham, 1999). Willig urges the researcher not to simply look for keywords, as the objects may be referred to in subtle ways (ibid. p.115).

## Stage 2: Discourses

Willig (2008) describes stage 2 as a focus on the differences in constructions (in this case, of teacher-motherhood). I have organised some of the constructions of teacher-motherhood that were identifiable in the text in a table, together with examples of the transcribed interview and the discourses that these might represent. As in other examples of FDA in use (Crowe, 2005; Stevenson, 2004; Van Ness et al., 2017) the identification of these discourses appears to be almost magical, with labels assigned to them by the researcher with no reference to any other work (Antaki, Billig, Edwards & Potter, 2003). I have followed the same model here, but with concern that identifying the discourses 'ad hoc', as seems to be the suggestion, could easily lead to the 'circular

discovery of discourses' (Antaki et al., 2003; Stevenson, 2004). Acknowledging that my interpretation is one amongst many possible interpretations, highlights that the participant is not a 'thing in the world', whose meaning lies ready to be discovered (Miller, 2000, p.330).

Assumptions are made here about what the participant meant with each statement of her interview, there are also problems with the interview method itself, as interviews are not a neutral 'machinery for harvesting data from respondents.' (Potter, 1996, p.149; see also Bold, 2012; Speer, 2007, p.131). The participant may have given her story particular discursive construction, simply because she was involved in an interview. She may be saying what she thinks I want or need to hear because she has an impression of what I think and that this research is important to me (Yuan, 2014). She could be telling a story that she feels is appropriate to the 'body' of a teacher mother and be constrained by what is acceptable to say or not say, about this state (Foucault, 1975, p.63; Hall 2001, p.78), she may have come to know and accept her place (Graham, 2005, p.10); she could be speaking about her experience as an individual, at a moment in time (Munro, 1998). It is not possible to know what motivates the participant in these statements that position her, and that she may not be aware of (Merrill & West, 2009, p.11).

From a postmodern feminist perspective, the best I can hope for ethically is that the interpretation I give to her talk-in-use is recognisable or authentic to her (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), but if it is not, does that mean that the analysis and synthesis of this data is without worth?

If the participant is not aware of the discourses that act upon her, the 'body' of the teacher mother that she has come to inhabit, then she will not recognise this. If I have misunderstood, created circular patterns that I wanted to find and created a 'body' of the teacher mother that actually doesn't apply, she still won't recognise it (Letherby, 2003; Miller, 2000). Neither of us may recognise it (Butler, 1997; Merrill & West, 2009). The 'truth' of the account is unknowable and unmeasurable and at best, what is 'known' is tenuous (Pillow, 2003, p.188). I still find this difficult to manage, what I think I know is neither 'a transparent or innocent process' (Visweswaran, 1994, p.80, see also Pillow, 2003). However, by crediting the participant with the power to construct her own world, it would then be disappointing to 'treat these members' practices as given, objective things in the world' (Bologh, 1992).

A limitation this method of analysis is the considerable amount of time taken to read, re-read and then try to identify discourses in the text. This is more onerous than a thematic analysis on the same transcript, as I attempted this as well, in the early stages of analysis. These two methods of analysis answer different questions, so they are not interchangeable – a thematic analysis starts from a broader base, with the researcher identifying themes in the text. These can be accepted as a 'true' account, or as a storytelling. But focussing on biographical details risks missing the bigger issue – how 'power permeates knowledge and knowing at every level.' (Merrill & West, 2009, p.11) Part of the issue I have here is that my question requires some analysis of the wider world, in explaining the way 'teacher mother' is inscribed on the individual (Hall, 2001), but I also want to take into account the participant's 'view from the inside', and acknowledge her power in identifying and choosing to challenge (van Dijk, 1997) or accept the inscription of this apparatus (Foucault, 1980, p.194).

Stage 3: Action Orientation

Willig (2008, p.116) describes this stage as a 'closer examination' of the discourses within the discursive construction that inscribe the 'object' or 'body'

in different ways. Looking at the action orientation means thinking about the reasons why 'teacher mother' has been described in the way it has. Why does the participant talk about herself as ultimately responsible for the health and care of her child? How could this discourse be deployed, and for what reasons? As a researcher, I am looking for patterns that my participants may not have contemplated themselves, I might suggest some uncomfortable explanations that they would not like to acknowledge – but in this case, it feels like there is not enough justification of how I have theorised her action orientation for me to present this to her and explain why I think this might be what she intended to do, with her story. Deleuze (1988) said that there is little point in analysing different types of intentionality (p.8) and I think this is what he means – we try to include the context into the analysis because discourse cannot be understood apart from context (Souto-Manning, 2014, p.162), and yet the context is so complicated, perhaps it doesn't matter (Graham, 2005, p.9). Make what you will of the story, if it helps to explain the macro-level social constructions (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007), there will always be other 'perspectives from which to interpret the material under review' (Hume & Bryce, 2003, p.180).

#### Stage 4: Positionings

Willig (2008) now suggests that we take a closer look at the subject positions offered by the discourses, to the 'object' - in this case, a person, so a 'subject'. Willig suggests that discourses 'make available positions within networks of meaning that speakers can take up (as well as place others within' (p.116). This is complicated by an idea that the subject position identified is not a role – they offer a position to speak and act from. As Willig points out, this has epistemological implications, as having a subject position may limit what can be thought and experienced by the speaker (p.117). From a subject position, ways of seeing and 'codifying certain practices' are privileged (Deleuze, 1988, p.11). A potential weakness here is 'taking sides' (Antaki et al. 2003), in that as a researcher I am looking at the participant's view and the discourses that I think are influencing how she talks about teacher motherhood, but I am not looking at the perspective of her employer, husband or work colleagues. I am not taking an objective stance and the study is to some extent politically motivated, in that I hope it will change the lot of teacher mothers, if only on a small scale. Dunne et al. (2005) would suggest that a neutral analysis is not possible and that this potential limitation is not possible to resolve. The context is vital to the analysis, and the context cannot help but have relevance to the analyst (Dunne et al., 2005, p.99).

#### Stage 5: Practice

This stage involves a systematic review of how the discursive constructions and subject positions open up or close down options for acting (Willig, 2008). 'Certain practices become legitimate forms of behaviour from within particular discourses.' (ibid, p.117). This is the point in the FDA model that I have reached in February 2018, but I can see how this might work as part of the identification of a macro-discourse, and also how this could be used as an activist methodology. For example, in the pilot interview Sian blames herself for her perceived poor performance in teaching since she had her baby, whilst acknowledging that there are many factors that prevent her working at the same pace and for the same hours that she used to. Her behaviour is to become the guilty party, to 'keep her head down'; despite the legal position her employers are in, to safeguard her well-being and to support her with a transition back into the classroom. Her understanding of the 'body' of the teacher-mother is one of ultimate responsibility for children, which drives her on to blame herself, work

long hours, feel guilty at work and home – as this is part of what it is to be a teacher-mother. If this was pointed out to Sian, that this is how she constructs her talk-in-use, it might challenge the way she speaks and thinks. Of course, this is just an interpretation; now at the fifth layer of assumption making. It is also an assumption made within an insider research relationship; the way Sian makes her husband 'absent' from her talk is potentially highly influenced by our own friendship, which began long before either of us got married or had children.

#### Stage 6: Subjectivity

In the final stage, Willig (2008) looks at the relationship with discourse and subjectivity (p.117). Having taken up subject positions, the participant's future actions are tied to a 'way of being in the world' (Davies & Harre, 1999, p.35; Willig, 2008, p.117). Willig gives an example of a man who positions himself within a discourse of male sexual drive, which means he can claim to not have responsibility for his actions, but also may allow him to feel less guilt about his behaviour, too.

Willig (2008) suggests a straightforward reading of the previous five stages, in order to identify the consequences for subjectivity, but metaphor and the positioning of 'I' in the text have also been suggested as tools for highlighting these relationships (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007, p.5). Willig suggests that this stage of the analysis is the most speculative, but it is more that speculative – it is suggesting a direct link between what is said, and what is felt, thought, believed and done. There is a leap between the existence or availability of subject positions and the feelings and actions that are theorised as caused by these positions. There is dispute as to whether the postmodern position necessitates that this relationship is causally bound; it seems possible that although subject positions are likely to create conditions where some actions are more likely, for an individual, we could not claim that this is an inevitability (Willig, 2008).

## Appendix 20: Examples of Willig’s FDA analysis of findings

### Sian

2. Discourse Identified	3. Action Orientation	4. Subject Positioning	5 & 6. Practice and Subjectivity
<p>Teacher-mother as ultimately responsible for family and work</p>	<p>Emphasises Sian’s importance in the family – she is irreplaceable in her position as carer/earner/organiser...also emphasises her importance at school, although to some extent her contributions are not recognised fully.</p>	<p>Mother centre of family life  Teacher as centre of school life</p>	<p>Sian’s positioning suggests that ultimate responsibility for her family comes down to her, and responsibility for many aspects of school work are also sitting with her and monitored/accounted for. Any failing in this role is due to Sian’s incompetence, rather than an issue with the system, workload, expectations, etc.</p> <p>This positioning potentially means Sian is accountable as well as responsible. Any dip in outcomes, progress, standards (particularly at school) means that she is somehow lacking, not working hard enough.</p>
<p>Set up to fail</p>	<p>Points out the unrealistic expectations of the teacher-mother role</p> <p>Excuses poor performance in either part of the role, as per above, ultimate responsibility for the family rests on Sian</p> <p>Sian starts the story with how she felt she had failed in her NQT year – long before she became a mother – points out that motherhood is not a deciding factor in teaching success?</p> <p>Unfairness of a system where pregnant women are not considered for jobs – takes responsibility away from the individual – powerlessness</p>	<p>Personal liability of the teacher  Personal liability of the mother  Lonely position of the teacher mother  Unfairness based on status – powerlessness</p>	<p>The position of teacher-mother and to some extent, teacher as well is that of being set up to fail, in Sian’s positioning. When things go well, its business as usual, when things are perceived as not going well, personal accountability is cited and ‘systems’ and ‘procedures’ begin.</p> <p>Sian ultimately leaves her post as full time teacher, and positions this decision as an instinctive reaction to an unfair system where accountability has encouraged her to ‘jump before being pushed’. Sian could be seen as questioning how she can win in the system as set up currently.</p>
<p>Guilty party</p>	<p>Sian admits to ‘neglecting’ her husband, feeling guilty about it, but has no option, building on what she has said about her responsibility and expectations of her.</p> <p>Sian also talks about prioritising her own child – she has to – but also suffering guilt because school workload has to be done.</p>	<p>Wife as personally liable for the marriage  Mother should prioritise her children and not be distracted or withhold attention from them  Teacher-mother as ultimately responsible for bringing two worlds of care and workload together.</p>	<p>Sian positions herself as the guilty party in several relationships – her marriage, her parent/child relationship and her workplace relationships. Her position is that whatever she is doing, someone is missing out or being neglected.</p> <p>Sian is positioned in such a way that whatever she does, someone suffers. Her own</p>

			welfare is not a consideration in this positioning.
--	--	--	---

## Anna

2. Discourse Identified	3. Action Orientation	4. Subject Positioning	5 & 6. Practice and Subjectivity
Part-time working as an issue	<p>Points out the unrealistic expectations of the part-time role, as well as the undesirable nature of job shares for senior leaders.</p> <p>Explains reasons why the teacher-mother may not have been promoted or been recognised for her work – part-time work means part-time support from above.</p> <p>Excuses the school leaders – supporting teacher-mothers is a burden and therefore possibly unobtainable?</p>	<p>Teacher-mother part-time as flawed/failing at role, potentially; creating more work for others – so Anna should expect to be passed over for promotion?</p> <p>Better support and treatment is going to be difficult to achieve anywhere, as part-time teacher-mothers are a burden</p>	<p>Anna's positioning of her as a teacher-mother who has unreasonable demands made of her, but is also a burden on the school community, may mean that in practice she does not expect support or credit/reward for her work.</p> <p>Positioning teacher-mothers as a burden may mean that Anna is unlikely to expect better support or conditions in other settings – teacher-mothers would be a burden anywhere.</p>
teacher mother as 'good enough'	<p>Anna points out that what she does at work is 'good enough' and that she manages the work and the role sufficiently – but this explains why she may be passed over for promotion.</p> <p>Teacher-mothers should not feel guilty for being 'good enough' – but questions raised about how you know you are good enough?</p>	<p>Teacher-mother as doing enough – meeting the minimum requirements.</p> <p>Being 'good enough' means that Anna should not expect particular praise or reward for what she is doing.</p>	<p>Anna positions herself as 'good enough', although questions how she would know if she was doing a good job at school. In practice, this may mean that she does not seek promotion or additional responsibilities, as being 'good enough' may not be enough to take on more.</p> <p>Being 'good enough' may also be a reason to reject feelings of guilt.</p>
Time is scarce for teacher-mothers	<p>Anna points out that time itself is a factor in teacher-motherhood – that time moves differently for this group of people; she generalises this to all teacher-mothers.</p> <p>As a teacher-mother there is no time to go 'above and beyond' as a teacher.</p>	<p>This could be limiting – time is finite and there is not enough time for her to be more than 'good enough'. The amount of work or the system that supports this requirement to overwork is not questioned.</p>	<p>Anna positions herself and teacher-mothers as being different to other teachers in terms of time available to do the job. This means that her status as teacher-mother and the relationship she therefore has with time, are limiting factors on her career.</p> <p>As time is out of our control, Anna's situation as an overlooked</p>

			part-time teacher is also out of anyone's control.
Politics affecting teacher-mothers	<p>Anna points out political issues and decisions at government level that have affected teacher-mothers, as well as the teaching profession more broadly.</p> <p>As a teacher-mother, not only is there a particular situation to deal with, but also the wider political debate around education, part-time work, teacher status.</p>	Political decisions act upon Anna in ways she cannot control – this makes her feel weary. As with the discourse around time, politics is a macro-system issue impacting on the individual, potentially reducing agency.	<p>Anna positions herself as knowledgeable about the wider politics, and weary of their impact on her situation.</p> <p>Anna affiliates with organisations that may have political impact now or in future – she is proactive in tackling the politics.</p>

## Charlie

2. Discourse Identified	3. Action Orientation	4. Subject Positioning	5 & 6. Practice and Subjectivity
Happy accidents	<p>Charlie orientates herself as the recipient of fortune due to happy accidents – her situation and achievements are due to luck.</p> <p>Charlie's children are also the subject of happy accidents, in that they are intelligent and resilient, which is orientated as accidental.</p>	<p>Teacher-mother as unaccepting of responsibility for positive or desirable outcomes.</p> <p>Teacher-mother as modest</p>	<p>In practice, Charlie's positioning as any success being down to luck may mean that she does not take credit for her hard work, or expect credit for future achievements.</p> <p>Charlie may be positioning herself as modest – her children just happen to be intelligent – but in terms of her subjectivity in the wider ecological system, she may be positioning herself as unworthy of praise and reward.</p>
'It's fine' – normalising performativity	Charlie orientates herself as 'fine' with demands of being a teacher-mother, particularly in the role of teacher and the workload and expectations of the job.	<p>Teacher-mother as receiver of additional workload without complaint</p> <p>Teacher-mother as oppressed worker</p>	<p>Charlie's positioning of being accepting of additional workload, overlooked for a permanent contract and support with transitions between key stages would suggest that in future, she would continue to accept performative demands as part of her practice.</p> <p>In terms of subjectivity, Charlie is potentially projecting this</p>

			normalising of performativity in line with colleagues and the wider community of teachers.
--	--	--	--

## Bell

2. Discourse Identified	3. Action Orientation	4. Subject Positioning	5 & 6. Practice and Subjectivity
Teacher-mother pioneer	<p>Bell orientates herself as a pioneer in terms of teacher-motherhood – she found ways to make the situation work, with few role models or peers in a similar situation.</p> <p>Bell orientates herself as in control of her destiny; she has managed the situation, the support, the organisation of teacher-motherhood.</p>	<p>Teacher-mother as wise and experienced</p> <p>Teacher-mother as capable and able to find her own way</p>	<p>Bell positions herself as in control of her teacher-motherhood now, and a pioneer in terms of her early experiences of the special circumstance of teacher-motherhood. Her practice is one of capable, experienced wisdom.</p> <p>Because of Bell's positioning, she has opened up opportunities for her to mentor others in a similar situation. She personifies the idea that teacher-motherhood is possible, following her lead.</p>
Ethic of self-care	<p>Bell strongly orientates herself with an ethic of self-care, combating the ethic of care that would suggest the teacher-mother puts herself last.</p> <p>However, in parts of the narrative, Bell orientates herself with struggle and self-sacrifice – putting her children first.</p>	<p>Teacher-mother as caring for herself</p> <p>Teacher-mother as espousing an ethic of self-care...to a point</p>	<p>Bell's strong assertions about taking care of herself and making sure that she is a role-model in terms of work/life balance mean that the likelihood is that she opens up opportunities for herself to opt out of additional workload, explain to others why her time is important and why she must put herself first, some of the time.</p> <p>In terms of subjectivity in her ecological systems, Bell positions herself as unwilling to risk her own health and happiness in service of others – however, there are notable exceptions with her own children.</p>
Being a role-model	<p>Bell orientates herself with being a role-model for a number of different situations, including being a teacher-mother, particularly with her own daughters.</p>	<p>Teacher-mother as setting the example for the next generation</p> <p>Teacher-mother as highly conscious of role-model status and impact</p>	<p>Bell's practice around being a role-model to her daughters and others, in terms of workload, self-care, working hard to achieve goals, suggests that she would position herself as a wise and experienced person in her community. This could potentially make it harder to admit to thoughts or behaviours that do not meet her role-model ideal.</p>

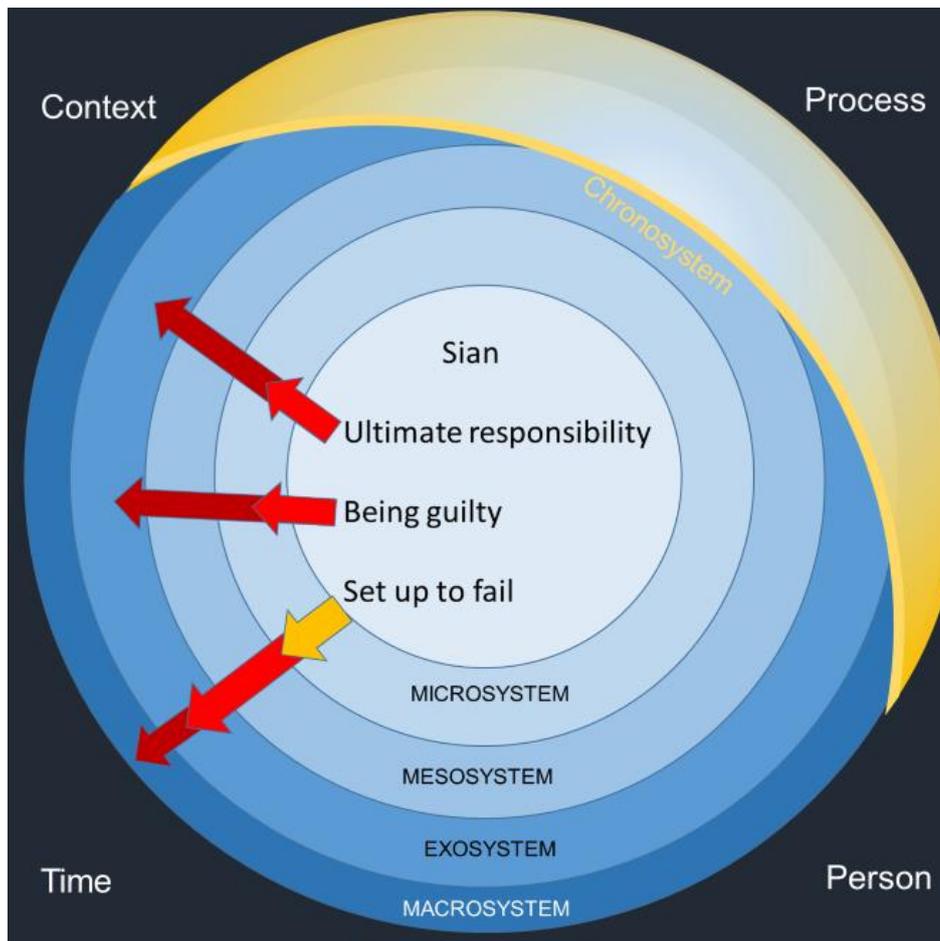
## Aliyah

2. Discourse Identified	3. Action Orientation	4. Subject Positioning	5 & 6. Practice and Subjectivity
Being the guilty party	<p>Aliyah talks about feelings of guilt around always having children (either at home or school) that she could be doing more for – particularly her own children. This orientates her as mindful of the needs of others. However, Aliyah also discusses how she is battling these feelings of guilt, because she is a good enough teacher and mother. This orientates her as a reflective and realistic.</p>	<p>Teacher-mother as always neglecting someone, somewhere</p> <p>Teacher-mother as 'good enough'</p> <p>Teacher-mother as a person who should rally against feelings of guilt and shame</p>	<p>In practice, Aliyah's positioning around her feelings of guilt would suggest that she may hold herself back from prioritising her needs above those of any child.</p> <p>Aliyah also talks about how she has reflected on feelings of guilt and discussed this with colleagues. She positions herself as aware of the barriers to her subjectivity in the wider world here, in that she talks about how guilt could prevent her going on holiday or out with friends.</p>
Single motherhood is different	<p>Aliyah describes single motherhood (also divorced motherhood) as different from her previous status – single motherhood is hard and the responsibility is all hers – she is oppressed.</p> <p>However, Aliyah also talks about how her current single status is easier in some respects to her married life – she has been liberated.</p>	<p>Single-mother is responsible for everything</p> <p>Single-father not under the same pressures</p> <p>Single-mother has freedom to make choices</p>	<p>Aliyah again reflects on two options for how her positioning affects her view of her place in the world and how she interacts with her ecological systems. She acknowledges that in some respects she is powerless – and from her discourse, there is an expectation that some of her options are limited.</p> <p>Aliyah also positions herself as having choices, because she has ultimate responsibility. She decides and lives with the consequences. In terms of subjectivity, this would suggest that Aliyah feels she has control over her situation and can make decisions about her future.</p>
Having a history of resilience	<p>Aliyah orientates herself as a person who has always been resilient – from early childhood – so someone who can cope with tough situations and a naturally resilient person.</p> <p>She also talks about the dangers of being resilient, in the eyes of others – there is an expectation that you can tackle anything.</p>	<p>Teacher-mother as strong and resilient</p> <p>Teacher-mother as exploited for resilience</p>	<p>Aliyah again reflects on two sides of her practice as 'natural resilient'. Because she positions herself in her ecological system as resilient, she invites further workload and reduced support, as she is seen as ultimately able to cope with anything.</p> <p>However, she also positions herself as resilient enough to know when she is taking on too much – and a mistress of her own destiny in some respects, as she can say no to additional work if the situation gets very bad.</p>

### **Sian Ecological Systems Discourse Analysis**

The discourses emerging from Sian's story are represented in the ecological systems map below. Her discourse around being responsible for everyone, all of the time seems to pertain to her microsystem, her home, children and husband, and into the exosystem, school and her work team. Her positioning towards a discourse of being the guilty party again is attached to her home and workplace, particularly feelings of guilt about spending time with her own children, and creating additional workload for colleagues.

In terms of the discourse identified as being set up to fail, Sian again relates this to her home and workplace experience, but also a wider context – she has an expectation that this applies in the national and perhaps international picture, too. This is particularly clear when she talks about employer's views of pregnant job candidates.

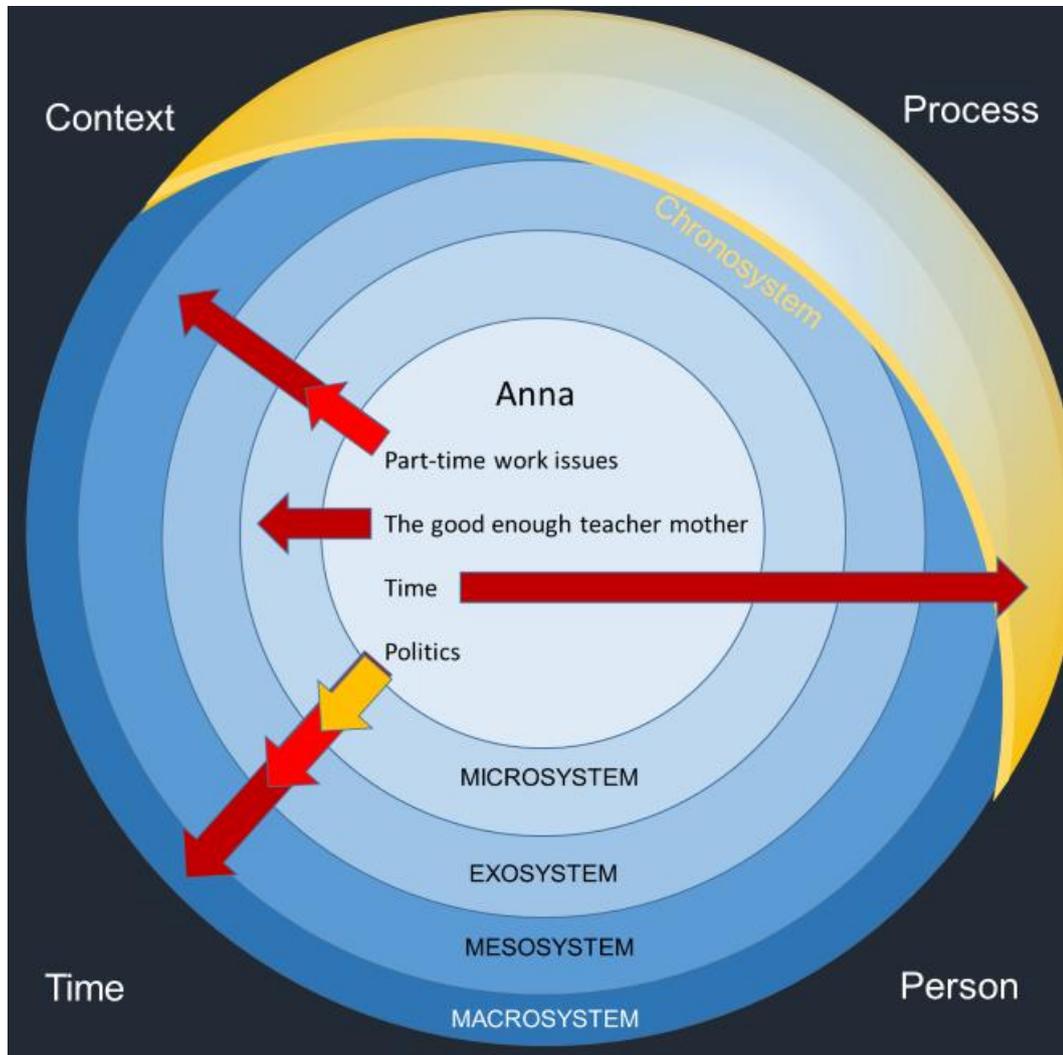


### **Anna Ecological Systems Discourse Analysis**

Anna's ecological systems map differs from others; she refers to change over time and issues around time constraints that fit into the chronosystem of Bronfenbrenner's model (1979). She also draws upon discourses from the macrosystem much more often, talking about wider issues in teaching and national and international networks of teachers and teacher-mothers, including the MTPT Project.

She also positions the part-time work discourse as an issue relating to senior leadership of the school, as well as wider political influences. I have placed this in the mesosystem, which means that in the model, senior leaders in school are sitting at the intersection of the wider world (government policy) and local situations (school policy,

formal and informal). Anna describes the school leaders as controlling the discourse around part-time work and job-shares, often having a negative skew, whilst simultaneously taking advantage of part-time and flexible working, themselves.

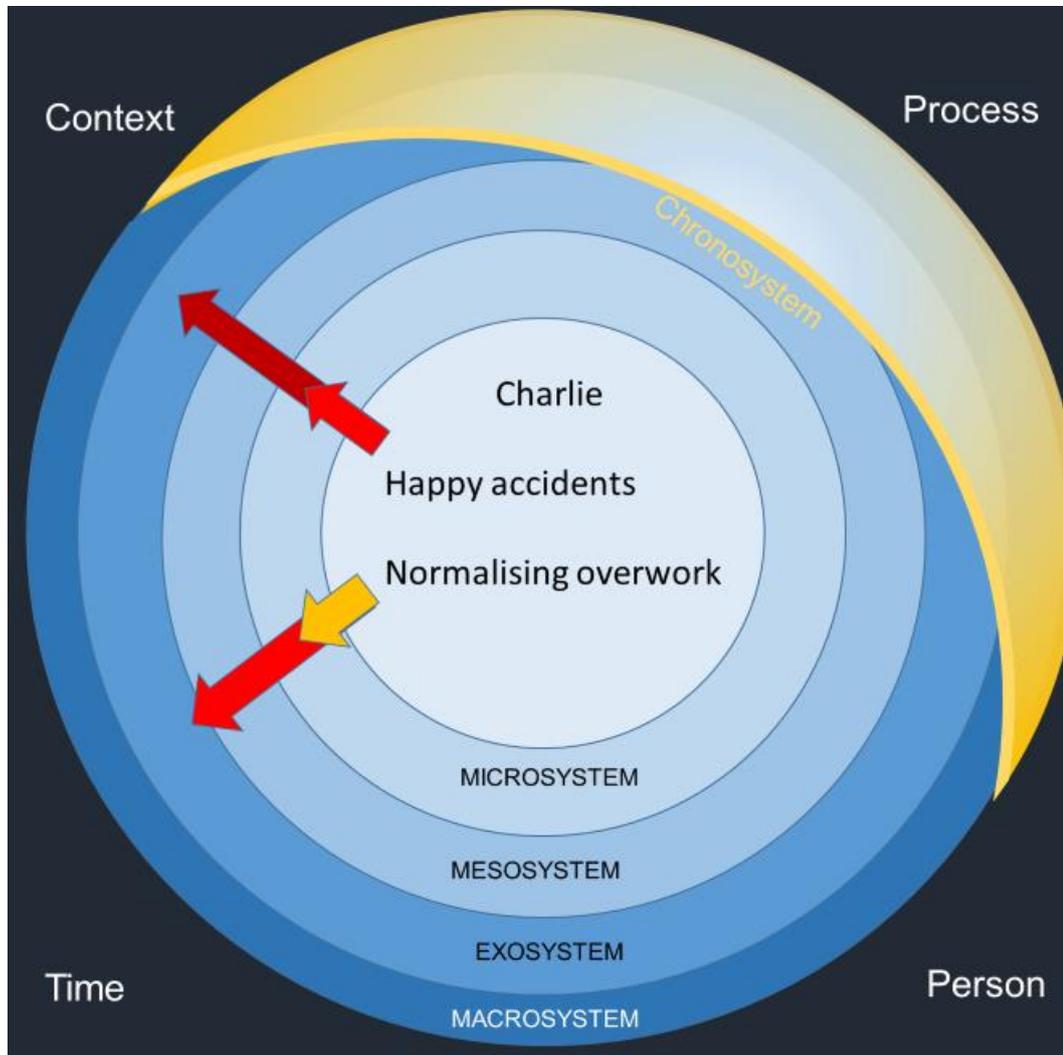


### Charlie Ecological Systems Discourse Analysis

When mapped across ecological systems, Charlie’s key discourses are local in description; she talks about ‘happy accidents’ in her family life and in her school, and her normalisation of overwork is also about her own school and her particular role within that school.

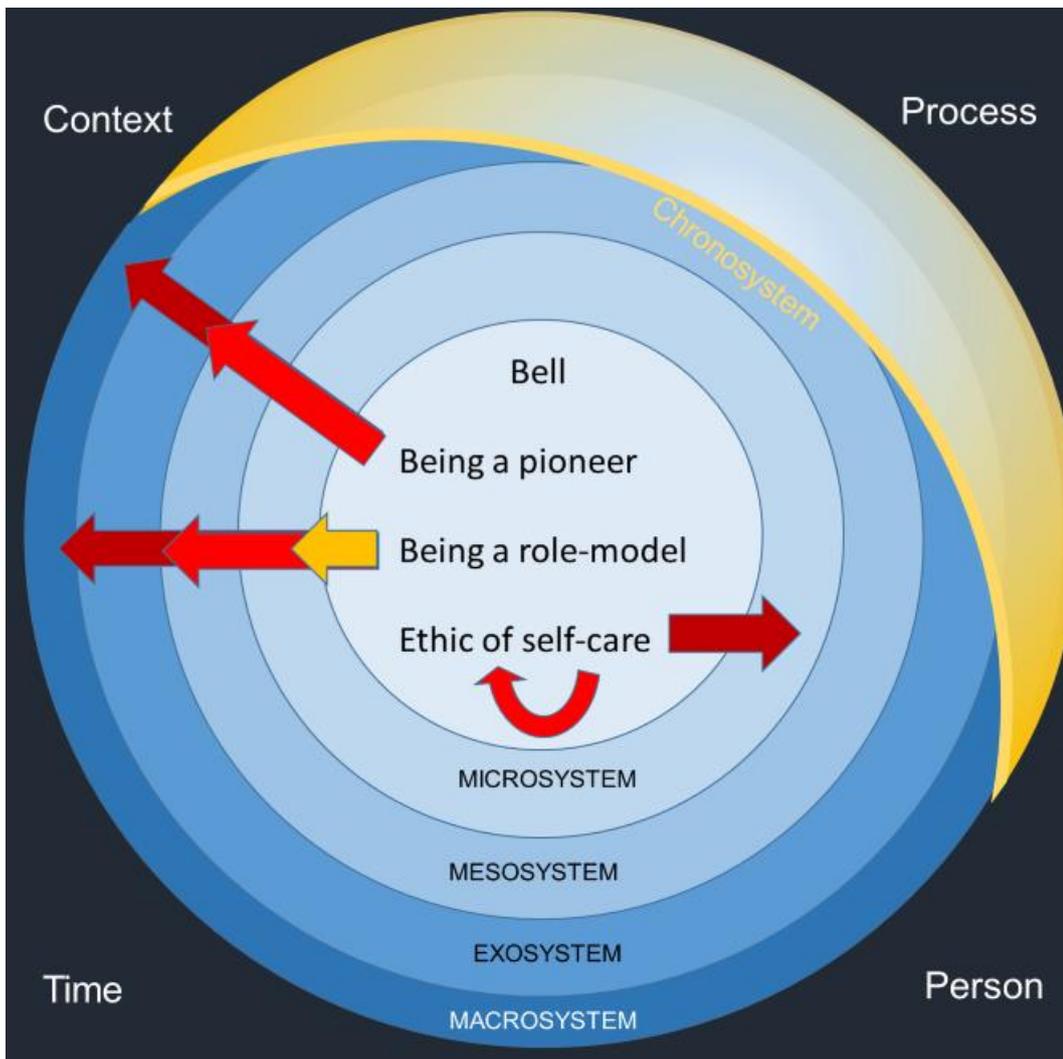
Interestingly, Charlie seems to steer away from identifying the senior leaders in the school as a problem in terms of workload expectations or consideration of her rolling

temporary contract. She positions herself as a lucky person who accidentally has good things happening to them, and as a person who accepts heavy workloads, in the individual system.



### **Bell Ecological Systems Discourse Analysis**

Bell's ecological system map reflects her outward-looking view of teacher-motherhood, in that she draws upon discourses such as being a role-model and a pioneer with a positioning of herself as activist and inspiration. Even when she is discussing the discourses of guilt, she throws this back out to the macrosystem and challenges the expectations of women to feel guilty about self-care.



# The life-histories of teacher mothers: exploring a special situation

Ethics Review ID: ER6533713

Workflow Status: Approved with Advisory Comments

Type of Ethics Review Template: All other research with human participants

## Primary Researcher / Principal Investigator

---

Aimee Quickfall  
(Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities)

Converis Project Application::

Q1. Is this project: ii) Doctoral research

## Director of Studies

---

Caron Carter  
(Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities)

Q4. Proposed Start Date of Data Collection: 17/08/2018

Q5. Proposed End Date of Data Collection : 22/10/2018

Q6. Will the research involve any of the following:

- i) Participants under 5 years old: No
- ii) Pregnant women: No
- iii) 5000 or more participants: No
- iv) Research being conducted in an overseas country: No

Q7. If overseas, specify the location:

Q8. Is the research externally funded?: No

Q9. Will the research be conducted with partners and subcontractors?: No

Q10. Does the research involve one or more of the following?

- i. Patients recruited because of their past or present use of the NHS or Social Care: No
- ii. Relatives/carers of patients recruited because of their past or present use of the NHS or Social Care: No
- iii. Access to data, organs, or other bodily material of past or present NHS patients: No
- iv. Foetal material and IVF involving NHS patients: No
- v. The recently dead in NHS premises: No
- vi. Participants who are unable to provide informed consent due to their incapacity even if the project is not health related: No
- vii. Prisoners or others within the criminal justice system recruited for health-related research: No
- viii. Prisoners or others within the criminal justice system recruited for non-health-related research: No
- ix. Police, court officials or others within the criminal justice system: No

Q11. Category of academic discipline: Social Sciences

Q12. Methodology: Qualitative

---

## P2 - Project Outline

---

**Q1. General overview of study:** I want to find out how a teacher mother's descriptions of their life, particularly their work and parenthood, illuminate this special situation and suggest what they believe about being a mother and a teacher, as well as the influences of power and discourse in their descriptions that they may not be aware of. Motherhood and teaching were once seen as compatible (Kell, 2016) but a troubling reflexivity is recognised in being a mother and a teacher (Thomson & Kehily, 2011). This has not been interrogated thoroughly in recent times (Valiquette-Tessier et al., 2016). My main study will take a narrative approach to exploring the life-history accounts of teacher mothers and their special situation. The pilot study data was collected during an unstructured, life-history interview (Goodson, 2013; Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). The proposed main study uses the same method with three participants to explore the complex, rich landscapes of life for these individuals. The theoretical framework draws upon postmodern feminist perspectives, using Butler, Foucault and Bronfenbrenner. Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA) will give the opportunity to explore descriptions of experience, to theorise the descriptions she cannot give; beyond boundaries of acceptable discourse. FDA turns attention to the macro-level discursive constructions, giving an opportunity to challenge and resist these constructions when they are illuminated (McNay, 1992, p.4) I want my research to make a difference to women who identify with the mothers in my study. As a postmodern feminist, I believe in the unique experience of every individual (Frost & Elichaooff, 2014, p.42). I do not seek to reconstruct 'oppressive views of reality' (Allen & Baber, 1992, p.3), but the research has to mean something. The findings of the pilot and main study are not intended to be generalizable to all teacher mothers, but a feeling of solidarity and shared experience may be possible for a wider audience of men and women.

**Q2. Background to the study and scientific rationale (if you have already written a research proposal, e.g. for a funder, you can upload that instead of completing this section):** When I started the EdD, I was a full time EYFS leader, Reception teacher and mother to a toddler. My experience of teaching and mothering had a huge impact on my career aspirations and I went from a determined future head teacher to leaving primary school teaching all together. My ambition to lead a school evaporated during maternity leave. On returning to full time teaching, I found the workload in school hours was manageable; I am lucky enough to have a lot of support from my family with childcare. However, the emotional burden of being with young children all day and my own child for sometimes as little as a few minutes before his bedtime, followed by more assessment, planning and resource making late at night...it was too much. I wondered if these experiences were shared by many parents in teaching, particularly mothers and teachers of the youngest pupils. An alleged 75% of teachers overall report that they think seriously about leaving the profession (Wiggins, 2016); and many leavers cite the intensification and extensification of teaching, work life balance and caring commitments within their family as the main reasons for their decision to leave (Conley & Jenkins, 2011). Part-time work in education is a double edged sword, which can hamper career progression (Conley & Jenkins, 2011). 88% of primary teachers are women (Patton, 2013) so if parenthood and returning to work after maternity/paternity leave is having a negative effect on career aspiration, then any attempts to redress the gender imbalance in educational leadership need to focus on this area. In a study by McNamara et al (2010), five times more female than male head teachers reported having modified their decisions on having a family, due to their career aspirations. If justification is required of a focus on mothers, rather than parents, the 'motherhood bias' observed in many industries and across the globe is pertinent to this study. In research on expectation states in recruitment, fatherhood is often reported as an advantage in terms of career, with employers and colleagues perceiving fathers to be more committed (Correll, Benard & Paik, 2007), reliable and professional (Moreau, Osgood & Halsall, 2005). The perception of motherhood is a significant disadvantage; mother-workers decrease in perceived competence as they increase in perceived warmth (Cuddy, Fiske & Glick, 2004). Motherhood is a more salient issue than gender, because of the conflict perceived between non-paid care work and paid employment (Berggren & Lauster, 2014). Although work on expectation states is often based on 'professionals' (Young, 2016; Cuddy et al, 2004) rather than a specific career, there is evidence that teaching is affected (Page, 2013). Intensive mothering is cited as problematic for working women (Wall, 2013; Ross, 2016; Graybill-Ellis, 2014). Hays (1996) suggests that the ideology of motherhood, the current discourse, is one of complete devotion and self-sacrifice. When combined with expectations of EYFS (Early Years and Foundation Stage) and primary schoolteachers (Page, 2013, Conley and Jenkins, 2011), which replicate the 'teacher as mother made conscious' role (Steedman, 1985), the intensity of the care burden can cause physical and emotional drain (Lynch, 2008). Much of the literature cited here is from large-scale, quantitative or mixed methods studies that have been designed to be generalizable. My study is small scale and the data from each participant will be analysed individually, before broader themes are considered, if appropriate. My study will explore the life histories

---

of teacher mothers, their experience of work and motherhood and the particular challenges of working as a teacher and having one's own children. Page (2011) suggests that being a mother and working with young children presents a unique circumstance in which women feel guilty at home and work, caring for the children of others, whilst their own children are potentially with a child minder or in another setting. These are the challenges and circumstances that my study will explore, giving the participants a chance to discuss and share their own view of their world and to reflect on the career choices that they made after becoming mothers, using a life-history interview method. I hope to provide an environment and interviewer interviewee relationship that is empowering and useful to the participants, which they have influence and control over in ways that they may not have experienced in other areas of their teacher mother lives.

**Q3. Is your topic of a sensitive/contentious nature or could your funder be considered controversial?: No**

**Q4. Are you likely to be generating potentially security-sensitive data that might need particularly secure storage?: No**

**Q5. Has the scientific/scholarly basis of this research been approved, for example by Research Degrees Sub-committee or an external funding body?: Internal Peer Review**

**Q6. Main research questions:** How do teacher mothers describe their experiences of work and mothering? What do their descriptions suggest about the discourses and power systems at work in their lives? To what extent are social-class, cultural capital and their own 'ecological systems' perceived as influences on teacher mothers? What do timelines and the construction of a 'despositif' add to the understanding of the teacher mother experience?

**Q7. Summary of methods including proposed data analyses:** Interviews - unstructured life-history interview in first instance Interviews - semi-structured follow up interview Foucauldian Discourse Analysis of interview data For the main study, I plan to use a life history interview method, which 'focuses mainly on past events in a person's life but aims to provide an overall picture of an individual's life' (Bold, 2012, p.26). The interviews will be recorded digitally and in notes and pictures made by the participants and the researcher (me) during the interview sessions. This 'co-construction' allows both researcher and participant to return to previous issues and events that have been discussed (Adriensen, 2012). The life history approach involves asking few or no questions, but asking the participant to map out or timeline their career, whole life or a chosen section of their life to identify key times and decisions and factors that have shaped that person's life (Adriensen, 2012, Goodson, 2013, Goodson & Sikes, 2001). My participants will make their own timeline whilst describing their experiences, going back as far as they wish to encourage them to tell their own story, rather than what the researcher has deemed most valuable to the study (Adriensen, 2012; Gubrium & Holstein, 2009; Banks, 2007, Pawson, 1996). I will also offer the participants a second method of reflection, using collage (Mannay, 2010; MacKenzie & Wolf, 2012) or ordering of influencing factors (Kara, 2015). The main study participants will be recruited using social media and teacher networks, with advertisements inviting participants to contact me if they are interested in the study. They will be teacher mothers in Early Years Foundation Stage and Primary phases, as this group suffer the 'double whammy' or 'troubling reflexivity' of teaching and mothering young children (Berggren & Lauster, 2014; Thomson & Kehily, 2011). I will use 'snowballing' as a strategy to recruit further participants, if necessary (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). This will also give an indication of whether the participants found the study useful for their own understanding, as their decision to recommend the study to friends and colleagues would suggest that it has been beneficial. As there is also the possibility that more people will be interested in participating than I require for this study, I will also use a short survey for potential participants, so I can select participants on the pragmatic issues (such as distance from my location) as well as making sure that there are differences between participants in terms of number of children, age of children, part time/full time work.

### **P3 - Research with Human Participants**

---

**Q1. Does the research involve human participants?: Yes**

**Q2. Will any of the participants be vulnerable?: No**

**Q3. Is this a clinical trial?: No**

**If yes, will the placebo group receive a treatment plan after the study? If N/A tick no.: No**

**Q4. Are drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?: No**

**Q5. Will tissue samples (including blood) be obtained from participants?: No**

**Q6. Is pain or more than mild discomfort likely to result from the study?: No**

Q7. Will the study involve prolonged testing (activities likely to increase the risk of repetitive strain injury)?: No

Q8. Is there any reasonable and foreseeable risk of physical or emotional harm to any of the participants?: No

Q9. Will anyone be taking part without giving their informed consent?: No

Q10. Is it covert research?: No

Q11. Will the research output allow identification of any individual who has not given their express consent to be identified?: No

Q12. Where data is collected from human participants, outline the nature of the data, details of anonymisation, storage and disposal procedures if these are required (300 - 750): Data recorded during interviews will be transcribed, and then the recordings will be stored on the university research data Q drive. No data with participant names and information will be stored anywhere other than the Q drive. Timelines, collages and other physical records will be coded to identify them, rather than named. In the event of participants wishing to include their own photos in their timelines or other identifying items, these documents would be photographed and stored on university secure Q drives. I acknowledge that a large amount of identifying data will be collected on each participant, which could be used to identify the participants by someone who knows them well. All data will be securely stored, and any findings written up from this data will have distinguishing information (eg age of children) reported in age brackets. During the study I will remind participants about the pseudonymised data, but also make sure that they are aware that there is a small chance that they could be identified (or someone might suspect) that they took part. Knowing this gives them the opportunity to withdraw, to modify their answers or to request that certain information is never shared.

## **P4 - Research in Organisations**

---

Q1. Will the research involve working with an external organisation or using data/material from an external organisation?: No

## **P5 - Research with Products and Artefacts**

---

Q1. Will the research involve working with copyrighted documents, films, broadcasts, photographs, artworks, designs, products, programmes, databases, networks, processes, existing datasets or secure data?: No

Q2. Are the materials you intend to use in the public domain?: No

## **P6 - Human Participants - Extended**

---

Q1. Describe the arrangements for recruiting, selecting/sampling and briefing potential participants.: Participants will be recruited through my own social networks, possibly teachers that I have worked with previously, some acquaintances who know what my research area is have already expressed and interest in being a part of the study. Participants will identify themselves as mothers and be EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) or Primary phase teachers, working in the UK. The sample size will be small - 4 participants. Briefing will be by written information sheet of the key themes of the study, the methods and their rights as participants will also be clearly communicated. There will be a verbal 'rebrief' before the interview begins and a verbal 'debrief' at the end of each interview. Information sheet attached.

Q2. Indicate the activities participants will be involved in.: Life history interviews (1 interview per participant), unstructured and without scripted questions. Participants can talk about their whole life, or a particular period in their history. This gives the participant the flexibility to focus on the most meaningful time of their life, and also the opportunity to avoid talking about experiences that they would rather not share with a researcher. This will be explained to participants at the beginning of the activity. Participants will be encouraged to draw a timeline as they are describing their experience (or alternatively, the researcher can draw it, or it may be co-constructed, depending on the wishes of the participant) - the timeline then becomes the object to be clarified, questioned and explored, rather than the verbal account of the participant. Semi-structured interviews roughly 1 month after the life-history interview. Participants will be invited to bring their own questions to this interview, this will also give an opportunity to share the initial analysis of the first interview and to clarify any points from the first interview that could have been misinterpreted.

Q3. What is the potential for participants to benefit from participation in the research?: I hope that the main study may help my participants to reflect on their choices and help them to feel empowered contributors to the research. The opportunity to discuss their experiences without interruption can be an unusual event in

the life of a teacher mother - my pilot study participant commented on this. The main study will help to raise awareness of the issues for women who are mothers and working in schools, and particularly how leadership teams could help to support women who are returning to work or have children.

**Q4. Describe any possible negative consequences of participation in the research along with the ways in which these consequences will be limited:** Participants may find discussing and thinking about their life histories distressing - there may be periods and incidents in their lives that are uncomfortable or upsetting to go over. They may be reflecting on choices that they subsequently came to regret, or talking about experiences such as marital breakdown. Emotional distress will be limited by being as clear as possible in advance that the research will involve life history interviewing and what this entails. I will make sure that I am prepared to signpost sources of help if traumatic experiences are discussed and participants need further support – for example, Womens Aid, NUT Support Network, The Fawcett Society and Refuge. Any wish for information or data to be withdrawn will be respected. The interviews will be recorded (audio only) which can have a negative impact on participants (Kvale, 1996) if they are embarrassed or have concerns about how the recordings will be used and who might hear them. This will be limited by addressing the issues (consent, how the data will be managed and used, anonymisation) with the participants, before and after the interview. The unstructured life histories interview method has been selected for this study, because it gives the participant control over the experiences they share with the researcher. They are not put into a position where a question is asked that they had been dreading. The participant steers the timeline and their discussion of their experiences. If there are events and experiences that they do not wish to share, as a researcher I am unlikely to know that these have been omitted, and certainly would not seek to probe into these events if I did suspect omissions were made. This will have an impact on the reliability of the data collected but the same would be true of a survey, questionnaire or potentially a structured interview, where participants can still omit information (Adriensen, 2012) but with potentially more distress caused to them. Using the life histories method allows participants to share as much of their experiences as they are willing to, in their own words, with their own biases and chronology. As part of researching this subject, I acknowledge that there will be emotional aspects to the interviews, and that my participants may be sad, angry, regretful – but that they have a right to feel these emotions and not be 'shut down' by the researcher. Throughout the recruitment and consent process, as well as before and during the interview, I will ensure that participants understand that they can terminate the interview at any point, have a break, or continue. The welfare of the participants and the researcher (me) are priorities, beyond any scope of the study. Distress to participants/researcher will be minimised, but I will also take in to consideration the idea that participants may want to continue with the interview, even if they are upset. There is the possibility that participants will feel strongly about wanting to share their story, which will be accommodated fully, if appropriate and mutually agreed. Participants may share information that puts them at risk of being identified in the findings of the pilot and main study - I will take steps to avoid this - for example, reporting children's ages in age brackets, instead of age in years. Participants will be made aware of the steps taken to anonymise their stories, but also will be given opportunities to withdraw part or all of their data. They may also share experiences that they feel would identify them, and request that these are not retold in the thesis.

**Q5. Describe the arrangements for obtaining participants' consent.:** Participants will receive clear information on the process and how I would like them to contribute, if they decide to take part. There will be a written consent form to sign in advance of the meeting date, so participants have time to change their minds and opt out, if they choose to. I will verbally explain consent again, directly before the interview, including what will happen to their data

**Q6. Describe how participants will be made aware of their right to withdraw from the research.:** All information sheets and consent forms will give participants a reminder and contact details for opting out of the research. I will also remind participants verbally that they can withdraw from the research at any point during the interview and reviewing process. Participants have up to 2 weeks after the interview takes place to withdraw their data.

**Q7. If your project requires that you work with vulnerable participants describe how you will implement safeguarding procedures during data collection:** N/A

**Q8. If Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are required, please supply details:** N/A

**Q9. Describe the arrangements for debriefing the participants.:** Participants will be debriefed verbally and given another copy of the information sheet to take home. My study is 'open' and participants should be clear from recruitment onwards about the main research question and methods. A debriefing sheet would not add to their understanding of the study, but a copy of the information sheet will ensure that they have my contact details (email address). Participants will be invited to review the analysis of data collected during their session, at a later date; by either meeting/telephone/email to discuss themes identified in their transcript and other materials. Participants will have my contact details so that they can contact me regarding the study, if they wish to.

**Q10. Describe the arrangements for ensuring participant confidentiality. This should include details of:** Data recorded during interviews will be transcribed, and then the recordings will be stored on the university research data Q drive. No data with participant names and information will be stored anywhere other than the Q drive. Timelines, collages and other physical records will be coded to identify them, rather than named. In the event of participants wishing to include their own photos in their timelines or other identifying items, these documents would be photographed and stored on university secure Q drives. I acknowledge that a large amount of identifying data will be collected on each participant, which could be used to identify the participants by someone who knows them well. All data will be securely stored, and any findings written up from this data will have distinguishing information (eg age of children) reported in age brackets. During the study I will remind participants about the anonymised data, but also make sure that they are aware that there is a small chance that they could be identified (or someone might suspect) that they took part. Knowing this gives them the opportunity to withdraw, to modify their answers or to request that certain information is never shared.

**Q11. Are there any conflicts of interest in you undertaking this research?:** I may know participants from previous workplaces or through current colleagues. This may impact on the responses but should not create a conflict of interest for the pilot group. In terms of impact on responses, I will stress to the participants that there is no desired response from the researcher and encourage them to share their experiences without pressure to 'fit the study'. As this data will not be included in the main study, if they do give responses that align with what they already know about my research interests, it will not have an effect on the main study. As the participants of the pilot study have been work colleagues of mine, we share a social network and friendship group. This could put participants in a difficult situation if they feel that anything they share would affect friendships. I will talk to participants about this before they give consent and attempt to reassure them that anything shared is confidential, and that they are under no obligation to share their experiences. If participants share information with me that I feel creates a conflict of interest, I will clarify with the participant that my role is as researcher during the interview. In terms of my influence, I would not be in a position to exert control or pressure on these people at work. I have never been their line manager or responsible for their career progression. I am in a position to exert influence by virtue of the relationship with the participants - I will protect my participants by maintaining my awareness of this influence, throughout the pilot study and main study. I will share this concern with participants in the briefing before the interview, as part of the consent process, so that they are aware, too.

**Q12. What are the expected outcomes, impacts and benefits of the research?:** I hope that the main study will give insights into the issue of teacher mothers leaving teaching, giving possible new perspectives on how to support teacher parents, mothers in particular. The study may reveal patterns in the careers of my participant teacher mothers, which would help inform policy at a local and national level, giving support to this group when they are likely to need it most. On a smaller scale, I hope that the main study may help my participants to reflect on their choices and help them to feel empowered contributors to the research. I hope the main study will help to raise awareness of the issues for women who are mothers and working in schools, and particularly how leadership teams could help to support women who are returning to work or have children.

**Q13. Please give details of any plans for dissemination of the results of the research.:** I plan to share my results with the research community, through access to my thesis, a journal article, presentations to conferences. Data will be stored on the university drives, anonymised data will be part of my thesis and therefore potentially a resource for future researchers.

## **P7 - Health and Safety Risk Assessment**

---

**Q1. Will the proposed data collection take place only on campus?**

: No

**Q2. Are there any potential risks to your health and wellbeing associated with either (a) the venue where the research will take place and/or (b) the research topic itself?:** Yes (please outline below)

**Outline details of risks to your health and wellbeing:** Emotional distress because of topics discussed.

**Q3. Will there be any potential health and safety risks for participants (e.g. lab studies)? If so a Health and Safety Risk Assessment should be uploaded to P8.:** No

**Q4. Where else will the data collection take place? (Tick as many venues as apply)**Researcher's

Residence: false

Participant's Residence: false

Education Establishment: true

Other e.g. business/voluntary organisation, public venue: true

Outside UK: false

Q5. How will you travel to and from the data collection venue?: By car

Q6. Please outline how you will ensure your personal safety when travelling to and from the data collection venue.: I will ensure a friend or family member knows where I am going, and let them know I have arrived/ left the venue.

Q7. If you are carrying out research off-campus, you must ensure that each time you go out to collect data you ensure that someone you trust knows where you are going (without breaching the confidentiality of your participants), how you are getting there (preferably including your travel route), when you expect to get back, and what to do should you not return at the specified time. (See Lone Working Guidelines). Please outline here the procedure you propose using to do this.: For each meeting, I will alert a friend or family member to the venue, timings and route. I will also inform them that in the unlikely event of me becoming a victim of a crime, details of the participant identity can be accessed by the police on the university research drives. I will text/email friend/family when I set off, arrive and leave the venue.

Q8. How will you ensure your own personal safety whilst at the research venue, (including on campus where there may be hazards relating to your study)?: Venue will be a public space, booked or agreed for use. I will have my phone on and with me at all times

## P8 - Attachments

---

Are you uploading any recruitment materials (e.g. posters, letters, etc.)?: Yes

Are you uploading a participant information sheet?: Yes

Are you uploading a participant consent form?: Yes

Are you uploading details of measures to be used (e.g. questionnaires, etc.)?: Non Applicable

Are you uploading an outline interview schedule/focus group schedule?: Yes

Are you uploading debriefing materials?: Yes

Are you uploading a Risk Assessment Form?: Yes

Are you uploading a Serious Adverse Events Assessment (required for Clinical Trials and Interventions)?: Non Applicable

Are you uploading a Data Management Plan?: Yes

Upload:



Risk Assessment Form Version 1.docx



Poster Version 6.pdf



AQ Participant Debrief Version 1.docx



AQ Participant Consent - Version 5.docx



AQ Participant Information Sheet Version 4.docx



Gantt chart - AQ Thesis.xlsx



Data Management Plan - AQ Version 2.docx

## P9 - Adherence to SHU Policy and Procedures

---

Primary Researcher / PI Sign-off:

I can confirm that I have read the Sheffield Hallam University Research Ethics Policy and Procedures: true

I can confirm that I agree to abide by its principles and that I have no personal or commercial conflicts of interest relating to this project.: true

Date of PI Sign-off: 28/05/2018

**Director of Studies Sign-off:**

I confirm that this research will conform to the principles outlined in the Sheffield Hallam University Research Ethics policy: true

I can confirm that this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge: true

Director of Studies' Comments: Thank you for this comprehensive ethics application. I just have a couple of points that you might wish to consider and tweak where appropriate: - Include your suggested two week timeframe for withdrawal on your consent letter and information sheet - Do you want to include your son's name on future conferences/publications? - Can you explain what you mean by 'bricolage of methodological tools'? - P6, Q4 - can you explain 'addressing issues around recording' - P6, Q9 - will your contact details be your email address? - I think the panel will rather you add your data straight onto the Q drive as a flash pen could be lost - They may also ask you to keep names of participants (codes separate from the actual data) check with data management arrangements and advice I hope these points will be useful.

**Upload:**

Date of submission and supervisor sign-off: 23/07/2018

## **Director of Studies Sign-off**

---

Caron Carter

### **P10 - Review**

---

Comments collated by Lead Reviewer (Or FREC if escalated): This represents thoughtful and careful attention to ethical issues. There are 2 areas to think through in preparation: - when participants review transcripts, will they be given an opportunity to remove sections if there are parts of the interview they later regret? - You state that you will share themes arising from your analysis with participants- what happens if they disagree with the themes/patterns you identify?

Final Decision to be completed by Lead Reviewer (or FREC if escalated): Approved with advisory comments

Date of Final Decision: 20/08/2018

### **P11 - Response to Advisory Comments**

---

Please provide any relevant information here: Thank you for the advisory comments, these have been very helpful. In response to the first point, if a participant requests partial withdrawal of the data, then I will remove it. I have requested that participants notify me of withdrawal of data within two weeks of an interview, I will reiterate this at each contact point with the participant. Second point - I expect that participants may disagree with the themes that are drawn out of their interview data. Particularly with Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, when the researcher is looking for how the participant has positioned themselves in the story and how they portray their situation. I have trialled this in the pilot study and it led to an interesting discussion about feminist research perspectives and whether it is ethical to 're-story' someone else's lived experience. To tackle this, what I propose is that I will share the Bronfenbrenner ecological systems analysis of the interview transcript - where the factors influencing the world of the participant are analysed, including education policy, school policies, etc. If the participant wishes to see more, then I am open to that. I would not change my analysis findings because of a disagreement, but I would hope to show how in this postmodern study, the perspective of one person is not right or wrong, or better or more true, but that the analysis and findings for this study have to be my own! In future work, collaboration on analysis and findings is very likely and what I would prefer!

### **P12 - Post Approval Amendments**

---

#### **Amendment 1**

**Title of Amendment 1: Addition of Participant Screening Questions**

**Details of Amendment 1:** Through discussions with my supervisory team and anecdotal interest via social media in my research area, it was felt that it may be necessary to apply some 'filters' if a large number of people volunteer for the study. This will ensure that the participants selected are within travelling distance of my location, but also that the participants do meet the criteria for the sample, which otherwise I may not find out until after a lengthy journey to interview them. Please see the attached screening survey, which will be sent to interested parties, with the information sheet, by email (from my SHU email account). All responses will be anonymised as necessary (coded so they can be linked with interview data) and stored securely on the university Q drive. This will also give me the opportunity to correspond with volunteers who do not become participants to thank them and to offer them the chance to be updated on findings and the finished thesis/journal articles if they wish.

**Date of Amendment 1:** 30/09/2018

**Upload:**



AQ Participant screening questions.docx

**In my judgement amendment 1 should be::** Amendment Approved

**Reason for amendment 1 decision (if applicable):** Approved

**Date of Amendment Outcome 1:** 16/10/2018

## **Amendment 2**

**In my judgement amendment 2 should be::** Select Amendment Outcome

## **Amendment 3**

**In my judgement amendment 3 should be::** Select Amendment Outcome