

Exploring a role for digital technologies in
life story work with adolescents in
residential care: A discourse analysis

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Abstract

This thesis explored the potential for using digital technologies to engage adolescents from residential care settings in self-reflective dialogues. In addressing the practice need to make the benefits of traditional life story work available to adolescents in care, the research emerged from a critical social psychological perspective informed by discursive approaches (Gergen, 1999; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Working in partnership with ten young people and staff teams from across four residential homes, the development and implementation of two digital innovations were undertaken. The first innovation was a bespoke private website called *bebook*. The second innovation known as 'podwalking', involved adolescents visiting places of importance to them with a camcorder and sharing the narratives such places elicited. Using action research methodology and Doise's (1986) levels of explanation framework to locate instances of talk, the three studies which emerged focus upon what was achieved in different relationship contexts.

Orientating at an intrapersonal level, study one explored what young people's use of *bebook* and their experiences of the facilitative relationship I shared with them enabled the relational-self to achieve. Findings indicate that adolescents can construct and reconstruct understandable ways of talking about themselves and their narratives if provided with predictable and engaged reflective relationships. In study two young people's experiences of the relational context created during the podwalk process with myself and staff members, were analysed with an emphasis on the continual renegotiations of the self and such relationships at a situational level. Staff members as engaged audience and digital technologies which record audiovisual were shown to create an abundance of opportunities to support young people's reconnections to place and time. Study three examined how young people's relationships with widely available digital technologies were mediated, understood and experienced by staff members, across both positional and ideological levels. By mobilising discourses of web-based risk as inevitable, some staff members could move to introduce residential relationships as a way to monitor via engagement in online environments. In so doing they were able to move away from an overreliance on web filtering technologies, promoting the development of web-based resilience via educational dialogues with vulnerable adolescents. These findings and their implications are discussed with regards to the place for digital innovations in discursive psychology and practice settings.

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In a thesis emphasising the relational-self I would be amiss if I did not mention the relationships which have contributed to the work in the pages that follow.

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Chapter 1: Adolescence: A time that matters

1.1 Looked-after children, life story work and adolescence

“When adolescents are supported and encouraged by caring adults, they thrive in unimaginable ways, becoming resourceful and contributing members of families and communities. Bursting with energy, curiosity and spirit that are not easily extinguished, young people have the potential to change negative societal patterns of behaviour and break cycles of violence and discrimination that pass from one generation to the next. With their creativity, energy and enthusiasm, young people can change the world in astonishing ways, making it a better place not only for themselves but for everyone.” (UNICEF, 2002:3)

The term ‘looked-after children’ refers to children up to eighteen years old who live in care provider or public care. Reasons for entry into care differ, with the fundamental aim being to protect vulnerable children from further physical and/or psychological harm. Looked-after children may not have access to knowledge which enables them to construct answers to rudimentary identity questions such as where was I born? And where did I get my blue eyes from? For the majority of children answers to such questions are generally known or ascertained through conversations with birth family members. Looked-after children may not be able to rely on such dialogues and in many cases; these children may have much more traumatic questions to which they are unable to construct answers. Additional challenges facing already vulnerable children include feelings of confusion about identity (Stein & Munro, 2008), linked to poor self-esteem (Rutter, 1993), poor physical and mental health (Meltzer, Lader, Goodman, & Ford, 2003; Sergeant, 2006).

In an effort to address self-knowledge gaps, life story work is often carried out with looked-after children to create a sense of identity coherence. Ryan and Walker (2007) state that life story work approaches aim to enable children in care to make sense of previous and often traumatic experiences. Traditionally life story work is commissioned as a short-term piece of work to aid transitions between short-term to long-term care placements. This work is commonly

undertaken with younger children up to the age of twelve, in order to help them come to terms with complex feelings towards birth relatives and previous carers (Ryan & Walker, 2007).

Transitions are also experienced by adolescents in care but, generally without the psychological support life story work can offer. Adolescent focused life story work may improve the mental health of this population by encouraging reflections upon more immediate preoccupations. Helping them discover for themselves the value of making connections between past and present. To date, neither practice nor research offer tools, approaches or knowledge regarding how to successfully engage adolescent care populations in life story work. Yet as UNICEF (2002) highlight, adolescence is a time that matters.

Adolescence is conceptualised as a life transition which possesses a reflective nature (Beckett 2002; Coleman & Hagell 2007; Erikson 1995; Frydenberg 2008; Galatzer-Levy, 2002), reinforcing the potential benefits of life story work to address self-knowledge gaps. In concentrating efforts upon undertaking life story work with younger care populations, professional practice conceptualises this process as relevant to younger children. This infers two things. Firstly that life story work can be something that is finished before a child begins to experience adolescence. Secondly, that this reflective quality of adolescence automatically endows older looked-after children with the coherence sought via life story work.

In reference to the first point, although the need to revisit life story work throughout the life course has been highlighted (Baynes, 2008; Fahlberg, 1994; Perry 2002; Rose & Philpot 2005; Ryan & Walker, 2007), publications stop short of providing detailed recommendations about working with adolescents. This conceptualisation obscures suggestions that as a phase of the life course, adolescence offers an individual time to take stock before moving on to adult roles (Frydenberg, 2008). This period of reflection is deemed here to be especially important for adolescents living in care. They tend to have endured more instability and ambiguity in their lives, potentially having a great deal to reflect upon. In this way adolescence comes to be represented as a window of opportunity for personal change, as opposed to a window that has already shut. This proposition invites the pursuit of innovative ways to communicate with vulnerable adolescents that may help them relate with others, manage behaviour, understand feelings and make beneficial decisions.

The growing availability and prominence of digital technologies and their popularity with adolescents, offers suitable ways to pursue the process and goals of life story work. Despite

their popularity and the competence young people exhibit using digital media, my time as a practitioner made me aware of a growing digital technologies paradox. On the one hand practitioners were becoming aware of the risks these communication tools posed, with shared social discourses tending to foreground risk in certain ways. “Facebook increases teenage drugs and alcohol abuse” (www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/8720309/Facebook-increases-teenage-drugs-and-alcohol-abuse-.html accessed on 07/03/12) and “Mental risk of Facebook teens” (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/7487723.stm> accessed on 07/03/12) for example. The mobilisation of discourse in such ways obscures numerous opportunities for working positively with adolescents via digital technologies. On the other side of this paradox was my awareness of the growing competence and affinity adolescents had with digital technologies. This, alongside young people using digital media to spontaneously record events from the world in which they live, offered a way in which to engage with adolescents in care. From this practitioner stance I became aware that these technologies offered opportunities to communicate with adolescents on their level. Such work could potentially begin to create opportunities for a sense of identity and self-knowledge coherence to emerge through reflective dialogues.

1.2 Vulnerable adolescents in care

Figures provided by the Department for Education (DfE) indicate that there are over 64,000 children in care (DfE, 2011). Most children are fostered, however 8,000 are in residential care and these are described as: “...a particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged group.” (Petrie & Simon 2006: 120). This group are at risk of personal difficulties, relationship insecurity and uncertainty about placement permanence (Fletcher-Campbell 1997; Jackson & Sachdev 2001; Meltzer 2007; Petrie & Simon 2006). These children are likely to be those for whom other placement arrangements may not have worked, with most children in residential care being adolescents (Bullock, 2009; Sinclair, Baker, Lee & Gibbs, 2007). It is important to understand the experiences of those living in residential care and how such experiences influence identity negotiations, which may create a legacy of narrative upheaval.

Children in care can often experience multiple placement moves (Munro & Hardy, 2007). Sinclair et al. (2007) highlight the acute way that residential care can be used, with young people only spending a short period of time in this care arrangement. In this sense, short-term placements are desired as opposed to being a characteristic of residential care not being able to

provide more long-term care (Berridge, 2002). This begins to illustrate how additional layers of distortion and complexity can be added to a young person's biographical narrative, when frequently moving from short-term care arrangement to short-term care arrangement. Thus for children who are looked-after, the process of creating coherent biographical narratives and negotiating identity management becomes increasingly difficult. This process can be further compounded for those who experience numerous placement moves and narrative upheaval.

1.3 Life story work gap

Young people living in care can experience moves across a range of placement provisions, but also into or out of care itself. When younger children experience such moves attempts are made to explain these via life story work. In this way the need to manage the psychological implications of important transitions for younger children is recognised. Recognition of life story work for adolescents in care remains underdeveloped, as do the tools, processes and potential benefits (Hammond, 2009a). Stein and Munro (2008:294) indicate that cross-nationally, the promoting of a stronger sense of identity and a "sense of belonging and connectedness" are particularly important for identity formation in looked-after children.

The need to improve the mental health of adolescents in care and reduce the cumulative effect of multiple placement moves is widely recognised (Berridge, Biehal, & Henry, 2011; Clough, Bullock & Ward 2006; Meltzer et al., 2003; Meltzer, 2007; Munro & Hardy, 2007; Sergeant, 2006; Utting, 1991). Findings relating to adolescents living in residential care in England summarised by Meltzer (2007), indicate that 72% could be diagnosed as having a mental disorder, with the most prevalent being conduct disorders (68%). Figures which report the prevalence of mental disorders within residential care and high placement instability again, need to be understood as a reflection of how this placement type is used (Berridge, 2002). In this case the short-term nature of residential care provision and its use with older and more vulnerable care populations (Bullock, 2009; Sinclair et al., 2007), indicates a need to assist in transitions within care and beyond it (Dixon, 2008; Kendrick, 2008). The importance of this to adolescents in residential care experiencing frequent narrative disruption via placement moves and confusion about identity, becomes more apparent when consistent others become unavailable and transient relationships dominate.

For those placed in residential settings, relationships with staff members may provide additional assistance in identity negotiations. Moses (2000a) reports that young people living in residential settings spend the majority of their time with staff members, meaning these relationships can provide a sense of safety and the opportunity for personal growth. Yet with the high rate of staff turnover (Holland, Faulkner & Perez-del-Aguila, 2005) and working conditions experienced by staff members as "...not being conducive to long-term employment..." (Moses, 2000b:113), the transient nature of such relationships may offer further disjuncture.

The tendency for residentially placed adolescents to experience numerous placement moves and relationships ending abruptly as a result of high staff turnover, means that pieces of the young person's narrative can quickly become lost when staff, peers and the young people themselves move on. In this way, a lack of stable relationships can further hamper the promotion of narrative and identity coherence. This deficit can lead to problems in mental health, identity construction and self-knowledge acquisition. All of which make for less than advantageous transitions to adulthood. If life story work can encourage reflection, aid self-knowledge development, narrative identity coherence and temporal connections, then it appears that those most in need may be missing out.

1.4 Research overview

Having identified the need to engage adolescents in residential settings in dialogues akin to life story work, a practice and research knowledge gap emerges. A gap not only in relation to how adolescent life story work could be undertaken and what it may achieve, but also a fundamental lack of practice tools in this area. In this sense there is a need to create and develop tools to engage vulnerable adolescents in dialogues which encourage self-reflection, promoting a sense of narrative and identity coherence. This need is coupled with the requirement to generate knowledge about how to use such tools. Identified gaps and the everyday use of digital technologies form the basis of this research project and the overarching research question:

How can digital technologies be used to engage adolescents placed residentially in reflective dialogues akin to those of conventional life story work?

To this end the project aimed to create two adolescent focused life story work tools, explore how these could be used and their potential benefits. The first was a secure bespoke website, which

provided each young person with a private online webspace. This was created in recognition of young people's existing familiarity with uploading digital data, such as video clips and pictures to the internet. The idea behind the website, which became known as *bebook*, was to make the potential benefits of creating and storing personal digital memories online more accessible and safe, in a way which was attuned to the sensitivity needed in life story work. The second tool which became known as 'podwalking', involved giving a camcorder to a young person and asking them to walk around their old neighborhoods sharing the stories this process evoked. During the editing of these recordings and the creation of a DVD, adolescents were encouraged to reflect about the process, as well as what this process and the footage meant to them. By introducing adolescent focused life story work tools which used the digital technologies many care settings can find troubling, the project was also able to explore how residential workers continually managed the aforementioned digital technologies paradox. Simultaneously the project was able to explore how workers made use of societal available concerns regarding vulnerable populations and widely available social media.

Alongside the creation of these tools, their development and implementation strategies were vital. They had to remain attractive to the young people, their carers and care providers. To ensure these approaches remained appealing to adolescents and relevant to care settings, partnership working was sought. Additionally due to the nature of the tools created, ethical considerations were a priority for all involved. Such partnership working allowed me to successfully negotiate the care provider's research governance procedures. Whilst also stimulating the innovative use of Participant Information Clips (PICs), short video clips used to convey complex ethical information in a communicatively sensitive manner (Hammond, 2009b; Hammond & Cooper, 2011a).

The project used action research methodology to facilitate research partnerships, create ownership opportunities and collect qualitative data longitudinally. A total of ten young people from across four residential homes and staff teams from these homes became involved in the research project. Both young people and staff participated in various research cycles to various degrees throughout a fourteen month period. Such on-going involvement enabled critical reflections to occur regarding how tools were developed and progressed within each of the four homes. The action research methodology enabled the project to evolve when, for various pragmatic and context specific reasons, both tools became seen as something undertaken in my presence, rather than a part of everyday practice. The involvement of young people and

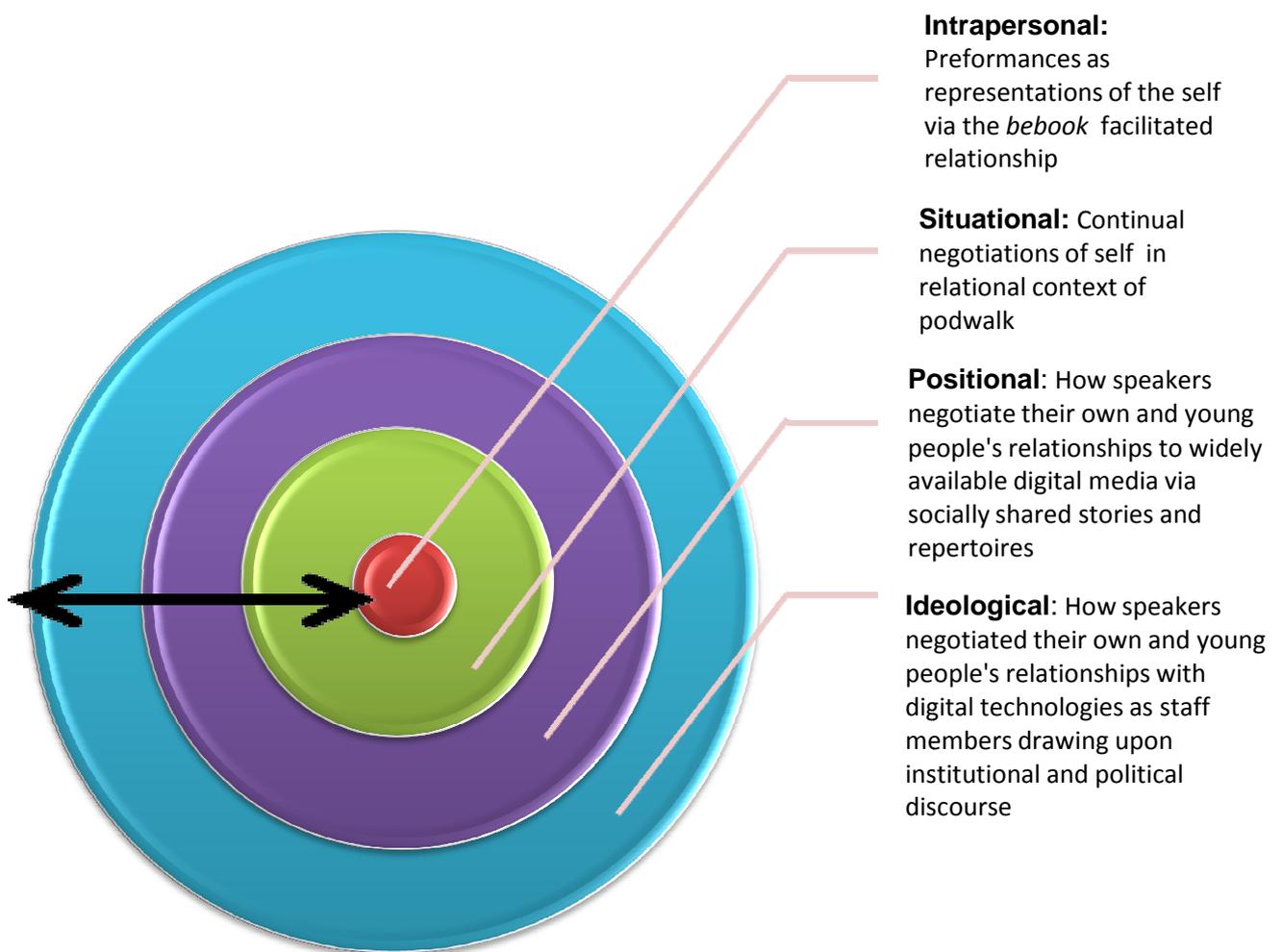
their care settings was crucial in developing and shaping the tools and associated processes created. The flexibility of the methodological approach also enabled the project to explore how and why my own direct facilitation of the tools became necessary. In so doing, this allowed the analysis to explore how the relationships I shared with the young people as a result of my direct involvement became an important feature of the overall project.

1.4.1 Analytical focus: Talk, technologies and teens

In many ways the research project was not about the development of the digital innovations *bebook* and podwalking per se, although the development of these tools and their approaches was an integral part of stimulating talk. The technology had the potential to promote and encourage reflections upon information and narrative. Whilst acknowledging this, the research project focused upon the relationships and world in which the doing of digital life story work took place. What did these tools and the shared relationships enable young people to accomplish and how did the residential world respond, promote and problematise the digital technologies introduced? Particularly as such technologies can be both facilitative of the goals such environments strive for, whilst simultaneously raising concerns and anxieties about safeguarding vulnerable populations in an increasingly online world.

The project is positioned within a social constructionist perspective and an interest in talk as emergent from one's own cultural, historical and local value systems (Burr, 1995; Edwards & Potter, 1992; Harré, 1989; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Informed by social constructionist ideas of the relational-self (Bakhtin, 1984; Gergen, 1999) and discursive psychology (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), the project locates talk as situated social action and is framed using Doise's (1986) levels of explanation. Doise (1986) proposed that within social psychology there are different levels of explanation, intrapersonal, situational, positional and ideological. Doise (1986) postulated that by combining and integrating these various levels of explanation more thorough theoretical accounts of human behaviour can be produced. Doise (1986) ideas are employed within this thesis to locate talk as situated across intrapersonal, situational, positional and ideological relationship domains; with an acknowledgement that such locating is not exclusive as talk can be up taken across differing levels. As illustrated in figure 1, young people's use of the *bebook* website and the facilitative relationship I shared with them is located and analysed in terms of its promotion of social performances as representations of self, orientating at the intrapersonal level. Young people's experiences of the relational context created during the podwalk process with myself and staff members as invited guests, is analysed with an emphasis on the continual

negotiations of the self and such relationships at the situational level. How staff members negotiate young people's and their own relationships with a wider range of digital technologies is analysed across positional and ideological levels. At the positional level of analysis attention focuses upon the differences in social position between the narrator and the listener. The ideological level of analysis is considered with the socially shared stories that are characteristic of certain communities or societies.



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1.5 Thesis structure

This thesis is divided into three discreet sections. The first begins by reviewing key literature and research relating to psychology's construction of adolescence, narratives of adolescence, the power of narrative sharing and the integration of ICT into contemporary narrative sharing practices. It begins with *Chapter 2: Adolescence and identity: A critical perspective*. This chapter outlines how psychology sets up its own truths with regards to normative adolescent experiences and expectations of adolescents themselves. Moving this critical lens towards identity in adolescence, the role of co-constructors as discursive resources is examined. *Chapter 3: Life story work and the power of narrative* then moves to highlight how life story work as an established practice is used with younger care populations to promote narrative reworking, reinterpretation and successful transitions. The power of narrative sharing is then considered in relation to different ways in which editorial roles function in conventional approaches to life story work. *Chapter 4: Bringing life story work and narrative sharing into a digital world* examines the potential applications of emerging technologies in narrative sharing and life story work. The chapter closes by outlining relevant digital media which may engage adolescents in life story work.

The second section follows this review of key research and contains one chapter, *Chapter 5: Methodology*. This chapter provides the epistemological, ontological and methodological considerations in relation to the iterative creation and development of the two comparative digital innovations. How action research methodology shaped the development and implementation of the secure bespoke website *bebook* and various phases of the podwalking approach are also described. In keeping with the critical social psychological perspective, the use of Doise (1986) to frame and locate instances of talk across intrapersonal, situational, positional and ideological levels is outlined. Reflections are then offered on research relationships and ethical considerations.

The third section of the thesis outlines the research findings and discusses their implications. It begins with *Chapter 6: bebook: Promoting reflective dialogues with adolescents in residential care*. This chapter introduces the young people engaged in using *bebook* and analyses what they were able to discursively accomplish at an intrapersonal level by being involved with

bebook. Chapter 7: Podwalking: Generating and analysing reflective talk via process driven method begins by describing how the idea of encouraging adolescents to revisit old neighbourhoods with a camcorder, recording narratives told and editing these to DVD was developed. This chapter gives consideration to each discrete phase of this process before moving to analyse the talk of those involved in the production of the young people's DVDs. Analysis focuses upon how podwalking was experienced as creating opportunities for discursive identity work, managed in the context of the situational relationships shared with invited guests and places visited. *Chapter 8: Managing uncertainty in residential homes: The emergence and consequences of the digital media, e-safety and the Scarlet Pimpernel* considers how young people's care environments mediated their experience and access to digital technologies. This chapter examines how workers used available discourses to position themselves and others in the episteme of risk (Beck, 1992), how societally available interpretive repertoires (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) were used by workers to create truth claims about risk and young people's uses of digital media which were seen as inevitable. *Chapter 9: Discussion and implications* considers how core research findings addressed the overarching research question. The chapter reflects on how relationships experienced during the implementation of each tool aided adolescent's constructions of narrative identities and what such findings mean for residential workers, care providers and policy makers. Finally future research agendas and closing comments are presented.

Chapter 2: Adolescence and identity: A critical perspective

2.1 Introduction

For adolescents in care available developmental narratives and dominant expectations about what it is to be an adolescent can become problematic. For many their own biographical narratives can be disjointed, feature highly emotive complexities in relation to their birth families and current living situation. Though adolescents in care are far from being a homogenous group, if this label is attached momentarily it becomes clear that as a group, these young people have differing experiences from their peers. When considering research undertaken in relation to adolescent identity, the majority assumes a normative family context and developmental opportunities. This normative assumption transcends across various psychological paradigms of adolescence. At an ideological level such knowledge operates to guide ways of thinking and talking at the time of the talk (Foucault, 1972), creating what Billig (1997) called ideological common-sense. In deconstructing psychology's notion of adolescence as a reflective life-stage in which developmental tasks and identity formation take place, the dominance of normative developmental narratives emerge, as do the challenges of available developmental narratives to children experiencing adolescence in care. The following chapter begins by considering how adolescence in relation to adolescent identity has become constructed in psychological literature and taken up in contemporary discourses. Through this perspective identity as continually reconstructed, reworked and renegotiated in talk emerges. With this emergence the potential for adolescents in care to be assisted in the reworking of biographical narrative complexities arises.

2.2 Contemporary discourses of youth

"Individuals, when they speak, do not create their own language, but they use terms which are culturally, historically and ideologically available." (Billig, 1997:217)

The role and way children have come to be perceived in Westernised cultures has dramatically shifted over the last two centuries. As societies have changed and developed, adolescence has

emerged as a discrete period of the lifespan (Giddens, 2002). Continuing advances in medical technologies continue to stretch the lifespan. This impacts upon and stretches discrete periods of it, including adolescence. In so doing, culturally based age-related expectations for young people have become sensitised (Schneider & Ingra, 1993). According to Eckersley (1988) discourses of 'youth at-risk' or 'crisis of youth' relate to truths rehearsed to position youths as delinquent and deviant. As Tait (1995) and latterly Kelly (2001) highlight, a dangerous connotation of youth at-risk discourse means that, potentially all behaviours, activities and groups of adolescents can be constructed in terms of risk.

In mapping youth at-risk literature Withers and Batten (1995) highlight two central competing discourses. They identified the first as humanistic intention, concerned about harm, danger, care, and supporting those who may be deemed at-risk, and the second as economic intention. Economic intention foregrounds interventions as legitimate ways to regulate youthful activities as economically beneficial to communities and nations. These discourses are particularly prevalent in health and social care settings.

Giddens (2002) suggests that in light of continual technological development and consequently longer periods of education, cultural expectations encourage young people to postpone marriage and childbearing until they are economically able to support themselves and their families. Shoveller and Johnson (2006) highlight how discourses concerning what they called risky groups, risky behaviours and risky persons, have been advanced as sanctioned discourses in Canada. Linking back to Withers and Batten's (1995) economic intention, Shoveller and Johnson (2006) discuss how approved realities marginalise those youth whose experiences do not match the dominant norm.

Arai (2009) highlights how shifting ideologies surrounding when having children is viewed as culturally acceptable, has resulted in the construction of teenage mothers as a social concern. In their review of social service's constructions of "Teen Mothers", Rains, Davies and McKinnon (2004:17) encourage agencies to reflect upon discourses enacted to define their clients and their range of needs. In a series of interviews with Norwegian youths examining feminine identity, Hauge (2009) also makes reference to strict developmental expectations being aligned with doing the 'right' thing at the 'right' time. Seemingly for young people whose experiences of adolescence differ from dominant societal expectations or approved realities, tensions can arise. This can lead young people to have their experiences of adolescence marginalised. How

a culture makes available and mobilises certain discourses over others allows the 'right' or culturally accepted way of doing things to become dominant.

In considering how young people's experiences of adolescence can become marginalised, the work of Foucault (1972) and Billig (1997) provide a deconstructive lens. For Foucault (1972) the way a topic can be meaningfully talked and reasoned about is determined by the dominant episteme. For Foucault (1972) an episteme guides ways of thinking, talking and the state of knowledge at a particular historical moment. The temporal strand of this concept enables knowledge creation as situated language to resonate. In other words, the meaning of language and what certain words relate to become linked to a particular historical moment and social context.

People draw upon shared social and culturally available discourses or ideologies. For Billig (1997:217): "An ideology comprises of the ways of thinking and behaving within a given society, which make the ways of that society seem 'natural' or unquestioned to its members." In this way Billig (1997) sees ideology as being the common-sense of society. Members of societies inherit the cultural truths of that society. These will appear to them as 'natural' or 'inevitable' (Billig, 1997). Such expectations make available certain developmental narratives whilst restricting and limiting others. Societal expectations guide how adolescence as a concept can be reasoned about at a point in time. In applying the work of Foucault (1972) and Billig (1997) to influential psychological literature on adolescence, the following section will unpack psychology's common-sense in relation to the adolescent experience. Similarly, reflecting upon which particular representations of adolescence constructed by psychological knowledge remain culturally available, dominant and readily foregrounded by society.

2.2.1 Psychological common-sense of adolescence

Psychological theories of development are based upon notions of normative development. In such theories ideas of parental and environmental continuity persist, as Burman's (1994) deconstruction of developmental psychology illustrates. In developmental psychology the home environment tends to be depicted as one of: "...a celebration of security..*(and)*..a conflict free heaven..." (Burman, 1994:65). In this way Burman (1994) begins to illustrate how the rhetoric employed by developmental psychology operates to set up performative knowledge.

Developmental psychology begins to promote certain developmental narratives and marginalise others. A comparable thread continues into adolescence.

Expectations of “...deviance, disruption and wickedness...” (Brown, 1998:3), appear to find cultural prevalence when we employ the word adolescent. The word ‘adolescence’ to describe the period of late childhood, is commonly attributed to the work of Hall (1904). In his two-volume book entitled *Adolescence*, Hall (1904) describes adolescence as a period dominated by biologically related change. In writing from this universal, biologically determined, developmental stage perspective, Hall’s (1904) work conceptualised adolescence as a period of ‘storm and stress’. This turbulent life stage was said to consist of three major themes: mood disruption, risk taking behaviour and conflict with parents. Though highly influential, Hall’s (1904) work neglected the potential for differing cultural contexts, regarding them as a by-product of the biologically driven universal aspects of adolescence. Through Hall’s (1904) ‘storm and stress’ paradigm, expectations of behaviour were the manifestation of universal biologically driven change occurring during this age period.

The remnants of Hall’s (1904) ‘storm and stress’ paradigm in relation to the role of hormonal mood disruption and risk taking behaviours remains ingrained with ways adolescents are talked about. Galatzer-Levy (2002) suggests the potency of categorisations remain strong when categorisation is assumed to make reference to an essential quality of the person. When the storm and stress paradigm is foregrounded, it becomes possible to talk about individuals experiencing adolescence in certain ways and harder to talk about them in others. It becomes acceptable to refer to adolescents as moody, impulsive, sexually promiscuous and hormonally driven. In this way the comments of Billig (1997) in relation to the inheriting of language which is culturally, historically and ideologically available find prominence. As the extract below, taken from *New Scientist* illustrates:

“Adolescents are known to be moody, insecure, argumentative, angst-ridden, impulsive, impressionable, reckless and rebellious....Scientists once thought that the brain's internal structure was fixed at the end of childhood, and teenage behaviour was blamed on raging hormones and a lack of experience. Then researchers discovered that the brain undergoes significant changes during adolescence” (www.newscientist.com/article/dn9938-instant-expert-teenagers.html accessed on 24/02/12)

The universal assumptions of biological 'storm and stress' as a truth of adolescence remain pervasive; adolescents are 'known' to behave in certain ways. How these 'teenage behaviours' become worked up in discourse are relocated in relation to causality. Teenage behaviour becomes constructed as a result of changes in the brain and not hormonal change. The expectation and acceptance of the approved reality means adolescence continue to be stigmatised as: "...moody, insecure, argumentative, angst-ridden, impulsive, impressionable, reckless and rebellious (www.newscientist.com/article/dn9938-instant-expert-teenagers.html accessed on 24/02/12).

In *Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity*, Goffman (1963) discusses the pervasive nature of spoiled identities. If we begin to apply Goffman's notion of stigma to frame conceptualisations of adolescence, assumptions of universality and claims made possible in approved realities become clarified. In discussing differences between what he called 'normals' and 'stigmatised', Goffman (1963) notes that stigma is pervasive and causes interpretation to be contingent. When a person is stigmatised, difference comes to be interpreted as being a direct expression of the stigma itself. Goffman (1963) referring to former 'mental patients', suggests the stigmatised person has to be cautious when engaging in sharp interchanges. Seemingly any show of emotion may be constructed as resulting from mental instability. Within the context of adolescence, disagreements with parents or other authority figures can become mobilised in discourse as rebellious teenage behaviour. In this way when stigmatised as an adolescent, discourses of youth at-risk become foregrounded (Kelly, 2001; Tait, 1995).

2.2.2 Challenging psychological common sense

How young people are experiencing adolescence in society and indeed how society is responding to them as adolescents is continually negotiated and renegotiated (Gergen, 1999). Discourses relating to teenage behaviour make certain tropes and additional discursive resources available to those labelled and those doing the labelling. Labels that categorise people are on the whole potent because, once in place, the categorisation is assumed to refer to some essential quality of the person (Galatzer-Levy, 2002). In this way the psychological common-sense of teenage behaviour as resulting from universal biological change, gives adolescence a pervasive stigma. Gergen (1999) comments that public portrayals inform those depicted of how society expects them to act, they are guided by this and act accordingly. Such

portrayals also inform society how to treat those depicted, becoming what Gergen (1999) refers to as a mutually sustaining symmetry.

Dominating youth at-risk discourses inform and set up a socially sanctioned hegemony of acceptability. In this way Hall's (1904) work can be seen to provide a trope of a normative developmental narrative which depicts age-related behavioural expectations, a representation mobilised by the group in question and their society. In this way when reaching their teenage years, psychological common-sense sets up an individual's behaviours as emerging from their entry into this adolescent phase. They become stigmatised as adolescents.

In the wake of Hall's (1904) 'storm and stress' paradigm came the conclusions of Mead (1928), whose ethnographic research examined the varied cultural meanings of this period in life. Mead's (1928) contribution underlined the cultural-specific and gender-specific nature of adolescence, overlooked in the biologically driven work of Hall (1904). Drawing comparisons between young women experiencing adolescence in Samoa and those experiencing it in America, Mead (1928) argued that this period was mainly experienced by Samoan women as an orderly maturing of activities and interests. Mead's (1928) research saw the role of psychosocial experiences across the lifespan prevail. However the impact of Mead (1928) reaches beyond how it is predominantly represented in psychological literature and undergraduate textbooks. Accordingly Newman (1996) writing from a critical perspective, suggests that whilst Mead is usually understood as challenging the western ethnocentric orientation, Mead (1928) did not challenge the belief in the cultural superiority of western civilization. Newman (1996) suggests Mead merely substitutes biological explanations of superiority for cultural ones.

Hall (1904) and Mead (1928) have multiple layers of meaning, but certain messages become foregrounded. The hormonal driven influences of Hall (1904) and orderly maturing derived from the work of Mead (1928) are two such examples of how psychology sets up culturally based psychological knowledge about adolescence. They become approved realities or representations of this work. The work of Erikson (1959; 1995) also tends to be presented in a way which rounds off its complexities and sets up psychological common-sense of adolescence in particular ways.

Less fixed than the original works of Piaget (1932; 1954) in relation to age-related changes, Erikson (1959) considered the influence of the psychosocial on development. The stage like nature of his approach underlines dominant ideologies in relation to strict developmental expectations being aligned with doing the 'right' thing at the 'right' time (Hauge, 2009). His work also features the combative elements of Hall (1904) via his ideas on conflicts. In his theory of normative development, Erikson (1959) sets up adolescence as a period in which the conflict to between what he refers to as identity and confusion needs to be resolved. In this way the work of Erikson (1959) begins to work up the availability of normative developmental narratives of adolescence in relation to conflict resolution and identity formation.

In this adolescent stage Erikson (1959) states that conflicts occur when exploring independence and during attempts to develop a strong sense of self. Forays into independence and autonomy are overseen by an adult bystander (Erikson, 1959). Erikson (1959) proposed that the resolution of this key psychosocial conflict involved developing a sense of identity which could connect childhood with adulthood. Resolution of this conflict was said to lead to: "...a feeling of being at home in one's body, a sense of knowing where one is going, and an inner assuredness of anticipated recognition from those who count..." (Erikson, 1959:165). To Erikson (1959) this is achieved via consolidating information relating to identifications of childhood into coherent adult identity. Hence the resolution of identity confusion and upheaval needs to be completed during adolescence and in a relationship context: "...with those who count..." (Erikson, 1959:165). Such a figure is usually a parent. In relation to adolescents in care, such developmental expectations and culturally available narratives can be in stark contrast to their own.

2.2.3 Mobilising alternatives

"There is no privileged relationship between world and word." (Gergen, 1999:34)

Challenges to dominant ideologies are not without their social risks. As Galatzer-Levy (2002:46) suggests: "People are expected to act according to their age, and, if they do not, they are commonly seen as disturbed." In British society for example, individuals who deviate from normative developmental narratives in relation to age-related behaviours can be often instructed to 'act your age, not your shoe size'. Such utterances demonstrate to the individual the foolhardy nature of their deviation. Even this mild form of social control illustrates the power of

normative developmental narratives. The power of this socially constructed narrative provides us with ideologies of approved realities which marginalise differences.

The availability of discourses of youth at-risk represented in the media predominantly, construct teenage years as conflict ridden and dangerous. In conflicts with, or as a dangerous to each other, society or authority figures. In taking a more discursive approach, for Vygotsky (1978) and indeed Bruner (1966), Erikson's (1959) process of conflict resolution can be moved from the context of the minds of the individual to relationships shared with others. On reflection, if there is conflict within this period perhaps it is worth refocusing on how society sets up relationships in adolescence. Think of a seventeen year old male, he is old enough to drive and yet not old enough to purchase alcohol. He is old enough to join the military and go to war, yet cannot join the Social Networking Site (SNS) Google+. Adolescence is abound with paradoxes such as these. Though the latter of these examples is a more recent paradox, it highlights why Erikson's ideas of conflict continue to be foregrounded as psychological truths. A psychological theory based on conflict resolution makes sense when society constructs 'youth at-risk' and creates conflicting paradoxes.

Ideologies of adolescence make certain ways of viewing this population appear natural and inevitable (Billig, 1997). In relation to adolescents in care, dominant psychological theories present as a narrative problem. Psychological common-sense dictates that having access to a secure base relationship is vital for normative development (Ainsworth, 1963; Bowlby, 1958). When resolving Erikson's (1959) identity conflict during adolescence, a similar relationship is seen as vital. For Erikson (1959) those who failed to resolve this conflict between identity and confusion may remain unsure of their beliefs and future directions. Failures tended to result in: "...delinquent and outright psychotic episodes..." (Erikson, 1959:165). In this way for looked-after children a second stigma appears. Not only do they become stigmatised as adolescents, but also as adolescents in care, adolescents who may be unable to resolve conflicts and according to Erikson (1959), can tend to become delinquent. Erikson (1959) sets up the passing of adolescence as also the passing of opportunities to facilitate positive change. Delinquency becomes seemingly inevitable.

Psychological literature commonly represents adolescence and therefore adolescents in certain ways. Galazter-Levy (2002:44) proposes: "...media portrayals and particularly psychological literature bear little resemblance to the systematic studies of adolescence conducted in North

America.” He continues that research has indicated that the majority of adolescents are thought to be: “...no more stress free than other people, are satisfied with their lives and engaged in moving forward in them.” (Galazter-Levy, 2002:45). For those who work with adolescents challenges to dominant ideological common-sense allow alternative conceptualisations to emerge. Such challenges open up possibilities for alternative narratives. This proposition offers adolescents and those who seek to engage with them, an opportunity to continually reconstruct what it is to be an adolescent. After all: “There is no privileged relationship between world and word.” (Gergen, 1999:34). In this way adolescence can become represented as a window of opportunity, as opposed to a window that has already shut.

In viewing adolescence as a window of opportunity this discussion acknowledges its use of: “...terms which are culturally, historically and ideologically available.” (Billig, 1997:217). It views adolescence as an important time period because Western society views it this way. This importance is intensified in lives of children living in care because of their pre-care experiences and current living arrangements. Available narratives bestowed upon these children by society provide them with a double stigma. In trying to make sense of their lives by available normative narratives, they are disadvantaged compared to their peers on various levels. Social constructionism carries with it the idea that other narratives are possible. Framing adolescence in this way invites the pursuit of innovative ways to communicate with vulnerable adolescents. In this context, searching for ways to help adolescents in care refine socially available narratives, make sense of their experiences, relate with others, and make life beneficial decisions is a worthy pursuit. After all, the window remains open.

2.3 Relativism and identity

Adolescence is viewed as a key period in the process of identity formation. Erikson (1959) suggests that adolescents find their identity through the resolution of the identity versus confusion conflict. This notion of identity as a fixed or stable entity has been discounted by social constructionist positions. So too has the notion that identity can be found through the resolution of such a conflict. Social construction moves the lens of enquiry from the mind of the individual to the relational context. Goffman (1959) represents an example of a symbolic interactionism approach, informed by such a relativist position.

Goffman (1959) stated human actions are dependent upon time, place, and audience. In this sense the self is a dramatic effect emerging from the immediate scene presented. As he states: "This self does not derive from its possessor, but from the whole scene of his action." (Goffman, 1959:244). In this way Goffman (1959) views identity as a discursive process negotiated and dependent upon the interactional context in which it occurs (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). Influenced by colleagues at the University of Chicago (Cooley, 1902; Mead 1934), Goffman (1959) emphasised the link between individual and environment. Even when alone Goffman (1959:81-2): states: "...an individual may be his own audience or may imagine an audience to be present". Private thoughts and monologues are experienced in language. A point followed up by Billig (1997) who suggests that the individual is in the company of others and their culture via language, even when alone and engaged in private contemplation. A point further reinforced by Gergen (1999:134):

"...we may be doing something privately – which we might want to call reasoning, pondering or feeling – but from the present standpoint these are essentially public actions carried out in private."

For Gergen (2000) the emphasis when considering identity is also upon the relationship context. Gergen (2000) understands identity as an incomplete pastiche of highly complex, partially constructed, inconsistent and contradictory sub-identities. This mixture of incomplete ingredients is used anew in everyday identity work to construct appropriate sub-identities. For Gergen (2000) modernist perspectives of the self and identity as fixed, stable entities become fragmented. In his work on the saturated self Gergen (2000:6) proposes that broad technological advancements within society have meant that we have become furnished: "...with a multiplicity of incoherent and unrelated languages of the self." These relate to the partially constructed appropriate sub-identities which we pursue in numerous incoherent and disconnected relationships. Such relationships require us to play a variety of roles, meaning the idea of an authentic private-self fades away. To understand how we get to this point, it is important to introduce how the study of identity has been approached by discursive psychology.

2.3.1 Discourse and identity

For Wittgenstein (1978) words gain their meaning through their use within language games. Bengry-Howell and Griffen (2007) demonstrated how through car modification young working-class men were performing on-going identity work by discursively distancing themselves from standard car-owning identities. Instead they constituted themselves as privileged through owning unique cars. To understand the meaning assigned to the term 'doughnut' in car modification subculture rhetoric, one needs to know the rules of the game. In this case that the term 'doughnut' is used to describe a driving manoeuvre which involves rotating the rear wheels of a vehicle around the front wheels of the vehicle with the aim of creating a circular skid-mark pattern. Employing rhetoric in one's talk is performative. The talk of Bengry-Howell and Griffen's participants positioned the self as masculine. It illustrated knowledge of the modifying car game, a generally perceived male activity. These young men constructed identities as: "Self-made Motormen" (Bengry-Howell & Griffen, 2007: 439). Austin (1962) also emphasised the need to attend to the performative character of language and how this functions within a relationship context. In other words the way we do things with words (Austin, 1962). The way that words become employed, is how Gergen (1999) suggests these words gain their meaning. Not only from patterns of talking but from the entire language games.

Informed by social constructionist ideas, discursive psychology and its methods emerged from debates and sustained criticisms of an overemphasis on experimental methods within social psychology during the 1970s (Gergen, 1978; Harré, 1979; Harré & Secord, 1972). Building upon these philosophical paradigms discursive psychology treats talk and indeed language as a performative medium which is action orientated, constructed and understood as situated (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). In coalescing the idea of 'the crisis in social psychology', Parker (1989) saw the turn to discourse as a way to solve it. Edwards and Potter (1992) sustained this critique, questioning the way in which discourse was treated in mainstream psychology and particularly cognitive approaches as an expressive medium of mental processes. Discursive psychology focuses upon challenging assumptions that language is the expressive medium of mental processes (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006; Edwards & Potter, 1992; Edwards & Potter 2001).

In this way when Erikson (1995:235) makes reference to conflicts and the "...dangers..." of adolescence, this becomes a speech act. A way of constructing a particular social reality which in itself has rules dictating socially acceptable ways of proceeding. Through his use of

combative metaphors, Erikson (1995: 235) constructs conflicts during adolescence and the finality of identity formation in this stage:

“...adolescents have to re-fight many of the battles of earlier years, even though to do so they must artificially appoint perfectly well-meaning people to play the roles of adversaries; and they are ever ready to install lasting idols and ideals of guardians of final identity...”

In considering discursive approaches the levels of explanation framework provided by Doise (1986) makes an important contribution. In his work Doise (1986) located the study of social psychology across four levels of analysis, those of intrapersonal, situational, positional and ideological. Different discursive approaches to the study of identity and self are similar. Each emphasises identity and self as neither a given or product, but as a situated process which is negotiated in talk (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). The point at which analysis focuses upon and privileges content differ. The approach known as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) orientates towards being located at the positional and ideological levels. This approach emphasises the political and ideological context in which the identity formation process is being negotiated (Reynolds & Wetherell, 2003). At an ideological level an interest in power and the way in which it is manifested in talk and social relationships are privileged. CDA can also be linked with Foucauldian ideas of the influence of episteme and dominant discursive formations, such as Potter and Wetherell's (1987) interpretive repertoires. Towards the positional and situational level the work of the analyst is to explore how identities are located in occasions of utterance, it is the immediate interactional context which becomes the focus. In this area discursive psychology shares the approaches of Conversational Analysis (CA) and its roots in Ethnomethodology (EM). Analysts emerging from this approach orientate their attention towards how identities manifest as negotiated by the activities in which participants talk is engaged.

In attempting to engage with the study of talk and indeed identity at macro and micro levels of analysis, a synthetic approach has been suggested by Wetherell (1998). In this approach Wetherell (1998) argues for using a blended form of analysis which conserves conversational analysis's attention to interactional situated talk, whilst also including the ability to map out discursive practices from an ideological and historical perspective. This approach has been challenged by amongst others Benwell and Stokoe (2006). They suggest that Wetherell's (1998) use of what they call the importation of extra-textual discourse to understand terminologies

occurring in talk, adds little to analysis (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). In referring to Wetherell's (1998) analysis of a male participant who uses the term 'Casanova' to suggest that such terms are recruited as shorthand by the participant. In this sense instead of going on to explain in detail why the participant's friend was a sexually promiscuous male, the synthetic approach allowed Wetherell (1998) to use a macro analytical feature within the situationally focused analysis of interaction. Benwell and Stokoe (2006) refute the need to do this, stating that there is nothing special about the word 'Casanova' which requires a macro level analysis to understand. They concluded that Wetherell's (1998) participant was unlikely to use this term without knowing its literary origins (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). Ironically the critique of Benwell and Stokoe (2006) orientates around the importation of what they call 'extra-textual discourse' to aid understanding. Yet, they too reach beyond the textual by importing assumptions about Wetherell's (1998) participant's level of knowledge.

Debates in discursive psychology in relation to different forms of analysis employed seem set to continue. Such debates impact upon how the field approaches the study of identity. In outlining discursive ideas of identity, attention towards the availability of co-constructive resources during adolescence needs to be examined. It is envisaged that lasting relationships and in turn the availability of co-constructors, is something that tends not to be experienced by the majority of adolescents in care settings. Such a lack of access is a notable difference to how their peers experience adolescence and indeed relationships during this period. The following discussion will examine identity resources available to adolescents as both co-constructors and co-creators of their own social reality.

2.4 Adolescent identity resources

"Even the concept of relationship itself, as we inherit it, presumes that relationships are built up from the more basic units of single individuals." (Gergen, 1999:123)

In his work on the relational-self Gergen (1999) emphasises the ideas of Bakhtin (1984). For Bakhtin (1984) performance constitutes relationships, inhabited not only by the history of relationships as well by the relationships into which they are directed. Thus in terms of adolescent identity performances, like all social performers adolescents need to take into account what the audience already knows about them (Goffman, 1959). In this way the role of consistent co-constructors within the identity process re-emerges. Adolescents who can build

upon relationships with audiences or relatively consistent co-constructors, need not to reintroduce themselves anew at the start of each performance. The audience already knows them and the adolescent is aware of this in the relationship context. Adolescents in care however tend to experience much more transient relationships (Stein & Munro, 2008), in giving a performance to new audiences extra discursive identity work is needed to bring the new audience 'up to speed'. The performer is left to reintroduce key characters within their performance. In relation to the works of Gergen (2000) the performer needs to construct a range of new sub-identities for relationships to be experienced. The availability of discursive resources as co-constructors is now examined with discussions highlighting the differing journeys experienced by adolescent care populations in comparison to those of their peers.

2.4.1 Co-constructive relationships in identity building

In social constructionist approaches to identity the role of co-constructors persists. When placing the role of co-constructors within an adolescent context the work of Schachter and Ventura (2008) and their concept of identity agents become relevant. Schachter and Ventura (2008) introduced the concept of identity agents as individuals who are actively involved and interact with children and adolescents with the intention of participating in identity formation. In conceptualising identity agents, Schachter and Ventura (2008) state that such individuals are potentially resources of positive identity formation. Continuing that, such identity agents also reflectively mediate wider societal influences on the adolescent's identity formation. Schachter and Ventura (2008) argue that the inclusion of co-constructors within developmental psychological approaches which acknowledge sociocultural and contextual influences, stop short of including reflective agents other than the adolescent themselves. As such Schachter and Ventura (2008) place a specific focus upon the adolescent-parent dyadic relationship, and the reflexivity the engaged parent can bring as a consistent co-constructor. However they also remarked that the identity agent or co-constructor role can also be fulfilled by individuals other than parents, referring to teachers, mentors and youth leaders.

In building upon Schachter and Ventura (2008), Von Korff, Grotevant, Koh and Samek (2010) provide an applied example which allows the additional identity complexities experienced by care populations to emerge. In exploring how adoptive mothers talk with their adopted children about adoption, Von Korff et al. (2010) suggest that by creating opportunities to talk with children about adoption, additional narrative complexities can be worked through. In this way by

engaging in conversations with young people about their birth family, adoptive mothers can act as identity agents. Effectively they become co-constructors assisting the young person in gaining knowledge about themselves and their narrative. Von Korff et al. (2010) and Von Korff and Grotevant (2011) frame this in relation to young people building up ways of talking about their experiences, referring to this as the young person's adoptive identity. Developing discursive resources in relation to handling questions about one's current situation is a common task for care populations whose personal narratives differ from those of their peers (Ryan & Walker, 2007). Jansen (2010) also suggested that access to personal narratives which constitute such adolescents as ordinary become restricted when attempting to explain experiences of unusual parental circumstances.

2.4.2 Narratives as discursive resources

"...because we are treated by others as storied characters, we are often called upon to "tell our story", to recount our past, to identify where we have been and where we are going. In effect we identify ourselves through narration. In a sense, narrative structures set certain limits over who we can be." (Gergen, 1999:70)

In order to understand how narratives become conceptualised as discursive resources we must first consider the demands being made by narratives themselves. For Sarbin (1986) narratives offer a way of organising life. He proposes the narratory principle as a way to coordinate episodes, actions and accounts of actions according to narrative structures. Such structures also allow the narrator to include motives for intent or causes for such intent happening. When choosing to engage with a narrative, individuals are led to interpret and to adapt to how they are portrayed within it. Narratives make demands upon those who share them: "The listener expects a story to have a beginning, middle, and end, and this expectation is typically couched in terms of time or chronology." (McAdams, 2006:12). In this sense narratives demand some form of structure and coherence to be understood.

Narrative approaches to examining talk give weight to the order of meaning; seen as the combination of temporal and causal connections (Crossley, 2000). The temporal strands of narratives made available to performers by dominant ideologies are viewed as discursive resources. Available narratives make certain identities, normative sequences and value positions available to social performers (Wetherell, 1998). They become the site for continual identity construction through the discursive work undertaken by speakers (Wetherell, 1998). As

such how temporal and causal features of narratives relate to creating a coherent story are viewed as being: "...constituted through our systems of discourses..." (Wetherell & Potter, 1992:65). In this way language enables performers to work up accounts as coherent, since to be coherent is to be understood by one's self and others. McAdams (2006) suggests narrative accounts are accepted as coherent when the produced account meets the approval of the localised cultural and performance context. In applying Goffman's (1959) theatrical metaphor the success of a performance relies upon time, place, and audience. Narrative performances function as coherent when they utilise structural components made available by the localised ideologies of the cultures in which they resonate and the life is lived (McAdams, 2006).

Turning attention back towards how narratives can be used as discursive resources for adolescents, Galatzer-Levy (2002) states that contemporary adolescents are now expected to be carefree, uncertain of their identity and open to possibilities. Dominant narratives of adolescence are inextricably linked to ideas of normative development. For adolescents, discourses used to describe them can be observed directly from mass media representations. Gergen (1999) suggests this can become a mutually sustaining symmetry. Public portrayals inform those depicted of how society expects them to act, they are guided by this and act accordingly. Such public portrayals also inform society how to treat those depicted, reinforced by society's treatment of them. In this sense, narratives of adolescence provide young people with a guide of how to be an adolescent, or indeed how to 'do' adolescence. When discussing his work which explored the contrasting availability of narratives to American adolescents, Galatzer-Levy (2002) describes how minority populations of adolescents are often faced with an even more rigid and less than satisfactory number of possible narratives. Galatzer-Levy (2002) states that male African Americans need only to turn on the television to learn that they are intrinsically violent and in a hopeless position.

In relation to experiences of those labelled as adolescents in care, the work of Jansen (2010) and Jansen and Havvind (2011) provide an insight into the narrative challenges faced. In conducting a series of longitudinal repeat interviews with twelve young people placed residentially in Norway, Jansen (2010) and Jansen and Havvind (2011) examined how participants identified themselves according to narrative structures. Jansen (2010) refers to a participant she calls Marius and discusses how the availability of simpler normative narratives appealed to him. In the words of her participant:

“Marius: It will be easier then...I get these questions of what it is like living here, things like that, but when I move to Mum’s I won’t have to deal with these questions, because then, it is, most people know what it’s like to live with your parents.” (Jansen, 2010:429)

In having to negotiate what Von Korff et al. (2010) refer to as an added layer of complexity by living in care settings, Jansen (2010) highlights how “Marius” finds it demanding to have to repeatedly explain himself and his circumstances. In this way by returning to his Mum’s house Marius is able to reduce the complexity of his biographical narrative. In so doing he reduces the need for extra discursive work to explain how and why his narrative structure differs to that of his peers. In analysing the same series of interviews Jansen and Havvind (2011) demonstrate how narratives can set limits over the different ways in which events are experienced and find meaning, highlighting how their participants identified themselves according to narrative structures. From their analysis Jansen and Havvind (2011) state that particular recurring narratives emerged and were used to interpret current experiences as meaningful. Young people who they state relied upon “Despite all” narratives were able to interpret their own capacities within a more resilient narrative framework (Jansen & Havvind, 2011:68). In comparison participants who told their story in relation to “If only” narratives, concentrated on how the present situation may have been different if events in their pasts had played out differently (Jansen & Havvind, 2011:68). Jansen and Havvind (2011: 68) conclude that those who recruited the “Despite all” narrative were able to constitute themselves as agents in their social world, as opposed to those who used the “If only” narrative who were conceptualised as passive. They continue stating that these narrative frameworks impact upon young people's perspectives in terms of their future directions and possible selves (Jansen & Havvin, 2011).

2.5 Summative comments

Narratives available to young people living in care need to be understood in the context of widely available narratives of adolescence they have access to. Adolescents in care face choices regarding further education and training or if to find a job. Such choices are deemed to be of vital importance by culturally available developmental narratives, with said narratives also having potential lifespan connotations. Adolescents in care as a group tend to have to make culturally based life choices without the stability of relationships enjoyed by many of their peers, but also with the possibility that choosing certain paths will impact upon the provision of their placement, support and care. The work of Von Korff et al. (2010) with adoptive mother-adolescent dyads illustrate how extra layers of complexity are added to young people's

narratives when living in care. Jansen (2010) and Jansen and Havvind (2011) provide a comparative element in relation to how this additional complexity is experienced by those living in residential care by their peers both in other care settings and also living at home. As a care provision residential is most distant from a normative family environment, with anywhere up to twenty carers attempting to replace a parental figure(s). As the comments of Marius illustrates additional complexities can take repeated explaining, which can tend to lead to more questions (Jansen, 2010). When experiencing frequent transient relationships and consequently meeting new audiences, additional discursive work can become tiresome. Crucially children in care are also navigating what has become seen as a culturally important phase of life and approaching the age at which they must leave care, which for residentially placed young people has been shown to be particularly difficult (Stein & Munro, 2008).

Chapter 3: Life story work and the power of narrative

3.1 Introduction

Life story work is consistently cited as something that needs to be carried out, create some form of resolution, aid transitions, be undertaken in childhood and continually revisited in later life (Baynes, 2008; Fahlberg, 1994; Ryan & Walker, 2007). In this sense life story work can be conceptualised as something carried out at a particular time in childhood to aid transitions to long-term placements. Such work is seen here as vital and a valuable practice when working with traumatised and possibly abused vulnerable children. Transitions and abuse can occur throughout the life span not just in younger childhood. This emphasis placed on transitions in younger childhood and the communicative methods used in conventional approaches aimed at this younger age group, obscure some to its benefits for adolescent care populations.

Through positioning life story work as a technique within a narrative framework the power to share and retell one's story becomes more visible, as does its lifelong implications. The power to continually reinterpret and retell one's own story grants an individual with the opportunity to reflect upon where they have come from, where they have been and where they wish to go next; a key element within the transitional aims of conventional life story work. When such power is linked with the apparent reflective opportunities provided by constructions of adolescence as a reflective phase, the need to recognise and engage with adolescents becomes apparent. This is especially the case when considering those adolescents who entered care at a later date and/or those who missed out on life story work when younger. To explore such suggestions the following chapter begins with a brief introduction to the cultural nature of narrative sharing, deemed to be a central feature of life story work. It then moves to consider the theoretical roots of using narrative creation and retelling when working with young people living in care settings. Wider applications of narrative retelling are presented with approaches to undertaking life story work critiqued in terms of their application to adolescent care populations. The implications of this critique are then considered before attention is given to the potential role that digital technologies may play in engaging with vulnerable adolescents.

3.2 Narrative culture: Contextualising life story work in a theoretical framework

Life story work relies upon a young person being allowed to express themselves through the story they share. As a form of communication, storytelling dates back to the earliest records of our ancient ancestors (Coe, Aiken, Palmer & Toral, 2006). The cave paintings of those who lived thousands of years ago may appear somewhat removed from the culturally specific, time dependent discourses that appear to pass from generation to generation by word of mouth. Narrative sharing still represents a major aspect of social worlds (Crossley, 2000), and as will be argued the power to share, reconstruct and retell narratives is still an important phenomenon in society and a vital part of life story work.

The power yielded by narratives is not a new idea but its influence has found new uses in critical perspectives (Galatzer-Levy, 2002). Social construction, for example, views language not as a neutral attempt to mirror reality but as an action with a purpose. The functionality of words can also be seen at a societal level. Giddens (1979) suggests narratives feature centrally in the socialisation of children through delivering messages and/or recommendations which portray how its members should behave. In many ways ideological common-sense is delivered to societies members via narrative (Billig, 1997). They are functional and powerful.

When considering the social act of sharing narratives in the social world over time, it becomes evident that whilst many of the tools used to retell and share narratives may have developed mirroring that of the technological advancements of many societies. The underlying premise remains. Narratives are shared for a reason; they serve a purpose and depict characters in social settings (Crossley, 2000). Different versions of an event can be told for a range of psychological and/or social reasons. An individual may choose to tell a different version of a night of excess to those whom he or she considers to be close personal friends, in comparison to those whom he or she considers to be work colleagues or a key worker. The language used therefore performs functionally. Narratives are personal and told with emotions, they do not seek to be devoid of context (Crossley 2000). In retelling a narrative one's positioning within it can guide subsequent interpretation and in some cases possible future actions. Davis and Harré (1990:262) elaborated on this concept in their work on positioning theory, stating that:

“A subject position incorporates both a conceptual repertoire and a location for persons within the structure of rights for those that suit that repertoire. Once having taken up a particular position as one’s own, a person inevitably sees the world from the vantage point of that position and in terms of the particular images, metaphors, story lines and concepts which are made relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned.”

For Murry (2004), when choosing to engage with a particular type of narrative, individuals are led to interpret and to adapt to how they are portrayed within it. In his applied work in the area of critical health psychology, Murry (2004) demonstrates how the sharing and retelling of a narrative can work to be both a limiting and/or liberating experience for those who choose to share them. In a supportive group environment Murry (2004) discusses how one may feel limited by the narratives told and the way in which these narratives construct one’s illness, especially if the narrative shared does not match the shared experiences of the group and becomes marginalised. Alternatively, one may find comfort in attending a supportive group environment in which patients with similar conditions can share similar narratives about their illness. Having one’s narrative heard and understood by others can be a powerful and therapeutic experience, and the opposite may be the case for those who do not feel their narratives are heard or valued. This last point underlines the need to allow all ages of young people living in care to share their stories and have them valued.

The sharing of narratives has led to the therapeutic application of narrative creation within a wide variety of settings. Autobiographical narratives are one such example, used here to illustrate the possible benefits of life story work to those beyond early childhood. According to Obyebode (2003) autobiographical narratives are said to combine self-analysis and an arena for honest disclosure. This self-narrative construction is said to be powerful because it allows for reflection, enabling a person to see where they have been and what they have done. Butler (1963) used the term life review for describing autobiographical narrative creation in his older target populations and employed it as a way of encouraging individuals to reminisce about memories from their past. He cited benefits to his sample as being increased self-esteem, lower depression and increased communication with others. Each of these are particularly desirable when considering evidence provided by Meltzer et al. (2003), that suggests adolescent care populations are around four to five times more likely to have a mental disorder compared to those living in private households (49% compared to 11%).

In later research examining the psychoneuroimmunological impact of sharing narratives, Ellis and Cromby (2004) cite numerous studies that portray a range of health benefits for the retelling of emotional experiences. For instance Esterling, Antoni, Fletcher, Margulies and Schneiderman (1994) reported that written or verbal emotional disclosures strengthened immune functioning. Other research also illustrated that nondisclosures appeared to be linked to a repressive personality type and reduced immune functioning (Garssen & Goodkin, 1999; Levy, Herberman, Maluish, Schilien & Lippman, 1985). Work by Bucci (1995) suggested that the way emotional experiences are expressed can be measured using Referential Activity (RA). Accordingly, RA is said to explore the extent to which emotional disclosures are present in narratives and how such emotions are assigned conscious meaning (Ellis & Cromby, 2004). Advocates of this approach suggest that higher levels of RA in narratives which disclose negative emotional experiences tend to be related to better health outcomes (Bucci, 1995). The on-going construction, continual revisiting and reinterpretation of emotionally sensitive narratives form the foundation of life story work with traumatised young people. Though positivist assumptions of psychoneuroimmunological research are apparent, the use of this research within a critical psychological framework is still apparent as Wetherell and Potter (1992:65) illustrate:

“New Zealand is no less real for being constituted discursively – you still die if your plane crashes into a hill whether you think that the hill is the product of a volcanic eruption or the solidified form of a mythical whale...How those deaths are understood... and what caused them is constituted through our systems of discourse...”

Though the work of psychoneuroimmunologists emerges from epistemological and ontological positions distant from the one employed here, the therapeutic potential that the retelling of narratives affords the narrator remains. Whether this therapeutic potential is experienced as a function of RA or as a consequence of having one's narrative heard is somewhat of a moot point. Both will be seemingly understood according to the availability accorded by the philosophical understandings of the relative positions such discourses emerge from. Regardless of philosophical orientation, the values of life story work when applied to a population which may be struggling to make sense of their start in life remain.

3.3 Editorial roles in narratives: “Once you know, you can’t un-know”

The ability to retell and reconstruct one’s story gives the narrator the power to place those deemed to be responsible in a psychological position within the narrative acceptable to the narrator at a point in time. Trauma, abuse and neglect can occur at any time along the lifespan and in a range of forms. However because of the context of this discussion, focus will be drawn to its impacts on infants, children and adolescents and its implications for sharing one’s story. In narratives shared over time, the positioning of characters and words used to depict them is likely to change as reflective capacities develop. Within care populations and indeed care leavers, this retelling and sharing of narratives can enable: “...troublesome beliefs about the self, others or the traumatic event...” to be retold and characters within it repositioned (Hanney & Kozłowska, 2002:37). The sensitive and emotional complexities for many mean that choosing whether to access memories and information in order to retell narratives is a multifaceted issue, which can have long-term implications. As the work of Murry, Malone and Glare (2008) with Australian care leavers demonstrates, time spent in care is not just a part of one’s early life, but can have a continued impact across the lifespan. The legacy of care is also apparent in the work of Horrocks and Goddard (2006) who discuss the dilemmas and motives for care leavers accessing their care files as adults. As their work demonstrates, the desire to know what others know about one’s past persists, underlining the on-going identity legacy which surrounds those who have spent time in care (Horrocks & Goddard, 2006). Such evidence not only highlights the importance of transitions post early childhood, but also the need for sensitivity and freedom of choice within this complex area, each of which has implications for the editorial nature of life story work practice.

In considering the impact of care leavers accessing their records, the manifestation of power and the editorial role that professionals play in the recording of children’s stories becomes apparent, as does the direct implication of editorial power upon the life story work process. The comments of Baynes (2008:43) indicate the complexity of this editorial power: “A number of children, given descriptions of their birth families so glowing, must wonder why they were removed....such sanitisation is unhelpful for all concerned”. For Baynes (2008), the role of the professional within this field is to make information available whilst respecting that some may not want to access it until much older, if ever. The legacy of this powerful and complex editorial role and its implications is manifested in the comments of one care leaver. In talking to me

about his decision whether or not to access his records he said that: "Once you know, you can't un-know, no matter how much you want to." Such concerns may see some care leavers unwilling to access their case or file notes because of the range of emotions this may evoke. Other care leavers have reflected positively about being able to keep the detailed records about their daily activities in care. As Murry, Malone and Glare (2008) and their Australian sample of adult care leavers accessing records noted, even the smallest amount of information may be important to the person searching. Murry, Malone and Glare (2008) also noted that for those denied the opportunity to make this choice there can be a huge sense of loss.

Traditional approaches to life story work undertaken with children can be seen as providing a foundation for making information available to young people at an age appropriate level. The recording of such information again underlines the editorial power of the social work professional in documenting such information, and the legacy that such work has. In returning to the goals of traditional life story work in facilitating transitions by working with the child in order to resolve, or at least come to terms with, a range of complex feelings towards birth relatives and previous carers (Ryan & Walker, 2007), it is important to be aware of why such work is deemed vital. Brunell and Vaughan (2008) for example suggest that such work can enable young people to begin to heal following abuse, neglect, emotional turmoil and life disruption. Others support its usage as a way of enabling troubled young people to leave behind negative emotions that may have accumulated before and after moving into care (Fahlberg, 1994; Ryan & Walker, 2007). In the narrative framework used here, life story work is viewed as a way of facilitating a sense of narrative coherence (Schofield & Beek, 2006). This sense of coherence is said to be brought about through the sharing and retelling of narratives, enhancing the temporal understanding of important life events and their sequential relationship to each other. As Crossley (2000:10) suggests: "In order to define and interpret 'what' exactly has happened on any particular occasion, the sequence of events is extremely important". This narrative framework also enables the narrator to position characters in the narratives shared in a way acceptable to the narrator at a particular point in time.

3.4 Approaches to undertaking life story work with looked-after children and young people

The first recorded use of life story work within professional social work settings appears to be the work of Glickman (1957), which saw life books created and used by care workers when preparing a child for fostering or adoption (Hanney & Kozłowska, 2002). The importance of the young person's role in the collaborative narrative reconstruction which takes place in such books pre-dates the socio-political discourses of empowerment, human rights and social inclusion of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. However this shift in societal emphasis has intensified the attention of stakeholders in the active participation of young people in society as a whole (Hart, 1992; Shier, 2001). This has in turn effectively increased focus on young people's active participation within this process as intended beneficiaries of these life books. The collaborative narrative created via the life story work process tends to be recorded at a particular point in a child's life. As established, life story work and the recording of such work in life story books is conventionally used as a way of aiding the transition of young people from short-term bridging placements to more long-term placements (Shah & Argent, 2006). As a result the emphasis within the application of life story work is positioned in the middle childhood phase of the life span, since this is the chronological age associated with such transitions.

For Baynes (2008) life story work itself should be conceptualised as a process, with the emphasis on this process part rather than being overly concerned with superficial presentational aspects of the product (book) itself. This conceptualisation reinforces that as a process, the product should supplement discussions whilst being continually updated and used to construct answers to the growing child's questions about their past, since: "...a poor sense of identity can disable children and adults alike." (Ryan & Walker, 2007:6). The creation of this book allows the young person to gain information from the associated narratives about whom they are and where they fit. Fahlberg (1994) outlined some minimum requirements for such books. She suggested that each book needs to mention the child's birth mother and father and information regarding their own birth, providing the young person with an opportunity to develop some sense of heritage that could otherwise be lost (Fahlberg, 1994). Continuing, that each book should explain why and how the child entered the care system (Fahlberg, 1994). As such, undertaking life story work allows the young person to construct a story or narrative of their early lives, promoting self-knowledge and identity development in a coherent and ordered manner. In contrast when discussing life story work Baynes (2008:44) suggests that in the context of what

she refers to as the target-led, evidence-based culture of social work: "...attempts to standardise it are futile and destructive...for many children, life story work is too little too late." This statement in itself seems to embody the task facing some social work professionals. Baynes (2008) continues by suggesting that life story work has been pushed to the periphery of practice within a more quantitatively driven target-focused profession. She fears that this may lead some to conceptualise life story work as a product, which could detract from the potentially therapeutic nature of the underlying process.

Narrative construction within life story work has been applied to care populations using three broadly different approaches. These can be characterised as the giving of a narrative, collaboration and empowering to create a narrative, and the multidisciplinary creation of a healing narrative. Within each of these approaches Baynes (2008) cites the importance of the communicative tools used as a way of conveying respect. She indicated that adults need to be: "...prepared to make themselves vulnerable by entering the child's world and having the courtesy to communicate in the child's way." (Baynes, 2008:47). This communicative sensitivity is perceived as a key element in the application of life story work to various populations of young people looked-after. The three approaches have different strengths making them more suitable in certain situations, yet the ability of each to entirely fulfil the different requirements of many adolescents living in care remains a concern. In this vein each characterisation will now be considered in relation to their abilities to fulfil the needs of adolescents in care, with particular attention given to those living in residential establishments.

3.4.1 The giving of narratives

"...comprises three main elements: the gathering up of treasured objects, photographs and mementoes; the creation of a written story that explains the reasons for the child's moves and gives information about birth family members; and the communication of this story to the child in a meaningful way." (Baynes, 2008:43)

The approach characterised here as the 'giving of narratives' relies upon giving the young person a collection of chronologically arranged information. This allows the young person access to information such as birth parents names, dates of birth and such forth. Life story work and life story books in this form involve giving the young people a: "...factual narrative about their lives and the lives of those closest to them." (Rose & Philpot, 2005:14). The use of the

word factual within such a quote reinforces the manifestation of editorial power. The worker recording the events influences how the characters within such a narrative are positioned. Versions of narratives told are influenced by the intended recipients (Goffman, 1959); they are personal and told with emotions, they do not seek to be devoid of context (Crossley, 2000). With acknowledgement given to the manifestation of power in this context, it is important to also highlight the great responsibility given to the individual charged with recording information. Not only may they feel a responsibility towards positioning themselves within the narrative, but they are also responsible for the positioning of the care provider, the young person, any birth relatives and other carers involved in the young person's journey. Through their recording and retelling of events within this characterisation, the social work professional may also engage in what has been referred to as defensive practices. Such practices are seen as undertaking actions to limit professional risk, rather than being in the best interest of the client (Harris, 1987). In this context this may involve a narrative given to the young person that seeks to inaccurately retell the circumstances surrounding their admission into care. To counteract claims of defensive practice, Baynes (2008) highlights the opportunity that this work offers to admit to mistakes and apologise if failures within a far from perfect care system have meant that both the young person and their birth parents deserved better. But as she admits such stories are the hardest to tell as professionals but states that: "...it is important to accept a share of responsibility for what has happened on behalf of our flawed and under-funded services." (Baynes, 2008:47).

In attempting to give this narrative a fair reflection of events and avoid as Baynes (2008:47) puts it "...unhelpful sanitisation...", the social work professional acting as narrator must also be aware of the longitudinal nature of the narrative they are creating. In trying to help children come to terms with something that is often very difficult, it is tempting to tell a different type of story. The nature of this story can be influenced by the individual's reasons for coming into care, the perspective taken by the narrator towards the birth family and the circumstances surrounding the young person's admission to care. The narrator must realise they are creating a document which may be read and reread countless times and over numerous years by an individual attempting to answer unresolved identity questions. This text based legacy gives the narrator the opportunity to give something of meaning to the young person; this may lead to the narrator themselves becoming a part of this story in a positive way. Yet to do so whilst consciously trying to present the circumstances surrounding this time in the child's life with a degree of fairness to

all characters in the story, clearly the task of narrator is one riddled with complexity and difficulty.

When evaluating such an approach, in general it would appear that giving a young person a narrative about their own life is not a complete way of learning such information. It does however become clear that such an approach still has an important part to play, laying the foundations for self-knowledge and possibly providing the young person with some sense of heritage. For those who have had no information about their earliest life such information and the delivery of it could be vital. As Ryan and Walker (2007) recommend, once created a copy of this life story information should remain in the young person's case file being continually updated as a way of supplementing their existing chronology. Nevertheless, when considering this characterisation of life story work as a form of giving and in relation to the application of it to older care populations, the relative strengths of such an approach appear to be less valid. In evaluating this claim it is useful to reflect upon age at entry into care.

Using a typology introduced by Sinclair et al. (2007), adolescent graduates are young people who entered the care system before the age of eleven, and are now eleven or over, whereas adolescent entrants first entered the care system aged eleven or above. Through employing this typology it becomes possible to suggest that for differing reasons adolescents living in care may already have information regarding birth parents names, dates of birth and so forth available to them. Clearly case by case differences and individual family contexts are varied, however for those who already have this information such an approach seems shallow in its benefits.

In concluding discussions regarding the characterisation of life story work known here as the giving of narratives, it seems important to highlight the idea that this approach has illustrated further that adolescence appears to offer the potential for reflection. In so doing, the giving of information in this way may offer its recipients the opportunity to rework character's roles and motives within previous narratives created. In the context of the current discussions, the giving of narratives should be viewed a first-step, especially when considering the reported therapeutic potential of life story work, the transitional nature of the adolescent life phase and its reflexive societal emphasis.

3.4.2 Collaborating and empowering to create narratives

The second approach to life story work based on developmental and attachment perspectives, empowers the young person to explore introspectively and construct verbally thoughts, feelings and emotions regarding their past with the assistance of a chronically available adult figure (Rose & Philpot, 2005; Ryan & Walker, 2007). Such an adult is said to provide a secure base relationship and it is through this relationship that the young person can find comfort and support when exploring their lives (Ryan & Walker, 2007). It has been reported that life story work of this nature can take up to eighteen months or thirty-six separate meetings in which the young person is able to address their past discarding some: "...negative emotional baggage..." (Rose & Philpot, 2005:14). More commonly life story work is used as a way of aiding the transition of young people from short-term bridging placements to more long-term placements (Shah & Argent, 2006), meaning that the time allowances and structured nature of the description provided by Rose and Philpot (2005) appear to be more of a rarity. As Baynes (2008:49) explains:

"The standard of life story work offered to children varies tremendously. The most fortunate receive timely and consistent explanations from adults for the changes in their lives and are given the time and attention of a worker who knows both them and their story well. Conversely, some children wait weeks or months after being separated from their birth families before they are given photographs or toys from home; others receive no more than a family photograph album and a record of their time in foster care."

The collaborating and empowering approach is based: "...on the crucial links between cognition and emotion, thinking and feeling." (Schofield & Beek, 2006:358). Ryan and Walker (2007) suggest that such life story work provides a structure for talking to children. A key feature of the approach itself is the person with whom the young person works through the process and the security that this relationship affords. According to Ryan and Walker (2007), this individual assists the child in exploring why various adults have been unable to care for them and how they came to be in care.

“Any sympathetic adult who is prepared to spend time and give the commitment to the child by making a life story book....can be the right person to do it but once taken on life story work, you must not abandon the child halfway through...” (Ryan & Walker, 2007:7)

Seemingly then once the coherence and security of the consistently available adult figure is removed, the effectiveness of this approach appears to be diminished. Critically, so is the security of the relationship within which the young person can seek support and comfort when exploring their past. Within certain placement types these short comings can be addressed through the undertaking of such work with other sensitive care givers, for instance adoptive parents, foster carers or residential workers. Yet for those placed residentially, the undertaking of such work seems more sporadic. This could be linked to the short-term usage and/or instability widely associated with the majority of this placement type (Bullock, 2009; Munro & Hardy, 2007). It could also be linked to the reportedly unstable and untrained nature of the staff teams within such residential placements (Holland, Faulkner & Perez-del-Aguila, 2005; Petrie & Simon, 2006), meaning that they are ill equipped to attempt to engage young people in this way. But it may also be linked to the conceptualisation of life story work within this approach, an approach which views life story work as something undertaken in middle childhood. It is suggested here that such a conceptualisation may impede the engagement of adolescents in this process in three ways. Firstly, as Baynes (2008:43) explains life story work is primarily aimed at meeting the needs of: “...children separated from their birth families through adoption or long-term foster care.” Yet the needs of many adolescents living in care may be very different since many could have regular contact with their birth families. This conceptualisation of life story work as aimed at younger children may also discourage adolescents from engaging with this process due to the desire to avoid being seen as a child. Secondly, the techniques employed by this approach primarily aim to engage with younger children. The communicative capabilities, potential and needs of adolescents are markedly different from those younger children. Identical communication tools are unlikely to engage adolescents to the same extent. Finally the inference that life story work is carried out at a particular time within one’s care journey reinforces the idea that it is something that can be missed out on. Only when something has a particular time that it is meant to happen can that very same thing be missed. The power of doing the right thing at the right time in normative developmental narratives emerges once again. Once an individual has passed through this life phase it is implied that they are no longer in need of, or actively encouraged to take part in the life story work process. This conceptualisation, as well as the child focused communication tools and relative instability of

adolescents living in residential care see the undertaking of this type of life story work as sporadic at best.

3.4.3 The multidisciplinary creation of healing narratives

The third and final approach to life story work represents a move towards a multidisciplinary and holistic approach. Family Futures, a centre using such an approach, provides multi-disciplinary assessment and therapy programmes for traumatised younger children and their families (Burnell & Vaughan, 2008). In this approach an initial file search is undertaken, which aims to obtain first-hand accounts from birth parents, foster carers and social workers involved with the child's case at the time of their admission. This in-depth search aims to uncover the child's reasons for entering the care system, so those who work with the child can understand the implications of their past in terms of the child's formative and crucially important developmental landmarks (Burnell & Vaughan, 2008). Accordingly, Burnell and Vaughan (2008) state that to create a process of healing a coherent and detailed narrative needs to be created. This narrative needs to ensure that the child feels that they are totally absolved of responsibility for their admission into care. Similar to both approaches critiqued so far, this approach is primarily aimed at addressing the needs of traumatised younger children in long-term care placement situations. It is in such family environments that attachment difficulties are said to be addressed within this approach. One of the key elements of this approach is that the new family is the most important resource the child has access to. For such reasons all therapeutic work seeks to strengthen new family relationships (Burnell & Vaughan, 2008).

An acknowledgement of the critical role the new family will play is both valid and justifiable, so too is the power of the editorial role to control and limit the narrative created through information selection. Such a tendency appears to obscure the possibility of any positive role played by non-threatening members of the child's birth family. This approach also marginalises the possibility of the child having mixed feelings towards birth family members. This point is supported by the suggestions of Fahlberg (1994), who stated that children whom may have experienced abuse and neglect may still have and express love, loyalty and empathy to their birth parents. They can remember some pleasant memories alongside the unpleasant ones (Fahlberg, 1994). Similar to the empowering approach, this multidisciplinary and holistic approach also tends to be most effectively employed in care environments in which on-going, intensive and long-term

support is available. Additionally, whilst in earlier childhood such an approach may aid the transition of younger children to a long-term foster or adoption placement, the application of this approach to adolescents in care requires considered development because of the communicative mediums recruited and ill-fitting application to residential population that may well still have and be promoting contact with birth family members.

3.5 Implications for approaches to life story work

Evidence presented illustrates life story work tends to support younger populations in care; helping them to develop a stronger sense of self-knowledge, or as Schofield and Beek (2006) suggest a coherent story. Each of the three approaches discussed provide professionals with a selection of routes to the creation of this self-knowledge, either through giving, empowering, or attempting to counsel children through the process. In circumstances where such approaches complement the needs of the young person, life story work of this nature can provide a positive step. Such approaches cater well when aiding the transition of younger children from short-term bridging placements to more long-term placements and are vital since: "...a poor sense of identity can disable children and adults alike..." (Ryan & Walker, 2007:6).

Nevertheless, they appear to have severe difficulties when attempts are made to engage adolescents and particularly those placed residentially. The conceptualisation of life story work as a childhood specific transitional tool omits their potential benefits during transitions experienced during adolescence. There is also an inference within conventional approaches to life story work that it is something that is to be carried out at a particular time within one's care journey. This reinforces the idea that it is something that can be completed and missed out on once an individual has passed through middle childhood. Because the aims of the approaches discussed are child focused, the communicative tools and techniques used mirror this focus. This communicative tendency alongside a care setting in which it is said that transient relationships persist (Holland, Faulkner & Perez-del-Aguila, 2005; Moses 2000b; Stein & Munro, 2008), mean that the frequency of life story work undertaken with adolescents living in residential settings is low. Another consequence of conventional approaches may be reluctance on the behalf of the adolescent to engage with this process. Amongst potential reasons for this reluctance could be a desire to avoid being seen as a child by fellow residents, who themselves may have undertaken life story work when they were younger. Another possibility could be that they may feel that they have dealt with past traumas and resolved sometimes painful memories.

Thus being asked about such narratives or to readdress them via life story work may be undesirable and too painful for some. They could be content with the narrative that they have created regarding their past and the role of the characters' within it. After all as Baynes (2008:48) suggests: "It is the child who has lived the story and the child who has the task of understanding and re-understanding these events throughout his or her life".

The influence of approaches focused with younger children may mean that the relative importance assigned to experiences of adolescent transitions into adulthood and the continual nature of identity construction occurring across the lifespan is neglected. Dominant ideologies and notions of normative narrative development informed by ideas of doing the right thing, at the right time, can provide a perspective which informs professionals that adolescent populations are not in need of such work. Yet, the prevalence of mental health concerns alone recorded in adolescents living in residential care depicts a particularly vulnerable group (Meltzer et al., 2003; Meltzer, 2007; Petrie & Simon, 2006). Given the reported benefits of life story work it is argued here that quintessentially, those who are in most need appear to be missing out. The inability of conventional approaches discussed to provide adolescents with a pathway which allows for the reported benefits of life story work to become accessible necessitates research attention.

3.5.1 A role for digital technologies?

A key theme emerging from discussions regarding conventional ways of doing life story work appears to be a lack of communicational sensitivity when seeking to apply such approaches to adolescents in care. Younger children particularly seem to enjoy painting pictures, cutting out shapes, and colouring in pictures, which are characterised here as being a more traditional cut and stick type life story work. Such techniques are an effective way of facilitating a dialogue. Adolescents however may not be as interested in such activities, since these sorts of activities are child focused. Fahlberg (1994) suggested the use of more imaginative ways to encourage disengaged, reluctant adolescents to participate in the life story work process. The usefulness of digital media such as video cameras and computers have been cited to engage hard to reach groups (Ahmad, Betts & Cown, 2008; Cown, 2000). Within the life story work process the usage of such communication tools appear to be more relevant and appealing to adolescent populations, since digital technologies are held in high esteem by youth cultures (Boyd & Ellison, 2008; Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe, 2007; Lenhart & Madden, 2007). Similarly such technologies can provide an instant product (Ahmad, Betts & Cown, 2008). Both their appeal and ability to create instant products are deemed here to be attractive features. A lack of

appropriate methods of communication in life story work may result in engagement opportunities with adolescents becoming lost and/or overlooked.

In an effort to keep pace with digitally proficient youth, the care system and social work practice itself needs to converse using culturally appropriate methods of communication. The attention paid by many adolescents towards new and emerging digital technologies may offer an opportunity to increase narrative coherence within this population, through adolescence specific approaches to life story work. The prominent role which such technologies have come to play in how youth culture now communicates offers flexible pathways for intrapersonal reflection and interpersonal communication, seen here as potentially facilitating self-knowledge and narrative coherence. The advent and continued rapid development of the internet, web-cams, blogs, chatrooms, instant messenger, interactive computer games and mobile phones which now allow their users to take, share and upload pictures and video clips to the internet have changed the way young people and indeed many Western societies choose to communicate. Yet for many social work professionals, communication tools such as those listed here could still be quite alien to them, since as a profession: "...social work has been slow to capitalise on new approaches to its core business: communication." (Tregeagle & Darcy, 2008:1481).

The task then appears to be embracing the communicative potential of digital technologies by moving beyond seeing them as primarily a way to do social work more efficiently, but to see digital technologies which can be recruited in adolescent specific approaches to life story work as communicative medium through which therapeutic dialogues and relationships can emerge. As Ahmad, Betts and Cown (2008:177) suggested when discussing digital media in the direct work of social workers: "If you're not using an interactive media of some sort – why not?"

3.6 Summative comments

Discussions here have illustrated how the sharing, continual reinterpretation and reconstructing of differing narrative accounts can have therapeutic benefits. Such narratives can be continually updated and revised in the light of new information and reflection. The ability of narratives to help children and young people come to terms with abusive, neglectful and traumatic memories has been discussed, as has the dilemma of revisiting and accessing information about one's care history as an adult, with the editorial power of the social work profession emerging. Discussions then turned to how conventional approaches employed by care professionals to

assist children in coming to terms with such experiences and their transitions to alternative care arrangements. The applications of conventional child focused approaches to life story work were considered in terms of their potential to meet communicative, transitional and reflective requirements when seeking to engage adolescents. In closing, the chapter moved to highlight the possibilities of digital technologies and their communicatively sensitive engagement potential. This theme is continued by the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Bringing life story work and narrative sharing into a digital world

4.1 Introduction

Numerous advocates have reported the benefits of utilising existing approaches to life story work in supporting younger populations of the care system in the creation of coherent narratives (Fahlberg, 1994; Rose & Philpot, 2005; Ryan & Walker, 2007; Schofield & Beek 2006). The following chapter considers the usefulness and possible applications of digital technologies to life story work with adolescent care populations, with particular reference made to those living in residential homes. This dialogue unfolds by addressing the wider question of why such technologies have failed to be suitably integrated thus far, before moving onto consider which culturally relevant and flexible technologies may encourage adolescents to engage with the life story work process. The chapter finishes by outlining technologies with functionalities which could inform adolescent orientated approaches to life story work.

4.2 Applications of digital technologies to life story work and narrative sharing

For the majority the assimilation of digital technologies, also known as Information Communication Technologies (ICT) into our everyday lives has happened. As Agar (2005) highlights, in some cases so common is this integration that the importance of such technology is only noticeable via an absence. This point is particularly pertinent to many adolescents in Western societies. To many technologies such as camera phones and the internet are held in high regard, and have been widely integrated into the ways in which members of society but particularly adolescents, choose to communicate with each other and with those around them. The high values placed on such objects by young people, led Cown (2000) to remark that just the very use of computers as mediums for communication can attract the attention of disengaged and socially excluded groups of young people. The dominance of this communicative preference became particularly apparent within the 2011 riots, witnessed across several major cities in England. Whilst contributory factors remain multifaceted and complex, there is less confusion around the emergence and use of ICT by those involved. Negatively the

use of social media and mobile phone technology in relation to criminal orchestration has been cited as contributing towards the rapid mobilisation of large gangs. Discussions of the influence of such technologies and their roles during the riots themselves continue (www.guardian.co.uk/media/2011/aug/08/london-riots-facebook-twitter-blackberry). In less doubt is how the use of the same social media and technologies assisted in the coordination of positive community action following the riots, with the Twitter profile [@Riotcleanup](https://twitter.com/Riotcleanup) and the website www.riotcleanup.com being two such examples.

4.2.1 Lack of integration

The negative possibilities of digital technologies tend to be foregrounded in conversations about their use by adolescents, yet they have a great deal to offer. Williamson and Facer (2004) for example, highlighted that interactive media can help young people to externally verbalise thoughts and feelings. This externalised product can then be updated regularly. Using interactive computer-based mediums in this way grants the controller unprecedented flexibility to make changes frequently and swiftly. Items can be copied, printed, saved or deleted as the operator desires, making it an ideal medium for the construction of life story books. As well as this ability to continually reconstruct externalised products; digital technologies represent familiar, non-threatening, non-judgemental and non-invasive communication tools already used by adolescents (Ahmad, Betts & Cown, 2008). The current use of ICT in many areas of the care system stand in contrast to the widespread and creative uses of such technologies in other disciplines. Education for example, has recognised the potential usefulness of ICT and integrated them into many of its professional development programmes. This discussion recognises that the increased vulnerability of care populations may have represented a justification for why care services have not readily engaged with such technologies. Such a justification is no longer applicable. As the comments of Agar (2005) illustrate the integration of ICT into everyday lives has happened. This is further reinforced by the importance of digital technologies within the communicative preferences of adolescents. Seemingly then looked-after adolescents will use ICT based methods of communication in some form or another. This usage is regardless of their perceived vulnerability and the apparent lack of integration of such technologies within the work of those who look after them. It would appear then, the care system has a duty of care to acquire and disseminate knowledge of how such technologies can be facilitative and how best to assist their safer usage. In the context of this chapter this will be addressed through the exploration of the application of ICT to life story work, with particular emphasis given to how this may assist the engagement of adolescents in this reflective process.

However, prior to entering into such discussions it is necessary to explore why the: “Explicit use of ICT in the interests of service users remains embryonic, and professionals have been slow to capitalise on the communication potential of new technologies.” (Tregeagle & Darcy, 2008:1481).

In their paper addressing social work as a profession rather than young people as service users, Tregeagle and Darcy (2008) would disagree with the justification regarding increased vulnerability of care populations being a key contributor towards a lack of engagement with ICT. Nevertheless young people as service users are referred to explicitly within their commentary, which suggests reasons as to why ICT has not been readily integrated and hence the paper’s validity to these discussions remains. In the context of their article Tregeagle and Darcy (2008) frame the lack of integration of ICT within direct social work as being a consequence of a lack of service user access. This lack of access is conceptualised as a digital divide, referred to as service users being excluded from technology (Tregeagle & Darcy, 2008). By conceptualising a lack of integration in this way Tregeagle and Darcy (2008) move the issue away from the domain of social work as a profession, towards a wider societal based issue regarding accessibility and socio-economic status. A conflicting argument will now be presented which suggests that this digital divide is wrongly placed. Whilst there is an appreciation of evidence presented by Tregeagle and Darcy (2008) regarding accessibility and socio-economic status, the applicability of such arguments alone within the context of young people as service users falls short.

4.2.2. An external digital divide or training need?

According to Haddon (2007) and Ling and Donner (2009) most young people appear to be fairly proficient and frequently engaged in using ICT to communicate in their everyday lives. Research has suggested that for young people in education, access to such objects at school are both available, and readily used (Agar, 2005). Clearly those who are not in education remain at risk of being excluded from access. This particular point is reinforced when considering care populations, who can struggle to engage with education (Jackson, Ajayi & Quigley, 2005). Conversely evidence highlighting the dissemination of camera phone technology to less advantaged populations (Agar, 2005; Ling & Donner, 2009) provides a stronger rebuttal regarding the location of this digital divide. Many young people are choosing ICT based methods of communication and according to Agar (2005) have been for at least ten years. Coupled with this group’s affinity for spontaneously recording events on their mobile phones and

the potential emancipatory power, the range of applications for such communication tools are vast. So if young people living in care settings are in many cases already using ICT to communicate, why are these methods of communication not being utilised and what does this mean for the location of the digital divide within the practice of social work professionals?

A perceived or realised lack of familiarity and knowledge on the part of many social work professionals may represent a rationale for why such technologies may go underused. This may lead to a tendency to problematise such technologies, signifying how such a short-coming may be represented as an internal factor within the profession itself, moving the location of the digital divide. Tregaele and Darcy (2008) illustrate this lingering concern which frequently emerges in discussions regarding young people's usage of the internet, but particularly when vulnerable populations are involved. They asked: "Will the rapid convergence of technologies (such as hybridisation of mobile phones and the internet) leave children more vulnerable to cyberbullying or paedophiles?" (Tregaele & Darcy, 2008:1482). Seemingly the answer to this question is yes. Despite research suggesting that public concerns regarding sexual predators using ICT may be exaggerated (Boyd & Ellison, 2008), the answer to the initial concern raises and reinforces its position within such discussions. This should not see ICT become overly and unduly problematised without careful consideration and exploration, since to do so would be to engage in what has been described as defensive practice (Harris, 1987). Whilst social work and its inherent duty of care undoubtedly must proceed cautiously when pursuing the use of ICT in regards to its care populations, to let it remain underused would be naïve. A point which this discussion and Tregaele and Darcy (2008:1488) agree: "...the internet is widely used and the medium of choice for many young people and we may jeopardize communication with them by not actively using ICT."

Social work as a profession then needs to be seemingly more proactive in its awareness of the role that ICT plays in the lives of many of its looked-after populations. Because if such technology does make vulnerable populations more vulnerable, then social work professionals must be engaged within this area. The answer to the question posed by Tregaele and Darcy (2008) should not be seen as a closing of a door on such technologies, since their rapid diffusion and importance to youth cultures is unlikely to halt because of this perceived risk. It does however open a door behind which sits a strong rationale for continued research, training and knowledge development in this area. This point is particularly central when considered in relation to cohort effects. The importance of ICT to new cohorts of care populations will

seemingly increase if trends in the development, accessibility and dissemination of ICT continue as predicted (Agar, 2005; Hadden, 2007; Koskela, 2004; Ling & Donner, 2009). Young people are becoming increasingly ICT literate at an earlier ages (Plowman & Stephen, 2005). The same cohort effects could also positively affect the skill sets of new social work professionals. This does not negate the need for further integration and appreciation of ICT within this sector. Nor does it escape the possibility of such a cohort of new social work professionals again having to continually catch up, since their ICT skills may have become outdated with the continued rapid development of digital technologies. What it does do is reinforce the importance of the concluding comments made by Tregagle and Darcy (2008:1494):

“...we cannot be complicit in depriving service users of potential benefits of ICT by failing to advocate them on their behalf. We must examine our own discomfort and position the use of ICT as an issue of social justice.”

This relative lack of appreciation, in some cases knowledge, competency and comfort with using ICT represents a digital divide located for the most part within social work practice rather than in young people as service users. It also suggests that at present this knowledge imbalance should be reconstructed as an opportunity for further engagement and communication, and not be seen as a threat (Ahmad, Betts & Cown, 2008). The possibility of shifting the power balance and expert label away from the care professional to the young people could be an empowering experience (Ahmad, Betts & Cown, 2008). On a cautionary note, if as suggested such technology does make vulnerable populations more vulnerable, professional engagement within this area must seek to develop an awareness and firm knowledge base. Of particular interest in the context of this chapter is the ability of digital technologies to be culturally relevant and provide a reflective space in which intrapersonal and interpersonal communications may emerge. In this way it is suggested that they could play a role in helping adolescent care populations to prepare for the transition to adulthood by building their sense of coherence and self-awareness.

4.3 When life story work and narrative sharing met the digital world

ICT with potential applications to life story work can be characterised using the following typology: connecting technologies and capturing technologies. Such potential need to be kept in mind when unpacking the applicability of digital communication tools to the sensitive process of life story work. Connecting technologies are those which tend to be intangible and allow users to connect with others and share created content, for example Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, YouTube, MSN Chat, Blackberry Messenger and Bluetooth. For the most part technologies of this nature provide the user with a platform of expression. Connecting technologies can be further divided by intended audience. Determined audience for example sees the user control who can see uploaded content. Open audience is where the user has no desire or control over who has access to the uploaded content. In some cases platforms of expression allow users to select the level of privacy desired. Capturing technologies are characterised as the hardware or physical tools used to capture text, images, sounds or both in the case of video clips. Computers, smartphones, camera phones, digital cameras and webcams are all examples of such technologies. Connecting and capturing technologies are in many ways inextricably linked. Attempts to isolate and examine each constitute part can distract from their contribution to the whole. In the context of exploring ICT and its potential applications to life story work and life story book creation, a more focused approach is required. For such reasons the flexibility, connectivity, creativity, compatibility and familiarity of webcams, smartphones, camera phones and Social Networking Sites (SNS) meant each was seen to have potential applications.

4.3.1 Webcams and the applications of vlogging to life story work and narrative sharing

Webcam technology has progressed rapidly since its first integration with the internet in 1993 (Koskela, 2004). Having once been considered expensive and the preserve of the few, the range and accessibility of such technology has led to the evolution of homecamming, pioneered by a US college student (Senft, 2008). JenniCam invited members to watch Miss Jennifer Ringle go about her daily activities from April 1996 through until December 31st 2003. Although discussions and research regarding the claims of authenticity thrived during and after this time period, "homecamming" a phrase used by Senft (2008:18) to describe the practice of recording material via webcams from home, has become more frequent despite authenticity debates. The

reduced cost of webcams, integration of such technology into existing applications such as Skype and Facebook Chat and the ability to upload clips on to sharing sites such as YouTube, have all contributed towards this popularity growth (Grinter & Palen, 2002; McKay, Thurlow & Zimmerman, 2005). According to the figures provided by Waldfogel (2007) YouTube is the fifth most popular website in the world, demonstrating that people are becoming: "...increasingly comfortable with the medium of video online." (Murthy, 2008:843). Figures estimating webcam ownership are uncommon. On the one hand this could be attributed to the mass integration of webcams with other applications, meaning such data is problematic to collect. On the other hand this lack of figures could be due to the mass saturation of this technology, now commonly a built-in feature of newer computers. Either way, this accessibility and developing competency with homecamming has led to the advent of video blogging also known as 'vlogging'. Seen as a progression from textual or written logs, known within digital culture as blogs, this technique involves an individual recording visual and auditory data and tends to see such entries uploaded onto expressive platforms of one form or another. The focus of vlogs can range widely depending upon the motives and intended audience. In terms of the possible applications of vlogging and webcams to life story work, evidence would seem to suggest that the process and product could be of equal importance to looked-after young people and that ICT could have a particularly beneficial role to play.

Emotional expression is one area of research which underlines the potentially positive role of the process of vlogging. As described in *Chapter 3: Life story work and the power of narrative*, there is support across a range of paradigms illustrating the positive benefits of narrative sharing through written expression via a traditional pen and paper format. A more recent addition to this area of research which highlights the possible uses of ICT within this area, and as such how it may be integrated in life story work, has been the use of computer-mediated written expression, for example, through the medium of email (Sheese, Brown & Graziano, 2004) and in online forums known as chat rooms (Barak & Gluck-Ofri, 2007). Research by Boniel-Nissim and Barak (2011) has also highlighted the therapeutic value of adolescents' blogging about social-emotional difficulties. In this study adolescents were shown to experience a range of positive benefits, with participants writing blogs open to responses illustrating the most improvements on a range of scales, including self-esteem. Though such research embraces technological developments and digital tools for recording and sharing the expression of emotions; the vehicle for the expression itself remained textual.

With the continued integration of ICT and the expectation that this trend will continue, the research interests of social scientists appear to gradually be expanding within this area. However there appears to be a research lag when it comes to investigating the usage of a range of expressive tools. The process of vlogging may serve to illustrate how research can explore the expression of negative emotions via ICT, opening up such practices to those who find it difficult to articulate themselves via written expression. This also serves to represent a route in which existing approaches to life story work and relevant ICT resources may complement each other.

Another way in which the process of vlogging could be beneficial in relation to life story work emerges from the comments of Tregeagle and Darcy (2008), who suggested that ICT based communication can enhance self-disclosure. There are of course potential issues in that vloggers (the individuals who create the vlogs) could be intentionally misleading intended audiences, yet the work of Goffman (1959) would indicate that this is something all social performance is open too. According to Murthy (2008:843) when individuals use webcams there is a tendency for events to be: "...less staged as respondents forget that minuscule cameras are recording them". When recording a webcam diary, this is unlikely to happen as in many cases the individual recording is deliberately aiming communications at the webcam. To forget it is recording is not deemed here as an appropriate explanation as for why webcams may produce less staged events to be recorded. Not only does the vlogger initiate and terminate recordings, in many cases they will then upload the vlog entry onto a website of some sort. An alternative explanation for the possibility of vlogs being less staged may originate from the intentions of the vlogger. In a diary format an individual may wish to reflect or watch back previous entries. Despite the possibilities of affectively performing for a real or imagined audience, the recorder could see their future selves as intended audience, counteracting overly managed performances (Groombridge, 2002). Paradoxically, if these diary entries represent an externalised inner dialogue, the need to present oneself in a positive light and perceived benefits of doing so at the time of recording may influence its production. A point arising from the work of Rich and Chalfen (1999) may aid the coherence of this discussion, providing a suitably emancipatory and pragmatic exit path. In their work children suffering from asthma were given hand-held video cameras and given the brief of teaching their clinician their illness. In this work they address the issue of participants playing up to the camera by suggesting that such performances portrays how the individual wants to be viewed and represented (Rich & Chalfen, 1999). If vloggers are said to play up to the camera then such a social performance is how they

want to be represented in the social world; it becomes a performance given to an envisaged audience (Goffman, 1959).

The potential benefits of the product (i.e. the vlog itself) to a life story work approach incorporating vlogging were highlighted in a participatory driven article by Whiteford (2005). In this work, Whiteford (2005:76) discusses issues regarding the need for young people to: "...enjoy or cringe at the visible reminders and memories of their relationships and experiences...". By underlining the positive aspects of young people re-establishing relationships with adults who had previously worked with them, Whiteford (2005) suggests that such people can be people to reminisce with. They are connected to the young person's narrative by their time and place within it. Yet as positive as these experiences are, their appropriateness at representing the experiences of the majority of looked-after young people appears to be short-lived in relation to placement instability and staff turnover tendencies (Holland, Faulkner & Perez-del-Aguila, 2005; Sinclair et al., 2007). Although clearly not an ideal solution to this problem, mediums such as vlogs could provide reflective coherence enhancing opportunities as vlogs will feature a time stamp, denoting the date and time an entry was recorded and also a representation of the individuals and the relationships enjoyed. This practice is not seen as the answer to addressing what Whiteford (2005) called the invisible childhood as it does not allow for the retelling of retrospective narratives with others present at the time of the events. But in providing a cue for reminiscence it may prompt the retelling of the narrative to a wider audience, one not present at the occurrence of such events but providing a reflexive co-constructor at the time of reminiscence.

4.3.2 Applications of camera phones and smartphones to life story work and narrative sharing

Like webcams, mobile phones have become cheaper and more accessible. Estimations provided by Ling and Donner (2009: 5) support such claims, suggesting that: "Between 2001 and 2010 the planet will have added another 3 billion new mobile subscriptions." The continued and rapid evolution of mobile phone technology has meant that in terms of their usage, mobile phones now have a range of uses including as digital cameras, MP3 players, camcorders, remote controls, laptops, satellite navigation devices (Sat-Navs) and Global Positioning Systems (GPS). The evolution of 3G or Third Generation phones saw the birth of the Multimedia Messaging Service (MMS). This enabled phones users to send videos, pictures and pre-

recorded sounds via a text messaging service for the first time. This generation of phones also saw the exchanging of data over short distances from fixed and mobile devices via Bluetooth develop. Connecting devices via Bluetooth allowed data regardless of format (i.e. visual, audio or both) to be passed from one device to the next over short distances.

The integration of older technologies for example computers developed before the advent of Bluetooth, has been made possible by external Bluetooth adapters known as Dongles. Such phones also began to access the internet, meaning users could upload or download data instantly regardless of relative location. With the on-going progress of mobile phone technology and as fit-for-purpose phones with larger screens (smartphones) become more prominent, Hadden (2007) believes connectivity to the internet from mobile phones seems set to increase. However, in terms of the possible uses of 3G and concurrently camera phone technology within the context of this dialogue and at the time of its writing, access to the internet is expected to occur via a more traditional desktop or laptop device. This is because despite estimations of mobile phone ownership in the UK being more than the actual population (16% more); the price of accessing the internet from mobile phones is still aimed at a top-end market (Haddon, 2007). However the internet based connectivity trend predicted by Hadden (2007) may flourish once prices become lower, a theme already emerging via 'all you can eat data' packages¹. Despite this the advent and rapid growth of wireless networks or Wi-Fi hotspots mean that accessing the internet from smartphones looks set to become cheaper and more accessible. Additionally with 4G internet which promises a faster broadband experience for smartphone users being piloted in the UK, mobile internet access seems set to continue in one direction. The cost of smartphones handsets has also begun to fall as newer models or upgrades are released.

In terms of the application of camera phones and smartphones to life story work and narrative sharing, the higher costs of accessing internet and sending information via MMS influences young people's sharing preferences. This means that there is a tendency to show pictures or clips to friends, deleting some and: "...keeping the 'best' ones on the grounds of either quality or content..." (Hadden, 2007:124). The pictures and clips deemed as 'best' are then uploaded via more conventional computers. The usage of this capturing tool with youth cultures may rely upon connecting camera phones via Bluetooth or traditional wired methods to an internet accessible computer. Once on the computer, images and clips can be uploaded onto expressive

¹ Such packages are still relatively expensive and require users to sign contracts from 18 to 24 months but allow unlimited access to the internet and usually include a smartphone.

platforms such as YouTube and SNS, shared as desired or saved elsewhere in private photo albums. This is not perceived here to alter the impact of camera phones as a modality in terms of its potential for integration into life story work, as camera phones as a way of capturing events is already seen as fairly mainstream due in part to the continued diffusion of this technology. This potential will now be explored further.

4.3.2.1 Capturing the everyday

The primary function of the mobile phone dictates a tendency to be kept on. As such mobile phones with cameras upon them, either smartphones or camera phones, have the potential to record mundane everyday places and experiences as well as sudden unexpected incidents. As Koskela (2004:202) suggests this is likely to "...crucially change the role of visual representation..." in communication. Koskela (2004) highlights the stealth like ability of camera phones due to their size, whilst illustrating that to an observer it would be difficult to accurately assume that a person was filming as opposed to sending a text message. The implications of this 'kept on' modality within a wider societal context have many impacts. This has led to the evolution of citizen journalism, in which eye witnesses record pictures and video clips surrounding unexpected incidents and pass these onto a wider audience via various media roots. Incidents such as protestors and police officers clashing in the events surrounding the G20 summit held in London on 2nd April 2009 and the death of Mr.Ian Tomlinson are such examples. Camera phone clips obtained via media agencies appear to show Mr.Tomlinson being struck by a police officer, with similar clips recording events surrounding this incident. On a cautionary note according to Groombridge (2002:38) such images are loaded with the "...promise of reality..." and yet on many occasions lack context. When released to the media, the narratives reported surrounding the events leading up to the clip or picture can be taken out of context in an effort to be made appealing. The narratives purpose is rarely to provide a multi-perspective account of what, why or how events may have unfolded but to entertain or attract attention. Such narratives can also label actors and actions accordingly, reinforcing culturally held beliefs or dominant discourses about them within society and within the actors themselves as members of a particular social group (Gergen, 1999).

The implications of this 'kept on' feature in youth cultures have been equally diverse. A phenomena known in youth culture as 'happy slapping' emerged around 2004 (Haddon, 2007). Reported to have derived from popular television shows such as Jackass, in which the hosts are recorded doing wacky and crazy stunts, happy slapping tends to involve assaults on unknown

victims which are recorded on the assailant's or the accomplice's camera phone (Haddon, 2007). The escalation of this typology of crime, in other words this filming of victims during crimes for the gratification of the attackers, has led many to question the appropriateness of this trivial happy slapping label due to cases of rape, manslaughter and murder being recorded in such ways (Ling, & Donner, 2009). Other implications of ICT in this culture can be witnessed in what has been called Cyberbullying. This involves a: "...child, preteen or teen being tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the internet, digital technologies or mobile phones." (www.stopcyberbullying.org accessed on 16/06/09). Haddon (2007) reported how young people could take pictures and clips of others deemed to be embarrassing and would either send them around the victims social/peer group or post them on various websites.

Happy slapping and cyberbullying are unwanted side effects of the camera phone modality. But this misuse of technology does not detract from the abilities of the camera phone to provide a relevant and flexible communication tool that could be integrated within life story work. Given that the use of camera phones to capture and share events now appears to be a common communicative feature, the potential role of ICT when seeking to communicate with young people becomes more apparent. Additionally the inherently temporal and coherence inducing nature of using camera phones to capture content from the environment should not be overlooked in terms of importance, since if a narrative has a high frequency of instability (for example through placement and/or carer instability), then the individual is unlikely to remember the details of specific events. A less obvious, but seemingly crucial strength of using camera phones is the ability to record content, time and date of recordings and/or uploads, allowing temporal features of such recordings to become accessible to those viewing said recordings. This is a critical feature if narrative coherence is fragmented as narrative approaches view temporal, sequential and causal linkages as extremely important (Crossley, 2000). The prominence of the camera phone has been complemented by their integration, connectivity and compatibility with expressive platforms such as YouTube and SNS. The ability to share events and narratives from one's life captured using ICT is seen as a key feature of the usefulness of ICT and their applications to life story work.

4.3.3 Applications of Social Networking Sites

The final modality of communication to be explored is Social Networking Sites (SNS). In a care system in which the effectiveness of interventions are on too many occasions subject to washout effects (Courtney, Dolev & Gilligan, 2009; Knorth, Harder, Zandberg & Kendrick, 2008), where once the young person returns to an environment the positive changes experienced due to the intervention environment can be lost, more longitudinal benefits are understandably sought. To this end when considering the role of SNS in regard to care populations there is reason to look beyond initial understandable discomfort. SNS now represent a method of communication that young people use frequently; reinforcing its possible application to life story work approaches that incorporate ICT. Estimations of overall usage for the most popular SNS Facebook, suggest that in the UK there are over 30 million users (<http://www.checkfacebook.com/> accessed on 17/01/12), with predictions of worldwide user numbers exceeding 800 million (<http://www.checkfacebook.com> accessed on 17/01/12) and continuing to grow. With young people aged 13-25 comprising of around 46.4% of the websites total global users (www.kenburbery.com/2011/03/facebook-demographicsrevisited-2011-statistics accessed on 17/01/12) their appeal to young people becomes crystallised. It is this popularity with young people, their ability to integrate camera phone and webcam technologies and potential as a performative online digital repository which attracts the attention of this discussion. This section will briefly introduce SNS and their features, before focusing upon how these features make SNS a platform for narrative sharing and potentially useful when seeking to engage adolescents in life story work.

The main shared characteristics of the various SNS are that they enable users to invite friends to become a part of their social networks, and allow users to search for others whom they wish to become friends with. This connecting with other users is enabled through the creation of profiles. Profiles are created when first registering on SNS and prompt users to enter generic information regarding their age, gender, marital status, interests, hobbies, a profile picture and their hometown's name. A user can also upload a range of digital data to their profile. These can include short video clips and digital photographs which the user can display publicly, leaving such content open to comment, or choose to keep as private. The profile becomes an online digital repository which the user can regulate in terms of its audiences being either private, selected contacts or public. Desired audience may be influenced by the individual or social sensitivity of content displayed, but also the individual's ability to self-regulate their profile via privacy settings.

Users can search and connect to other user's profiles on SNS. This enables the maintenance and promotion of previously and newly established social networks. Exploring how young people tend to use SNS, research emphasises how these sites are a way of young people mainly maintaining pre-existing offline friendships (Ellison, Steinfield & Lampe, 2007). In their work Lenhart and Madden (2007) report that 91% of their American adolescent sample used SNS to connect or reconnect with previously known friends. Steinfield, Ellison and Lampe (2008) elaborated on this work by exploring why SNS were important to the life phase they labelled as emerging adulthood. By highlighting that the relocation of this age group to geographically new locations had the potential to sever or disrupt the young person's links to previously held social networks, they concluded that: "...sites like Facebook play a vital role in maintaining relationships that would otherwise be lost as these individuals move from geographically bonded networks..." (Steinfield, Ellison & Lampe, 2008:435). The maintenance of social relationships is important, particularly during periods of transition where individuals can experience feelings of displacement and loss.

4.3.3.1 Social networking as identity resource

A consistent theme of research with care populations is their tendency to experience more periods of transition than their peers and the frequent breaking down of a range of social relationships (Gilligan, 2005; Hayden, Goddard, Gorin & Van Der Spek, 1999; Kendrick, 2005). For some individuals living in care, contact with certain family members and friends may be voluntarily bypassed or be actively discouraged by those responsible for the young person's welfare. Regardless of the root or motive of these separations, it would appear that if a looked-after young person registers on SNS they have the ability to reconnect or be contacted by those with which contact was lost, for good or for ill². Searches via SNS need to be supported through a holistic perspective and an understanding of what such contact means to the young person (Fursland, 2010).

The views of Gilligan (2005) regarding what good residential care should be appear to have wider applications when discussing the usage of SNS by looked-after populations and its chronic implications. Seemingly helping the individual manage such communications should become central, as evidenced by Gilligan's (2005) commentary. Gilligan (2005:107) stated that one of the key challenges for care providers today is to avoid: "... unhelpful 'splitting' in thinking

² See Fursland (2010) for a wider discussion of contact and social networking.

– bad outside/good inside, bad past/good present, bad home/good care, bad parent/good carer...”. SNS and their usage by young people living in care environments appear to be a case in point. Potentially available benefits of increasing and maintaining wider social network via SNS are seen here to include those highlighted by Jackson and Martin (1998). The challenge then appears to be embracing SNS whilst helping young people manage potential risks. With this in place, the potential of SNS to become facilitative of the goals care environments strive for find resonance.

In terms of critical approaches to identity and their relationship context, maintaining contact with those who are able to co-construct shared experiences may enhance narrative coherence and self-knowledge. Research exploring benefits available via connections on SNS have highlighted how such relationships can act as a social resource and how different benefits can be ascertained depending upon the type of relationships experienced (Boyd 2006; Steinfield, Ellison & Lampe, 2008). Boyd (2006) highlighted a qualitative difference between ‘Facebook friends’ opposed to those labelled as ‘real friends’, reporting that the most striking difference came in terms of investments made to uphold these two friend typologies and the social capital each may make available. In terms of investments Boyd (2006), suggested that Facebook friends offered users an imagined audience tending to guide behavioural and cultural norms with little direct investment. In contrast real friends were viewed as being those with whom one feels closer to and more invested in. Social relationships experienced as casual or close can provide a range of benefits. In recent years there has been a re-emergence of interest in the concept of social capital in relation to benefits available from social relationships. Putman (2000:19) defined social capital as: “...the connections among individual’s social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them.”. As a concept social capital is something touched upon by researchers concerned with improving outcomes for looked-after populations (Gilligan, 2005; Jackson & Martin, 1998; Kendrick, 2005), but seemingly not in relation to how this could be aided by SNS. Building upon this friend typology Steinfield, Ellison and Lampe (2008) suggested that bonding social capital was a feature of people in tightly-knit, emotionally close relationships, for instance family and close friends. Whereas bridging social capital is a feature found in Facebook friends and relies upon: “...loose connections between individuals who may provide useful information or new perspectives for one another but typically no emotional support.” (Steinfield, Ellison & Lampe, 2008:436).

When registering upon SNS many prompt users to update their status. Status in this context relates to their thoughts and feelings which other users can see each time they sign in. In this way: "...individuals are consciously able to construct an online representation of self..." (Boyd & Ellison, 2008:219). The ability of profiles to be almost instantaneously updated with a user's latest thoughts, emotions and digital content appear in line with the patchwork of partially contradictory sub-identities constructed anew in everyday identity work (Gergen, 2000). The continual negotiation and management of such identity becomes sensitised and the 'identity work' undertaken becomes more evident. To reintroduce the ideas of Goffman (1959) the performer needs to take into account what the audience already knows about them. With the aforementioned compatibility of SNS with smartphone and camera phone technology, instantaneous audiovisual access can be granted to the individual's backstage areas. The uploading of personal visual and audiovisual artifacts from conventionally private personal spaces portrays intimate experiences more commonly associated with close friendships. These can become available to the user's entire social network and potentially seep onto the performer's front stage, in some cases giving the impression of intimacy despite this intimacy itself being a performance.

In this way SNS are able to make more visible the roles and different overlapping partial identities users play in different social environments. Not only is this information available longer term which can promote coherent narrative creation, but it is open to more current changes in one's identity and reflections. Such reflection opens up possibilities for reconstruction. SNS may offer a space for individuals to enter into interpersonal communications which facilitate, validate and/or challenge identities.

In terms of the direct application of SNS to narrative sharing, their potential to promote intrapersonal reflections and interpersonal dialogues may facilitate the exploration and the retelling of narratives. Features of SNS would seemingly allow the young person to construct narratives of their worlds in a coherent, logical, chronological and communicatively sensitive manner. The online nature of SNS means that information uploaded is accessible from any location with internet access. It is not dependent upon social work professionals collecting life story books or getting data from residential homes/foster carer's computers. Information is not stored on a computer or memory stick; young people would not lose any vlogs, blogs or pictures by moving placements or misplacing memory sticks. Yet if we introduce the retelling and sharing of narratives within a strictly life story work context, the desire and ability to share potentially

traumatic memories and narratives upon a publically networked (link to other users who are friends) area remains unpalatable. This could easily leave vulnerable young people open to cyberbullying from peers, but also possibly increase the chances of an individual feeling more stigmatised and less supported. If posts desired to elicit supportive interactions achieve the contrary, potentially an already low level of self-esteem may become much worse. Yet as traditional life story work and research by Boniel-Nissim and Barak (2011) highlight, the therapeutic value of an approach which incorporates adolescents sharing emotions about social-emotional difficulties is likely to be enriched by a facilitative audience and/or relationship.

4.4 Digitising life story work

The potential application of digital technologies to life story work in this chapter has highlighted the need to incorporate adolescent sensitive communication methods. The following features of the technologies discussed in this chapter were deemed to be highly relevant to digital-based approaches seeking to engage adolescents in life story work:

Webcams:

- Audiovisual emotional expression via vlogs - Ability to record visual and audio whilst bypassing written literacy issues commonly associated with blogs
- Accessing backstage performances - Webcams tend to be found in home environments
- Availability - Majority of computers now have inbuilt webcams as standard. External webcams cheap and easy to install
- Integration – Can be used in collaboration with SNS

Camera phones/smartphones:

- Mobile - Modality makes different types of recordings possible in comparison to webcams
- Accessible - Many young people own mobile phones with inbuilt cameras
- Kept on - Potential to record the everyday as well as unexpected spontaneous experiences
- Familiar - Young people proficient in using their own mobile phones
- Integration - Can be used in collaboration with SNS

Social Networking Sites (SNS):

- Online - Ability to access profile from any internet accessible computer
- Temporal and coherent - Time and dates of uploads are recorded and displayed
- Existing skills - Many young people familiar and proficient in using SNS
- Digital identity repository- Ability to store digital pictures and short movie files
- Integration - Compatible with vlogging and camera phones
- Performer/audience negotiation - Ability for users to control and continually renegotiate boundaries of performance/relationships dependent upon level of trust and goals.

4.5 Summative comments

Emerging from discussions considering applications of connecting and capturing technologies to life story work is the positive potential of such technologies. As practice recognition continues to grow regarding the use of ICT to engage with adolescents, the requirement to create, develop and trial such technologies in a way which is fit for purpose becomes crystallised. So too does the need to understand how such technologies are experienced by young people, their carers and care providers.

Chapter 5: Methodology

5.1 Introduction

The following chapter introduces the practice origins of the project and how key features of this experience influenced its conception, design and undertaking. The chapter outlines the overarching research question, conceptual framework informed by social constructionist ideas and critical social psychological perspectives. In outlining cycles of action research undertaken this chapter moves to present a reflective account outlining how the two comparative digital life story work approaches were created, developed, installed and then implemented across the partnership care provider and four residential homes engaged.

5.2 Origins

Between 2005 and 2006 I was employed by The Together Trust as a residential worker in a residential home in Sheffield. During this time I worked with a variety of adolescents with varying levels of need. This area of work was for the most part an unknown for me. From my own experiences I was somewhat familiar with the strain placed upon families due to challenging behaviours³. I remained chronically aware of the disparity between my own family's ability to cope with such stresses, as opposed to those of the young people I came to work with as a residential worker. My ideas of coping, family life and vulnerability underwent considerable revision during this period.

Being relatively close to the main demographics of the young people, in terms of age, socio-economic and geographical background whilst in this role, I was able to build up good relationships with the young people. These relationships were helped in part due to my inexperience, meaning that when on shift I was able to avoid the paper work side of the job and for the most part engage directly with the young people. The idea and motivation to undertake this doctoral research were developed during my time in this role and from research interviews with Milly, my former residential manager (see Hammond & Cooper, 2011b). As a care leaver herself, Milly was very keen for the adolescents she looked after to be engaged in some form of

³ To the point of being taken and shown the door of a residential home or 'naughty boys home' during my middle childhood, by parents struggling to cope/understand my older brother's behaviour due to relative lack of knowledge or research on Autism Spectrum Disorders during the late 1980's early 1990's.

life story work activities. This was something I was often encouraged to facilitate. Attempts made were often refused by the young people for a variety of reasons, with most common being linked to a lack of age appropriateness. Of the approaches used, even novel approaches using computers such as the *My Life Story CD ROM* (Betts & Ahmad, 2003), were aimed at younger care populations, with the adolescents I worked with often encouraging me to: “stick that CD-ROM up your arse”.

Much of the reflective, communicative and temporal elements deemed to be central features of life story work became regular features of visits I undertook with young people to their previous neighbourhoods. Such trips were often to facilitate family contact or visit a friend still living there. These visits were particularly pertinent for a young person called Kieran whom I worked with. Following the breakdown of his long-term foster placement which he had shared with his sister, Kieran had been in the residential home for around nine months. According to Kieran following his sister's desire to move out of the foster placement, his foster parents had decided that they could no longer deal with him so made him leave. Despite moving to the other side of Sheffield, Kieran identified the area of Chapeltown as his home and would regularly revisit the area. Most prominent to me were the trips to his local hairdressers. Though he did not have a regular hairdresser who he knew, these trips gave him an opportunity to experience being in an area where he could recognise casual acquaintances and geographical landmarks of personal importance. To this end, and not knowing this part of Sheffield very well myself, Kieran would often act as navigator or as he preferred to be called ‘sat-nav’. On such occasions we would often find ourselves taking what he referred to as ‘the scenic route’, stopping on numerous occasions to allow Kieran to use his camera phone to take pictures. In so doing Kieran used visual artefacts in the environment as triggers to share narratives from his past, some pleasant some not so pleasant. This process enabled Kieran to share stories which reconnected him to the local landmarks and reconstruct close relationships he experienced with people in this place. Being on what for the most part became guided tours was particularly powerful and encouraged me to reflect upon the individualised ways stories were constructed and how they were understood. These tours also made me reflect upon how the way which such stories were recorded and shared was changing because of digital technologies and how these technologies were of growing importance to young people.

I was and am still intrigued by how the rapid expansion of technologies continues to furnish human story tellers with tools to record, edit and retell narratives in different ways. The

increasing integration of digital cameras into mobile technologies has meant that remembering to bring a camera is no longer required. The spontaneous capturing and sharing of everyday experiences with audiences instantly has become a widely accepted and undertaken social activity. Such digital technologies also enable audio and visual material to be recorded together in one narrative block. This narrative block could potentially be revisited time and again. It can remain stable in its constituent parts, or be edited and reworked. Crucially it will be played as social performance and received in the social world dependent upon temporal and socio-cultural factors. In short the various modalities of communicating narratives furnish people with the ability to share these narratives with a range of audiences, friendship groups, acquaintances and potentially a global audience. Their appeal to me as a researcher and former practitioner was their potential to furnish confused narratives with packets of visual and verbal artefacts from which reflections, narrative sharing and coherence can begin. Alongside the perceived benefits of technological innovations, what became apparent during my time in practice was how these digital communication tools were being experienced by practitioners. Anxiety and nervousness developed around the inability to safeguard vulnerable populations in an increasingly online world. The advent of MSN Instant Messenger, chat rooms and the rapid emergence and popularity of Social Networking Sites (SNS) appeared to raise professional preoccupation with safeguarding guidance/policy orientated mechanisms, as opposed to monitoring through engaging with young people via the same digital technologies.

To me this creates somewhat of a digital technologies paradox. On the one hand young people have access to and are increasingly using the technologies they own and feel confident with to capture the world in which they live in the way in which they see it. On the other there is an understandable anxiety and nervousness around the promotion and engagement with such tools by professionals. What remains for me is the realisation that digital technologies can promote and encourage reflection upon information and narrative at a point in time which is important for these young people. Whilst acknowledging the potential of created digital life story work approaches, the interest of the thesis lies within ways in which such approaches are experienced and constructed by the young people, residential workers and care profession, particularly how workers negotiate using unfamiliar tools which are by and large familiar to young people and could facilitate the very goals care environments strive for.

5.3 Technology in partnership

In terms of developing the study I was clear regarding the iterative processes and flexibility required to allow the research to develop, whilst involving target populations throughout the research process. Employing digital technologies in a way which would allow me to explore discursive performances, as well as providing research partners with tangible outputs was also iterative. Many of the ideas which informed the planning of the study emerged from my practice frustrations and the purchasing of what became instrumental technologies to the research. Having purchased a camcorder in January 2009, I was able to explore its potential within the research. Experimenting with such technology as Kieran had done in places that were of importance to him allowed me to explore the potential and limitations of such technology. This iterative learning was facilitated by a trip to my former primary school. With their agreement I was able to walk around the internal and external features of the school sharing with the camcorder the narratives that the features of the school evoked. This allowed me to experience and reflect upon the meanings of my school and similar important places visited in my hometown. From a research perspective, this provided an insight into how to integrate digital technologies and communicative media in narrative work. More importantly this highlighted practical, methodological and ethical issues of working in innovative ways with such technologies⁴.

Alongside the camcorder I also purchased a webcam. The availability of webcam technologies and their recent integration into existing communication platforms such as Skype and Facebook chat made their inclusion within the research an important one. The positive benefits of encouraging young people to record reflective webcam entries were threefold. Firstly the use of webcams would produce research data directly through young people using them to record their entries. Secondly data would be triggered indirectly by discussions within the residential homes regarding the use and promotion of technologies with vulnerable adolescents in this context. Thirdly in recording regular webcam entries, young people would build up a bank of such data which could be given to them and with their permission, shared with stakeholders on a DVD once their involvement in the study had finished.

⁴ Extracts from this process can be viewed at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SdNa6IBNZl0&feature=related>. This short clip features my own podwalk around my own primary school and local neighbourhood.

To explore the possible roles for digital technologies in life story work, the centrality of the target group's active participation was vital. What also became apparent during this planning period was the need to actively involve the care provider as gatekeepers, but also the residential home's staff teams and its individual members. In using qualitative methods with a small sample over a period of time, particularly one regularly conceptualised as hard to reach, the need to create opportunities for ownership and investment to reduce dropout was vital. In this way investment across all levels was deemed important in a project recruiting so few participants. My research aims which included making a contribution towards informing policy and practice in relation to using technologies to positively engage disenfranchised youth populations, also informed this collaborative perspective. Collaborations were sought to drive and shape the functionality of the life story work tools. This was vital since to be used as data collection methods, they had to be fit for purpose and operate within the residential care environment. Such requirements meant participatory methods, in which research cycles could engage participants and stakeholders in planning, carrying out and reflecting upon progress at various points in time, would play an important part throughout. This iterative process in turn drove the selection of the action research and stimulated the following overarching research question:

How can digital technologies be used to engage adolescents placed residentially in reflective dialogues akin to those of conventional life story work?

To fully answer this research question three discrete studies emerged, each with distinctive research aims. Due to the emergent ethos of the action research process, the research aims of the three studies will be presented within each of the discrete findings chapter they relate to. To present these aims now would indicate that such aims were created before any research cycles were undertaken, rather than through critical reflective action research processes in partnership with young people.

5.4 Conceptual framework

“...a general loss in our assumption of true and knowledgeable selves. We absorb multiple voices, we find each truth relativized in our simultaneous consciousness of compelling alternatives. We come to be aware that each truth about ourselves is that construction of the moment, true only for a given time and within certain relationships.” (Gergen, 2000:16)

In considering the identity of looked-after populations the potential for large discrepancies between their experiences and those of their peers emerge. Those whose developmental trajectories differ attract attention. Differing trajectories can occur across the life course but in relation to identity, societal expectations around identity development in adolescence can be particularly powerful. Power indicates the importance of the modernist legacy, whereby problems are constructed as residing within the individual's mind. Gergen (1999:74) calls this "...the metaphor of mind as mirror...", the belief that inside the individual's mind/head is subjective and the world outside is objective. In viewing the world through such a lens problems are seen to reside within the individual. Treatments to adjust developmental trajectories are as such aimed at them as individuals. In exploring the world from a social constructionist perspective the point of entry into debates alters. Focus in this section will be given to how the conceptual framework is informed by my own understandings and readings of social constructionism and how this locates the research accordingly.

5.4.1 Social constructionism

The main premise of the philosophical orientation labelled as social constructionism is that such a lens challenges taken for granted versions of reality. Berger and Luckman's (1967) book *The Social Construction of Reality* represented a confluence of ideas from areas including linguistics, phenomenology and sociology. It proposed that knowledge is not discovered so much as it is constructed. A social constructionist perspective treats language not as a reflection of the world underpinned by the idea that a single truth can be discovered. Instead this perspective views truths as achieved through language and as a result of communal interactions. Such interactions are bound by culture, time and experience. Social constructionism carries with it the idea of other possibilities. It does not privilege one account over another; instead it begins to unpack how language creates knowledge as privileged. In so doing, the social constructionist perspective places knowledge construction in the process of social interchanges (Gergen, 1985). The work of Wittgenstein (1978) emphasised how society becomes the source of shared concepts and key in our understanding of ourselves and our relationships in the world; a perspective which continues to influence the social sciences. Of interest to this conceptual framework are the comments of Wittgenstein (1978) in relation to words gaining their meaning through their use in the language.

Words themselves do not describe the world; meaning is worked up from their successful functioning within the relational ritual (Gergen, 1999). Or as Wittgenstein (1978) would suggest

words can become truth telling in the game of language. So if I stood over my desk and I said to a work colleague "I'm going for a break" the word 'break' gains its meaning within the relational context. If I said the same to a martial arts expert whilst standing over my desk, the word could function in the relational game very differently. In this way social construction becomes about how the language functions in a relational context, or as Austin (1962) suggests we need to analyse performative aspects of how language functions in relationships. For Gergen (1985) this perspective invites one to question the objective basis of conventional knowledge. Realist perspectives are based on the idea that knowledge is discoverable and can be objectively described in the same way by different observers. Social constructionism challenges realist claims that universal truths exist and are discoverable. Knowledge production becomes viewed as something performed together and achieved through social interactions as opposed to a phenomenon found in the material world or residing in the heads of individuals. In challenging assumptions that truth can be carried in language, Gergen (1999) suggests we begin to see that there is no privileged relationship between the world and word. Multiple views exist. However society bestows upon as certain truths, how these truths are constructed, negotiated and managed is performed in language (Galatzer-Levy 2002). Achieving truth becomes a social process (Gergen, 1999).

In relation to the discipline of social psychology and its construction of truths, a seminal paper by Gergen (1973) argued that social psychology is primarily a historical inquiry. Since: "Unlike the natural sciences, it deals with facts that are largely non-repeatable and which fluctuate markedly over time." (Gergen, 1973:310). Consequently to attempt to "...build general laws of social behaviour seems misdirected..." (Gergen, 1973:316). The crisis in social psychology around this point was spurred by a disillusionment of some with laboratory based experimental methods (Parker, 1989). This linguistic or discursive turn (Harré, 1979; Parker, 1989), characterises a move in the philosophical focus of the social sciences towards language as truth constructing, as opposed to truth giving. For those exploring how truths are constructed in the discipline of psychology, Discourse Analysis has provided a way to attend to the performative actions of language.

The emergence of discursive approaches in psychology places attention on language as social action (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) and encourages the critical reflection upon how psychology, but particularly cognitive psychology, constructs certain truth claims from a realist standpoint (Edwards, Ashmore & Potter, 1996; Edwards & Potter, 1992; Foucault, 1972; Gergen, 1985;

Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Wetherell & Potter, 1992). Discursive approaches in psychology also encourage methodological innovation. The refinement of discursive methods is of course on-going. Burman and Parker (1993) encourage attention to on-going reflections; others discuss methodological representations of social interactions (Griffin, 2007a; 2007b; Henwood, 2007; Potter & Hepburn, 2007). What I take from such debates is an awareness of hypercriticality, an acknowledgment of the inescapability of language and its effects and an interest in accessing talk in innovative ways.

5.4.2 A critical social psychology perspective

In moving analysis away from the focus upon the individual mind, Gergen's (2000:16) work on the saturated self begins to illustrate how in contemporary life: "...a general loss in our of true and knowledgeable selves emerges." In describing how contemporary life is experienced as a number of increasing relationships due to technological innovations and globalisation, Gergen (2000) suggests that with each relationship comes a different role which needs to be played. In Gergen's (2000:16) words we become immersed in multiple perspectives, with each furnishing us with: "...a multiplicity of incoherent and unrelated languages of the self." By taking a critical approach to the study of identity, Potter and Wetherell (1987) argue that talk is the site in which identities are negotiated and taken up. In so doing, such a perspective takes the emphasis away from given forms of categorisation, instead identity is seen as an on-going process of continual renegotiation and interaction. For looked-after adolescents the doing of the on-going identity process may be more problematic than their peers. Such populations in many cases may lack regular relationships which can inform dialogues about the self and as such narrative identity work. Additionally as discussed in *Chapter 2: Adolescence and identity: A critical perspective* the narratives available to looked-after young people may require more discursive negotiation and maintenance due to the disparity of these narratives. From the social constructionist position informing this conceptual framework, there is a realisation that the world as experienced does not demand a particular form of categorisation (Galatzer-Levy 2002). Yet whilst people do things in different ways, the availability of society's truths are seemingly more available to some than others. Within the context of life story work and my view that a more sensitive adolescent approach is needed, the work of Gergen (1999:70) again emerges as highly relevant:

"...because we are treated by others as storied characters, we are often called upon to "tell our story", to recount our past, to identify where we have been and where we are going. In effect we

identify ourselves through narration. In a sense, narrative structures set certain limits over who we can be.”

Within such a framework my ability to privilege my account, and with it my research, is needed but in so doing becomes an act of rhetoric. What does this leave me with: in many ways an ideological dilemma (Billig, 1997). But from such a dilemma emerges a range of dialectic resources I can use to perform a range of activities (Potter, 1996). Social constructionist accounts enable the authoring of accounts as one’s own; to do so critically and through on-going reflexivity is paramount. Though my writing will not contain rhetorical devices which seek to distance myself as an objective observer, it will contain the rhetorical devices associated with arguing from a social constructionist position. Clearly I cannot escape the effects of language (Potter, 1998), nor what my language does. But what social constructionism does permit is for me to be reflexive. Such a conceptual framework also allows me and indeed my research to:

“...open the way to new forms of inquiry, and possible ways of going on in the world... take a risk with words, shake up the conventions, generate new formations of intelligibility, new images, and sensitivities.” (Gergen, 1999:117)

For me the limitations of relativism and social constructive arguments surrounding the creating of recommendations for action persist (Burr, 1998; Foucault, 1972; Willig 1998). Yet I cannot escape the effects of language more than anyone else who chooses to engage with such a perspective. As Burr (1998) suggests in agreement with the commentary of Willig (1998), inaction is still a form of action. Willig (1998) states that by observing, commenting and yet resisting making recommendations for fear of proposing different constructions which may play out as more negative than those orientated as dominant in the first place, the discursive analyst merely maintains the status quo. With the acceptance that a discursive psychological position cannot escape language nor indeed its effects, the capacity to move beyond hypercriticality emerges. The action research methodology offers this opportunity.

5.5 Action research

The term action research has been widely attributed to the work of Lewin (1946), which explored the development of group involvement in decision making (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002). Action research as a method is made up of four constituent processes. These processes are intertwined and form the core of this method. As illustrated by figure 2 the processes reflect, plan, act and observe occur in a cyclical arrangement. Once observations from an initiated plan

of action have taken place reflection immediately follows. Depending upon the research project, this could also be the start of the next cycle of the project, or feed into the projects conclusions. One of the key aspects of action research is the requirement for on-going critical reflection throughout each individual research cycle, but also across the entire research process. This reflexivity requirement means action research methodologies complement social constructionist approaches to research.

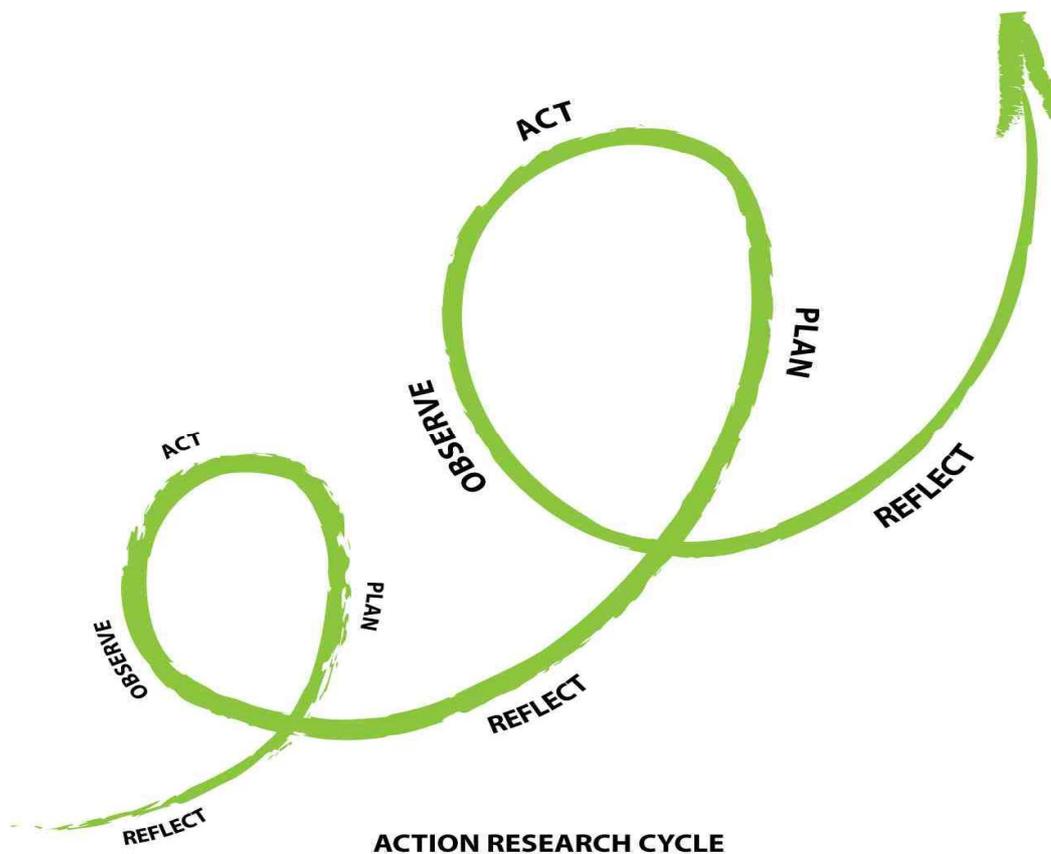


Figure 2: Illustrating cyclical nature and constituent processes of action research

The use of action research methodologies throughout the social sciences continue to grow, having moved beyond educational settings where they first came to prominence (Noffke, 1997). With this growth debates regarding action research have moved from attempting to validate what was once a fledgling methodology attempting to find legitimacy, to how action research is carried out and for what purposes (McNiff & Whitehead, 2002). Of the debates surrounding how

action research is carried out a threefold typology has been proposed by Carr and Kemmis (1986). They suggest that types of action research can be segregated according to different relationships between researchers and participant actors at the start of a project. Of this typology the technical model, initially led by the researcher who brings to the context their own rationale for initiating the research, emerges as most appropriate. This technical approach has been conventionally associated with a positivist standpoint that views its purpose as seeking to discover knowledge. The technical model has also been widely used in critical qualitative studies with minority groups (Bostock & Freeman, 2003). This technical model enables me as the researcher to introduce the goals of the research in the first instance. The license such approach gives me ensures I can guide, where appropriate the progression of the digital life story work tools development. The use of this model also compensates for the unpredictable nature of the participants and research field through ensuring a degree of flexibility.

In reviewing for what purposes action research should be undertaken Winter (1989) provides six key principles, listing these as reflexive critique, dialectic critique, risk, collaborative resource, plural structure and theory-practice transformation. Whilst all principles remain relevant to the current study, the principles of risk and collaborative resource warrant further discussion. The principle of risk within action research acknowledges that its introduction can threaten previously established ways of working (Winter, 1989). In challenging existing practices and procedures action research and indeed the researcher can become a threat to professional identity and organisational competencies, a concern at individual and organisational level. Winter (1989) suggests that professional apprehension may stem from having one's ideas and judgements discussed publicly. For Winter (1989) the action researcher can use this possibility to ally themselves within the process, pointing out that they too are subject to the same process of critique. Importantly Winter (1989) calls for the researcher to emphasise that, whatever the outcome, positive learning will take place. For the action researcher to use the principle of risk in this way they need to be seen as an ally in the action research process rather than its controller. In this way participants need to be invested in the project. This can be achieved according to Winter (1989) by participants being engaged as co-researchers, in so doing they become a collaborative resource. For Winter (1989) this principle presupposes that the ideas of each individual within action research are equal as potential resources.

5.5.1 Participatory methods

Some researchers see participation within research by minority or marginalised groups as tokenistic (Vandenbroeck & De Bie 2006). Others see it as a core principle and strength of recruiting such a research design (Stringer, 1996). Even through acknowledging that different levels of participation are possible at different stages of the research process (Hart, 1992), disputes arise within the literature regarding claims that with participation comes empowerment. Grover (2004) amongst others would appear to suggest that participatory research is undoubtedly empowering. Yet others such as Vandenbroeck and De Bie (2006) suggest that rather than serving to provide a voice for marginalised populations, participation tends to privilege the already privileged. Holland, Renold, Ross and Hillman (2008:6) put forth a similar critique stating that: "...whilst most participatory research with children is labelled as 'empowering', much is in fact highly managed by the researcher..." Consequently Holland et al. (2008) argue strongly against the idea that participatory methods are automatically superior to other methodologies. Issuing warnings around complacent claims with regard to quasi-participatory work with children, Holland et al. (2008) also suggest that it is not so much the approach or method that grants participatory characteristics, it is the manner in which this method is carried out.

5.5.1.1 Empowerment transparency

By recruiting the technical model of action research I can guide, where appropriate, progression of the digital life story work tools. This is a necessity since the ability of these tools to be created, developed and implemented within research constraints impact directly upon this research and the thesis. The use of this model also compensated for the unpredictable nature of the participants and research field by ensuring a certain degree of flexibility. This was judged to be vital since an evolving project featuring new technologies and adolescents' living in residential care was likely to create unforeseen situations due to its innovative nature and the realisation that software, hardware, staff and participant based issues may have arisen. The technical model also allows the project to react to and explore emergent themes from initial data collected, meaning that the project could explore unforeseen avenues of enquiry. In utilising this technical model in which I declare my own rationale for carrying out the research, I am aware that the inclusion of participant voices can be seen as tokenistic. By stating this position and as such making its subjectivity transparent, the selected typology utilised should not be seen to limit its participatory ethos. As the comments of Holland et al. (2008) highlighted, it is not so

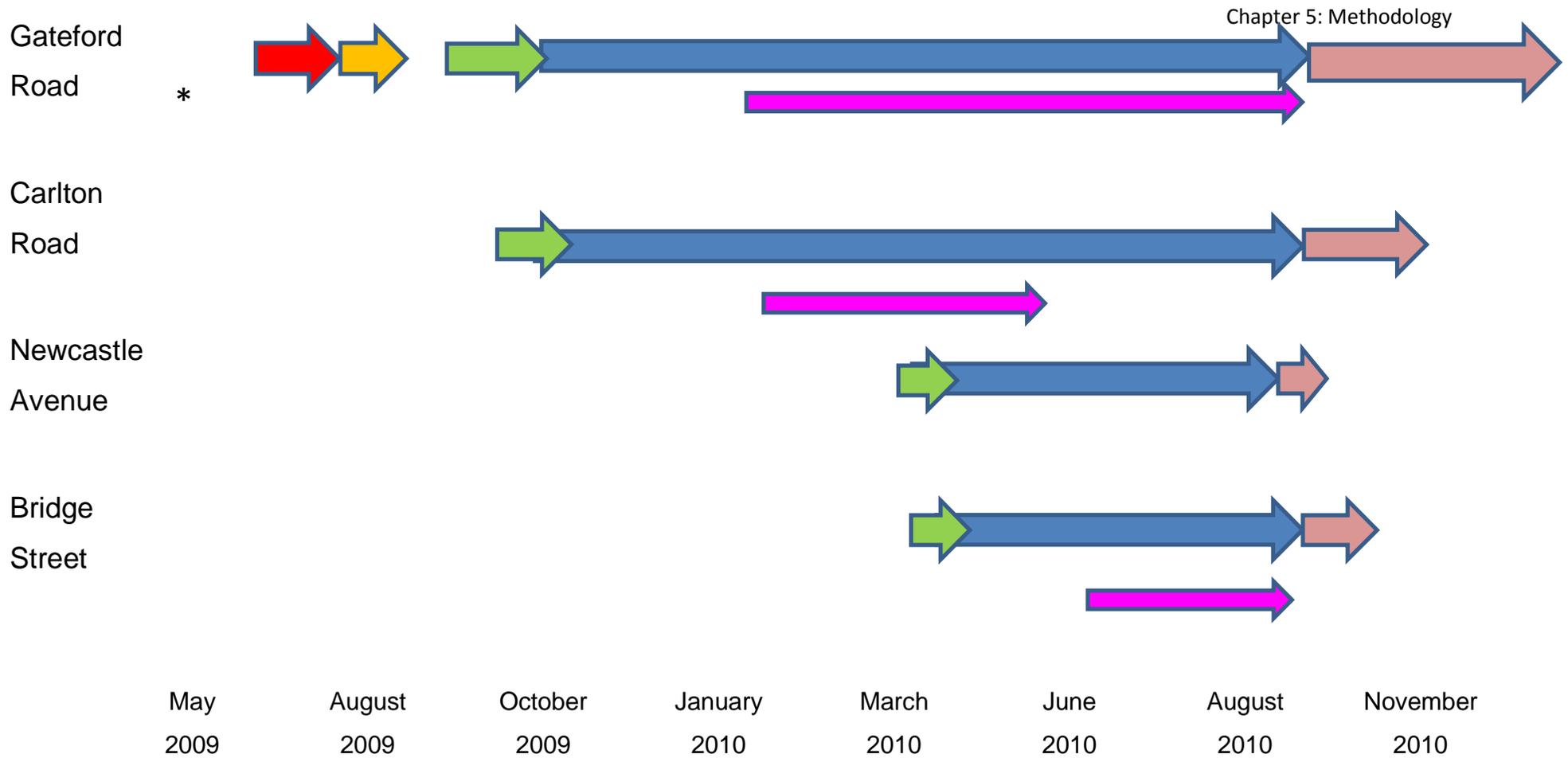
much the approach but the manner in which it is carried out which influences participant involvement. For many, participation is empowerment, and yet with empowerment arrives the potential for political gain. Claims to construct value-neutral knowledge are not sought to be made, instead transparency in political orientation and desire to contribute to social change are overtly made.

5.6 Research cycles

This section will introduce the research cycles by which data was collected. This leaves reflections and discussions regarding process based consequences of introducing and facilitating created digital approaches to be analysed in *Chapter 6: bebook: Promoting reflective dialogues with adolescents in residential care*, *Chapter 7: Podwalking: Generating and analysing reflective talk via process driven method* and *Chapter 8: Managing uncertainty in residential homes: The emergence and consequences of the digital media, e-safety and the Scarlet Pimpernel*. Although the following cycles of research are presented in a linear dimension a point worth reinforcing is the on-going and continually reflexive orientation of action research. As well as the flexibility of this iterative process to allow unplanned cycles of research to emerge. As will become apparent due to the innovative way engagement with vulnerable populations was sought, it became necessary to stagger the introduction of research cycles across the four residential homes, as illustrated by figure 3.

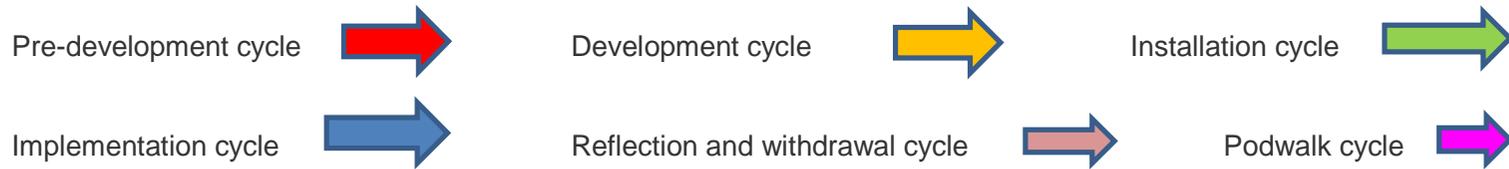
5.6.1 Creation cycle

I created the tools used through the project. My idea was to create the tools but leave them unfinished. In this way the development and refinement of the tools could create collaborative dialogues, but also allow them to remain fit for purpose. From a research perspective they were data stimulation and collection methods. In the care context they represented digital life story work tools, aiming to promote coherence enhancing reflective dialogues and engagement with hard to reach adolescents. They were in effect a relatively blank canvas, but a canvas I had provided and asked adolescents and their care settings to help me paint.



Key:

Figure 3: Project timeline with discrete and interconnected cycles of research.



* For creation cycle see 5.6.1

5.6.1.1 A private website as an online digital repository

The first tool created was an online approach, which sought to harness the benefits of conventional paper-based life story work books as a way to encourage the construction of coherent narratives and the collection of memories. This tool aimed to make this aspect of the conventional life story work process a more digital experience. This approach sought to capitalise upon the perceived familiarity and competencies of young people in relation to SNS, their use of digital technologies to record everyday experiences and the sharing of these memories online. Crucially the sharing, reconstructing and reinterpreting of such memories during this process was perceived to be in line with conventional approaches which are more private and shared within more immediate and supportive personal relationships. Once the functional requirements of the site were outlined in terms of their usage as a digital life story work tool and data collection method, a web designer was commissioned to build the website's back end⁵. The back end infrastructure of the nominal⁶ website is shown in figure 4. This left the front end⁷ of the website and some additional functionality to be developed in line with young people's and stakeholder wishes in the pre-development and development phases, discussed in more detail in the pre-development cycle section of this chapter. This infrastructure meant that access to each user's page was within their control and could be accessed upon entering their own unique username and password. Each user was also aware that in my dual role as *bebook* administrator/facilitator and researcher, I would also be viewing content uploaded. Whilst perceived safeguarding and ethical considerations were created at this stage based on my practice experience, these were developed fully in collaboration with professionals to address organisational and home specific concerns in the pre-development cycle.

5.6.1.2 Visiting important places to record and share narratives

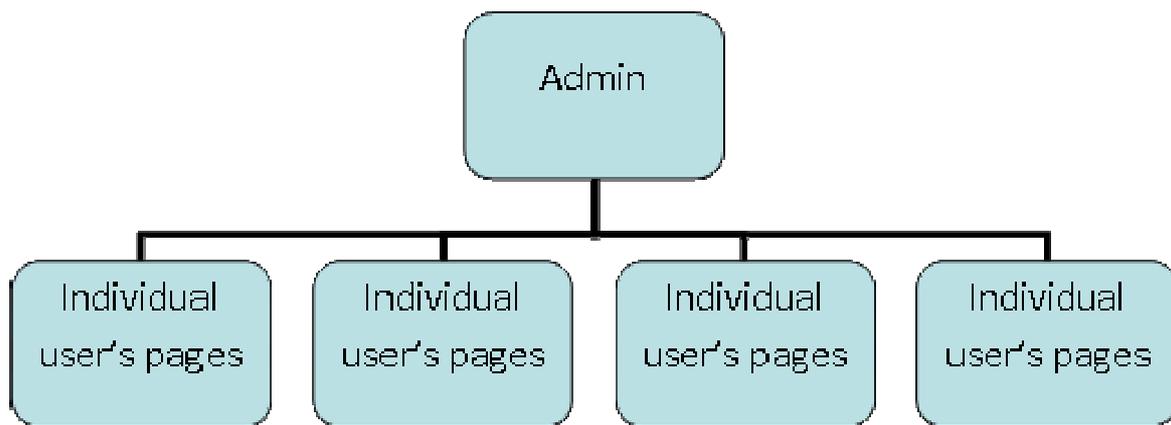
Following the filming around my hometown I decided that the off-line nature these walking tours could offer the project would provide a complementary companion to the nominal website. In creating this approach and considering how to introduce this within the overall research project, 'podwalking' as the approach became known, appeared to offer the research process an

5 The back end of a website relates to the administration area of the site. Once in place this determines the functionality of the website, in other words what the website will allow users to do. In the case of this nominal website the back end was programmed or built to allow users to only see their own page and yet allow me as administrator to see the content of all users.

6 Nominal website feature webpages that are private and can only be viewed by members of a community who ascertain log in credentials. In this case only individual users and I could see user's pages individual pages.

7 Front end refers to the skin of website which is what the user sees and interacts directly with.

engagement hook, in that as opposed to the continual basis of using the nominal website over a period envisaged to be between six to nine months, the podwalk research cycle would offer a more immediate tangible product. A more detailed context is provided in *Chapter 7: Podwalking: Generating and analysing reflective talk via process driven method*, for now it is sufficient to note that young people and workers alike would be able to experience a quick return on time invested once the film clips were edited and burnt onto a DVD.



website.

5.6.2 Pre-development cycle

The innovative use of digital technologies, the vulnerability of the target population and the risk averse tendencies of residential home environments meant that the support of a partnership care provider was crucial. The pre-development cycle allowed me to introduce the idea of the research project to a potential partner care provider. As will now be outlined this cycle enabled me to build relationships with a partner care provider, which included a number of residential homes, their managers, staff teams and most importantly the young people living in these homes.

5.6.2.1 The internal care provider champion

In negotiating access to the sample various gatekeepers and governance procedures had to be satisfied. This was cyclical in nature since I needed to illustrate to gatekeepers that administrative and safeguarding procedures were in place before I was granted access. Yet due

to the innovative and sensitised use of technologies by young people, these protocols needed to be developed in consultation with the proposed data collection sites and their staff teams. This meant that initial contact with a partner data collection site had to be made before research governance and university ethical approval could be fully granted. Such ethical considerations meant that an initial meeting was sought with the Head of Residential Care in the partner care provider. In this meeting I was able to pitch myself as a researcher with residential experience, the tools created, precautionary ethical/safeguarding considerations and the potential benefits of involvement.

The success of the meeting meant that the Head of Residential Care, “Kat” as she will subsequently become known, was able to vouch for the project and oversee the facilitation of meetings with the first residential home. This role moved beyond simply issues of accessibility and saw Kat play an active and on-going role within the promotion of the research in the partner care provider. The role of Kat as the internal care provider champion within the project was a vital aspect, allowing for the smooth and dynamic progression through the inherently slow research governance process.

5.6.2.2 Creating collaborative opportunities

Once granted access to a single residential home, the next step was to meet with this home’s management, staff teams and to gauge the interest of the young people. It was also important to build a rapport base with the manager and staff team in this, the Gateford Road home. This phase of pre-development enabled the project to evolve in consultation with practitioners’ relevant procedural protocols, allowing the project to meet the criteria outlined by research governance and university ethical procedures. This allowed the project to hone traditional administration tasks such as participant information and consent procedures and also (of particular importance due to the innovative nature of the project) the creation of risk assessments, safeguarding procedures and protocol agreement documents should any safeguarding issues become apparent (see appendices 1, 2 and 3 accordingly). The creating of participant information forms, safeguarding procedures and protocols before meeting Kat and indeed this first home’s management team were a vital step. Yet the continual negotiation of such procedures as this cycle progressed was an important factor as organisational and home specific concerns emerged. Rather than acting as a barrier to successful partnership, the

common goals of the project and the Gateford Road home allowed good working relationships to develop.

Despite the benefits of this collaborative dialogue, with each meeting and subsequent document revision, additional requirements were added. This meant that the information which needed to be communicated to participants continually increased. As such the volume of information to be synthesised and presented to the young people as potential participants became a concern. For this reason a pilot meeting was carried out with a group from a separate care population, but with similar demographics to that of the target population. This meeting illustrated the inability of traditional materials to provide information to assist the gaining of informed consent. This in turn raised questions regarding how to communicate the volume of information required sensitively to the target population. The flexibility and communicative potential of digital technologies as a medium for compressing and disseminating important information to young people presented a viable solution. Particularly as young peoples' active participation and collaboration was sought throughout the research project. The use of Participant Information Clips (PIC)⁸ also enabled the project to provide ample opportunities for young people to gain a full understanding of their participation, as well as providing additional information and consent gaining opportunities across the various research cycles (Hammond & Cooper, 2011a). PICs are short video clips used to convey complex information of an ethical nature to participants. In this project the volume of information which needed to be shared with participants was considerable. Hence PICs offered the opportunity to move beyond text-based information giving in a way which was engaging to the potential audience whilst still presenting information. As such PICs were created for the development and implementation cycle⁹ of the project supplemented by a one page participant consent form (see appendix 4). The same procedure was also used to introduce requirements for those choosing to undertake the podwalk cycle¹⁰ again see appendix 5 for supplementary consent form. An additional consent form was created and used on occasions when consent was deemed to be needed from a young person's parent/guardian/social worker (see appendix 6).

8 PICs are short video clips used to convey complex information of an ethical nature to participants. In this project the volume of information which needed to be share with participants was vast. Hence PICs offered the opportunity to move beyond default information giving procedures in a way which was engaging whilst still being informative.

9 To view PIC used in development and implementation cycle see <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bw591lrjBC4>

10 To view PIC used in podwalk cycle <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCKhiVJJA6E>

5.6.2.3 Building relationships

Being from a practitioner background and familiar with the capabilities of such technologies, I was able to envisage a number of potential issues and subsequently make changes or create contingency procedures to counteract such issues occurring. This appeared to address some concerns but a degree of nervousness and scepticism about the use of digital technologies remained for some staff members throughout the project. Once administrative, ethical and safeguarding procedures had been successfully negotiated and an additional CRB check undertaken, I was invited to have dinner at the Gateford Road home. This would allow me to pitch the research and in many ways myself to the young people. Following the success of this initial pitch and the now approved safeguarding protocols, the internal care provider champion was able to disseminate the idea of the project at her monthly managers' meetings. From such meetings a small number of participants were highlighted, their home's managers contacted and similar informal initial meetings with potentially interested young people undertaken. Across the homes contacted most young people seemed politely interested in the guest at their dinner table and his idea. Such meetings were also an opportunity for staff on duty to scan me, finding out more about who I was and what I wanted from the young people they worked with.

5.6.3 Development cycle

The aim of this research cycle was to create a brand identity for the website including its name, but also to shape the visual elements and front end of the nominal website providing an opportunity for amendments to functionality to emerge. To achieve these outcomes these tasks were approached across two separate steering groups. The first steering group would create a brand identity and name the website whilst the second would shape the front end, visual appearance and allow adaptations to functionality.

Despite visiting several homes within the jurisdiction of the care provider, the first steering group was attended by two young people and a residential worker. This steering group also aimed to develop a sense of ownership and investment in the project from the young people in attendance since they were to create the website's name. The steering group ran for half an hour and was structured to be an informal, creative session. Thus whilst a Dictaphone was present to record conversations which were stimulated by my initial questions regarding how attendees experienced technology, such discussions were introduced alongside the branding

task. This steering group was aided by the use of a whiteboard which provided a table cover. The idea being that the three participants could use this to jot down ideas independently whilst sharing them with the group. As shown in figure 5 the name 'bebook' was suggested and agreed upon. Following the steering group attendees, myself and two colleague volunteers played five-a-side football. As will be reflected upon at a later point in this chapter, similar additional recreational activities became a frequent feature of my relationships with the young people.

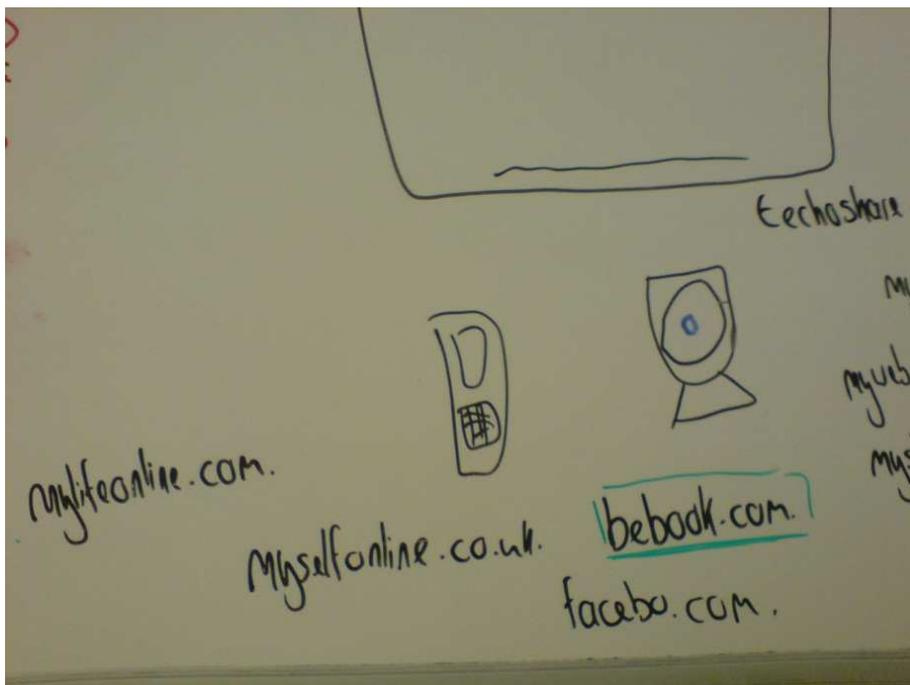


Figure 5: Photograph taken at the end of first steering group illustrating use of whiteboard and creation of *bebook* name.

On reflection holding the steering groups in the summer holidays probably contributed to the low number of attendees. Young people from other residential homes around the county would have had to make a two hour round trip to attend, placing a high level of demand upon their free time and the time of facilitating staff members. This it would seem had knock-on effects for shift patterns and the other young people living in the homes approached. For such reasons it was decided that the development and integration of the website would take place in conjunction with the Gateford Road home due to its location and the relationships I had developed there.

At this point it is necessary to briefly outline the young people who participated in the various research cycles. As will become apparent through the remainder of this chapter and the findings chapters that follow, my relationships with each young person were more than researcher and researched. Of course these relationships were being experienced as continuously negotiated, yet the different research cycles and created digital tools made different requirements upon such relationships. To this end participants are introduced at this point via Table 1: Participants at a glance, with more context driven portraits provided at the start of *Chapter 6: bebook: Promoting reflective dialogues with adolescents in residential care* and *Chapter 7: Podwalking: Generating and analysing reflective talk via process driven method*.

A week after the first steering group a second was undertaken. The second steering group was only attended by one young person. This impacted how the *bebook* website's front end appearance and functionality was progressed. Yet this also allowed the young person who attended to have a considerable impact upon these facets. Chris 17, the participant in question had attended the first steering group alongside his housemate Billie 15, yet it was Billie who created the *bebook* name for the website which he said was a combination of Facebook and Bebo. As sole attendee at the second steering group, Chris was able to select and shape the visual elements and front end of the nominal website. He chose the black and green skin¹¹ and created the *bebook* logo, an unfinished task from the first steering group (figures 6 and 7) and provided constructive feedback regarding the websites functionality (figure 7).

11 'Skin' is a term which refers to the aesthetic overlay on the front end of a website which covers the underlying features of *bebook* websites hierarchical back end infrastructure.

Table 1: Participants at a glance

Participant	Age	Home	Development Cycle	Installation Cycle	Implementation Cycle	Podwalk Cycle	Withdraw Cycle
Billie	15	Gateford Road	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Chris	17	Gateford Road	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Phil	15	Gateford Road	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Anne-Marie	15	Carlton Road	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stan	15	Newcastle Avenue	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
John	18	Newcastle Avenue	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Haze	14	Gateford Road	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Nikki	15	Bridge Street	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ivy	14	Bridge Street	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lynk	15	Bridge Street	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

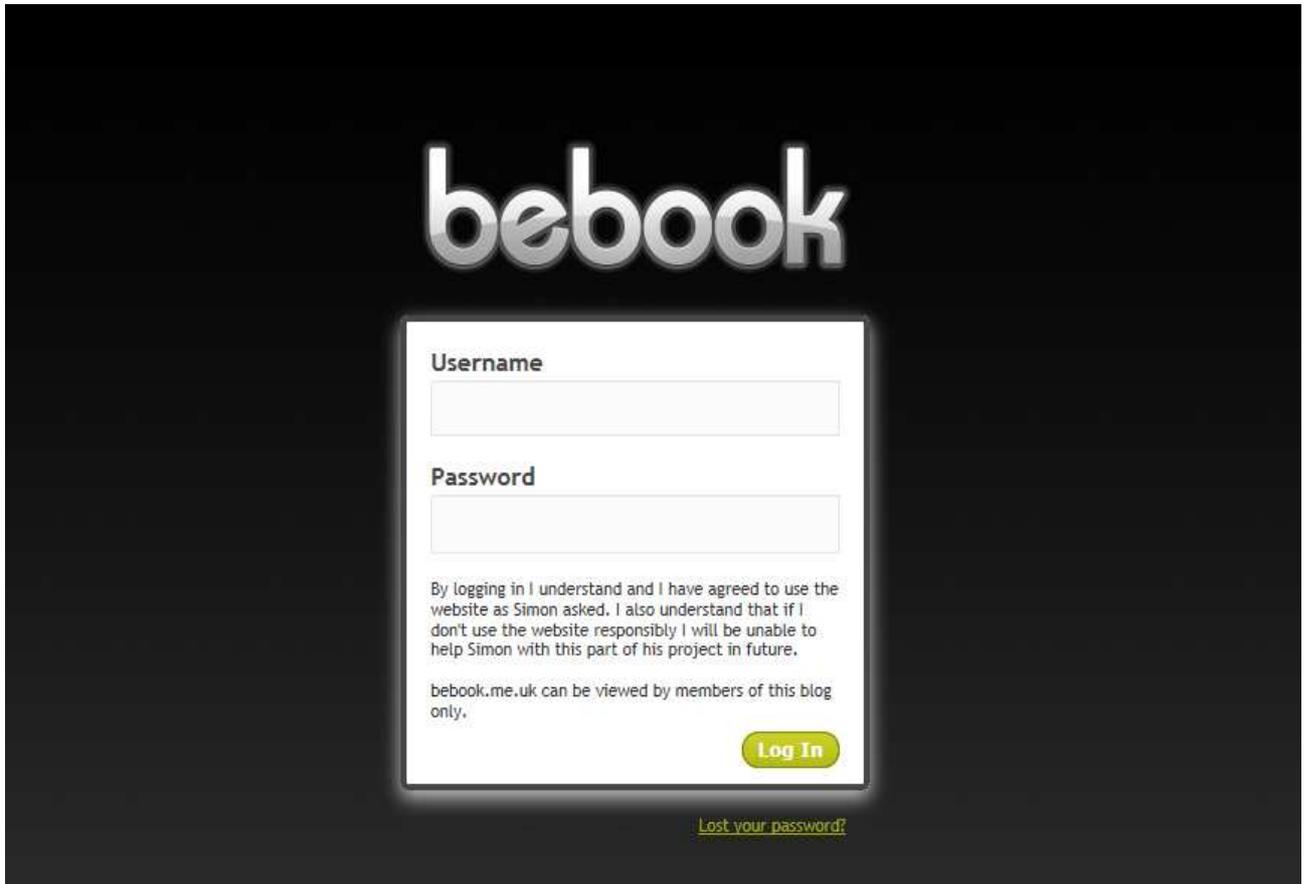


Figure 6: Screen shot taken showing black and green skin chosen by Chris and the *bebook* logo. Also visible is the continual prompting of young people's consent.

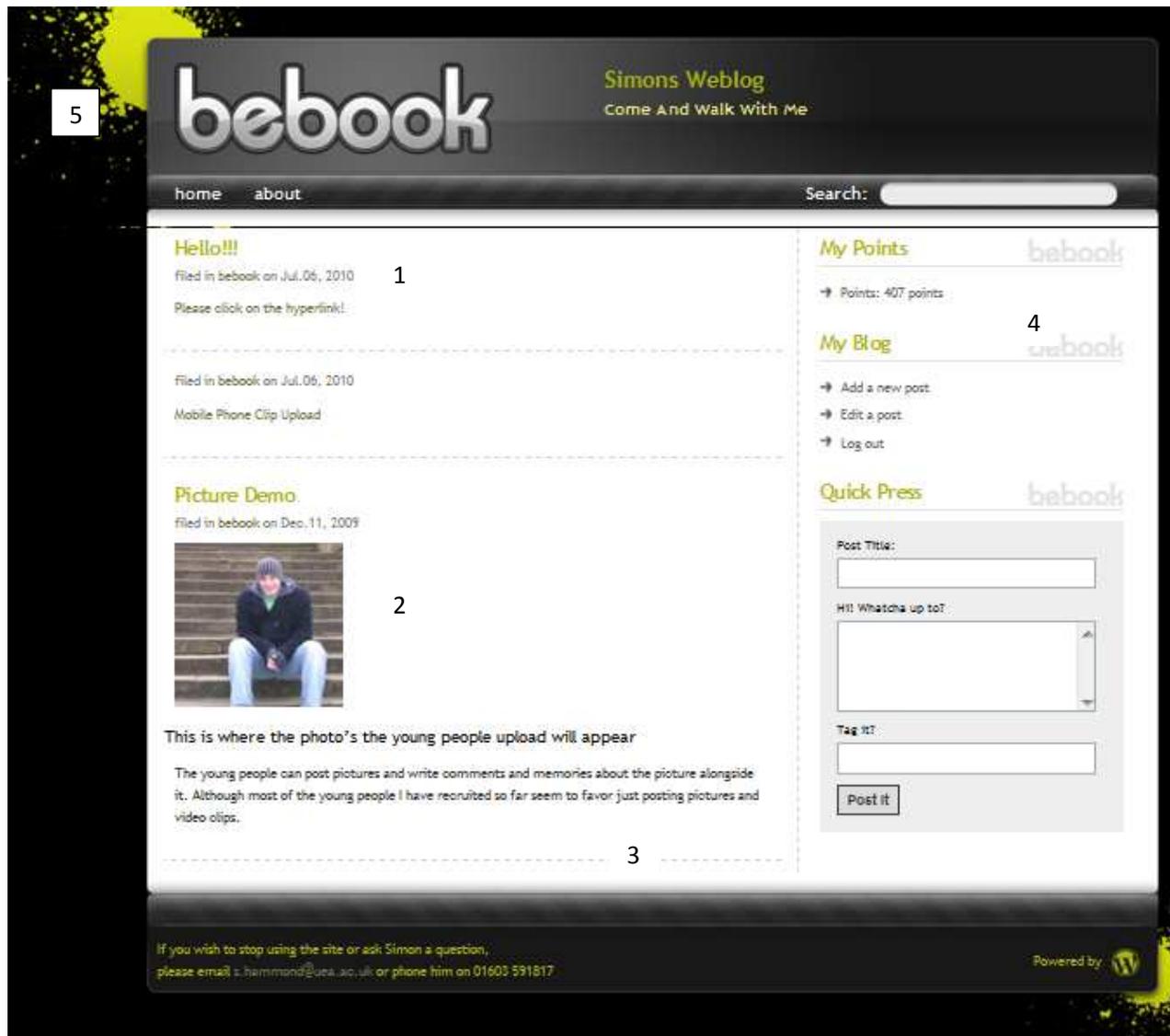


Figure 7: Screen shot exemplar of a young person’s private webspace, also illustrating *bebook*’s black and green skin, logo and functionality

Key:

1. Shows a hyperlink to an uploaded audiovisual file, which once clicked will activate a pop-out media player
2. Example of uploaded digital image
3. Example of blog data
4. Rewards points system used in primary stages of implementation cycle
5. Chosen paint splat skin and colour scheme

5.6.4 Installation cycle

The installation cycle became as much about me being accepted and installed as a familiar face within the homes, as it did around introducing the website and installing associated hardware. The cycle was experienced primarily in two residential homes, the Gateford Road and Carlton Road homes as illustrated by figure 3. This was due to the abundance of problems initially experienced on a range of technological and research-based issues. In working closely with the individual staff members and crucially the primarily engaged young people, numerous issues were resolved or contingency strategies developed. In relation to the installation of webcams onto computers, the connecting of young people's computers to the internet, the reliability of such computers and/or young peoples continued access to them, this cycle presented numerous issues.

5.6.4.1 Website problems: Access

As a result of the developmental cycle and my own initial proposal of functionality for the nominal website, a brief was given to the commissioned web designer. With an emphasis upon security and usability, the brief was to produce a user friendly secure website that provided individual users with their own private space upon which they could upload a range of digital data. Specifically this had to include the ability to upload webcam entries and mobile phone clips. Two months later when the website was ready it was not user friendly. The main issue being the inability of the website to upload popular movie clip file types, particularly those created by the majority of young people's mobile phones¹². Whilst frustrations continued in relation to the functionality, I had also underestimated the risk sensitive reactions the introduction of *bebook* would evoke. Issues of access in this cycle related to young people's ability to access reliable computers with internet connections but also my ability to access the young people themselves.

In terms of young people's ability to access computers and the internet there were numerous on-going issues. Of those young people who had access to their own laptops, the reliability of these devices through technological and young person induced faults was poor. Where young people could use their own or the home's computers which had access to the internet, the

¹² Short movie clips recorded on camera phones commonly create 3GGP movie files. This particular file type could not be uploaded straight to the young people's *bebook* profile without being converted to a more common file type. This meant that young people had to convert these files into another file type file an online file converter before they could be uploaded onto their *bebook* profile.

installation of webcams and other devices was problematic. Primarily this was because the computers were limited by distant or local administrators in terms of what they would allow the young people to do. For young people who did have access to a reliable computer with internet connectivity, web filters installed by distant or local administrators had to also be negotiated. Unfortunately such administrators were not always available at the time problems occurred. To this end I would regularly take a university laptop and webcam to facilitate the young people's use of *bebook*. However young people were unable to directly upload their webcam entries to *bebook* from this university laptop, as the laptop could not be added to the various homes broadband connections since wireless network access codes were unavailable¹³. Whilst staff team members sympathised with this predicament, they were unwilling/unable to allow the young people to upload the webcam entries they had recorded on the university laptop to the internet via the office-based desktop computers.

In terms of me accessing young people and engaging them, with *bebook* apprehension continued on behalf of many staff members. Because of the innovative nature of the project and its technological aspects, close partnership working with the Gateford Road homes management team was the dominant feature of the pre-development cycle. Yet when installing and beginning to work with the young people using the webcam in this home concerns were triggered. Despite a CRB check and having worked with the management team of this home for around three months, concerns were raised back with the manager by several workers. Concerns were mainly in relation to young people being able to 'live-stream' themselves via webcams given to them for using *bebook*¹⁴, post video clips of themselves on YouTube¹⁵ and my use of a Dictaphone when facilitating young people's use of *bebook* to record talk triggered. These issues were then escalated upwards to Kat in her role as Head of Service. These were quickly addressed and I was allowed to return to the Gateford Road home and continue working with the young people as I had been doing before. From this point forward before I began to install and work with young people across the remaining sites, I would attend residential team meetings to introduce the project and myself to address staff concerns before meeting the young people.

13 This was not ideal solution however getting agreement to allow my university laptop on these networks could have taken months the project did not have.

14 Live streaming is the process of transmitting video footage over the internet as the event occurs in real time.

15 This concern mainly related to young people uploading inappropriate videos of themselves or others, or sharing information of intimate or highly sensitive personal nature. Such possibilities were however a possibility regardless of the projects involvement since many young people owned camera phones and knew or visited internet cafes.

5.6.5. Implementation cycle

The technological frustrations accompanied by the restricted nature of young people's computer and internet usage shaped much of the implementation cycle, as did the initial teething problems surrounding use of the *bebook* website itself. During this time young people were heavily reliant upon me to provide instructions regarding how to use *bebook*. Their reliance upon me was reduced as they became more familiar with the website which was helped by the creation of a 'Your guide to using *bebook*' instructional booklet (see appendix 7). Created in consultation with the young people this booklet featured instructions on how to use *bebook* and attempted to address additional software training needs. Like similar booklets, it used screen dumps and step by step instructions to remind users how to perform certain aspects such as uploading pictures, vlogs and textual blogs.

5.6.5.1 How were the tools progressed?

The combination of access issues resulted in me undertaking weekly visits to the recruited residential homes. During these visits I would try to work through problems with the help of the young people and on some occasions staff team members. Because of my own investment and indeed involvement in what became an extended installation cycle, using *bebook* became associated with my presence. This trend continued into the implementation cycle. Young people would engage in my presence and not engage when I was absent¹⁶. In order to engage young people incentives were initially created on the basis of the frequency of uploads to *bebook*. However, this rewards points system led to initially engaged young people uploading a variety of content to earn points rather than being reflective. For example, one young person uploaded around 36 pictures he had found on the internet so he could "earn some coin". In an attempt to remedy this, the initially used rewards points system was replaced by a monthly mission incentive. The idea for the monthly mission sheets was to steer the young people towards using the website to upload the sort of data that could begin to promote reflective dialogues about the self. As shown in figure 8, these monthly sheets were themed using the *bebook* log in screen and issued monthly goals. Each month the tasks required for the young people to complete were altered, yet with the underlying aim being to create reflective and projective dialogues. Despite several attempts to bring staff members into playing a more directly facilitative role dialogues created by the activities associated with the *bebook* missions, such conversations mainly took place in the relationships I experienced with the young people. This is discussed in

¹⁶ Pitches given at staff meetings were used to encourage staff teams to engage in directly facilitating *bebook*'s usage. Such attempts were mainly unsuccessful.

more detail in *Chapter 6: bebook: Promoting reflective dialogues with adolescents in residential care*, with suggestions for the reluctance of care environments to engage with a wider array of digital technologies examined in *Chapter 8: Managing uncertainty in residential homes: The emergence and consequences of the digital media, e-safety and the Scarlet Pimpernel*.

The image shows a screenshot of the bebook website interface. At the top left, a light blue box contains the text "APRIL 2010". In the top right corner is the UEA (University of East Anglia) logo. The word "bebook" is displayed in a large, stylized, white font with a slight shadow effect. Below this is a white login form with two input fields labeled "Username" and "Password". Underneath the password field, it says "blogs can be viewed by members of this blog only." and there is a yellow "Log In" button. Below the login form is a link that says "Lost your password?".

Below the login form is a light blue banner with the text: "This month's mission if you choose to accept it is to upload the following.....".

- Four webcam dairies, each at least two minutes in length.
- Seven pictures from your mobile phones of things that are important to you.
- At least 3 pictures with you in them.
- Three mobile phone video clips.

At the bottom of the page is a light blue banner with the text: "GOOD LUCK!!!".

Figure 8: Example of *bebook* monthly mission task sheet

5.6.6 Podwalk cycle

Though conceived as a concept before *bebook*, the initiation of the podwalk cycle occurred some months later as illustrated in figure 3. The podwalking technique sought to encourage participants to be actively involved in making and remaking biographical narratives through visiting places of importance. The initiation of the podwalk cycle offered another opportunity to engage with young people and carers alike. In comparison to the *bebook* approach which became seen as an activity which young people undertook with me, podwalking explicitly requested that the young people invite a guest or guests. This cycle's overall goal was to engage young people to become tour guides sharing with the camcorder, myself and invited guests important places from their past, and for such filming to feed into the creation of a podwalk DVD. As such filming was undertaken in the places the young people chose to visit and the narratives they chose to share once there. These clips were then edited by the young people with cinematic features such as music added before being burnt onto a DVD for the young person to keep. A podwalk certificate was also presented to the young people when they received their podwalk DVD (see appendices 8 for podwalk certificate).

This cycle of research was the most developmental, with discrete yet interconnected phases emerging as young people, myself and in some cases staff members moved through the process towards the overriding goal of creating a podwalk DVD. Because of its iterative development podwalking evolved into a complex, multilayered and multiperspective technique, evolving and becoming more refined as the podwalk research cycle progressed. For such reasons the development of the podwalking approach will be explored fully in *Chapter 7 Podwalking: Generating and analysing reflective talk via process driven method*. The introduction of the podwalk cycle towards the end of the implementation cycle offered me a mechanism to begin to introduce the reflection and withdrawal cycles. This was enabled since the culmination of the work undertaken in the podwalk cycle was embodied by the presentation of the podwalk DVD and certificate to young people.

5.6.7 Reflection and withdrawal cycle

Because of the collaborative methods and the relationships I had developed with the young people and staff teams, when approaching the end of the overall research project it became very important to me that I had an exit strategy. From a methodological perspective the young people were invited to take part in either a focus group or interview to reflect upon their

involvement with the various aspects of the research. Following this focus group or interview the young people were presented with the data they had uploaded to the *bebook* website¹⁷ and a *bebook* certificate, as well as their podwalk DVD and certificate if they had not already received it (see appendix 9 for *bebook* certificate). At this point young people were also asked if copies of the data could be given to their staff teams, all young people agreed to this. Reflective focus groups were also held with staff members in each of the four residential homes. Engaging with both populations in this way provided a tangible endpoint for their involvement with the project and allowed me the opportunity to thank all for their time, commitment and involvement with the project and myself.

5.7 Dancing to their rhythm: Reflecting upon relationships during and beyond research

As touched upon in the preceding sections, from my perspective the relationships experienced between myself, young people and some staff members were beyond that of simple researcher-researched relationships. The following section provides a reflective dialogue upon how such relationships were negotiated throughout and beyond the research.

5.7.1 Gaining acceptance and building relationships

As mentioned I undertook several visits to the differing residential homes involved to engage young people and their carers. These visits became an opportunity to pitch myself as an accessible and engaging person. In these meetings which generally occurred around the residential home's dinner tables, I would regularly play down my identity as a PhD researcher, preferring instead the label PhD student. As I became more familiar across the various homes the need to identify myself through this role diminished. Thus when contacting homes to confirm appointments I would introduce myself via the self-appointed label of Simon from the UEA. Whilst I would always introduce myself in the first instance as Simon from the UEA to both staff and young people alike, Simon from the UEA tended to become known as Simon. Once referred to as Simon, I too would drop the more formal label.

As my relationships with those who lived and worked in the homes became more established I gained a variety of playful nicknames orientating around my physical appearance from the

¹⁷ This data was either on a DVD or on a memory stick. These different format were used to allow young people to watch their *bebook* uploads in chronological order whilst also being able to edit their individual upload as desired.

young people, most notably due to my lack of hair. Not being from the geographical area within which the project was engaged I was also distinctive due to my differing regional accent, and on some occasions my inability to understand or mimic the colloquialisms of the local accent. This gave myself, young people and staff members an immediate push-off point for humorous conversations regarding accents and colloquialisms. Such conversations had the immediate potential to engage young people in reflective dialogues about their own identity and geographical heritage.

5.7.2 Negotiating relationship boundaries

As touched upon in the developmental cycle, when seeking to engage young people I would also regularly engage in other forms of activities. For me these activities worked alongside traditional financially-based incentives as a way for me to thank adolescents for their time. This became a regular feature of the weekly visits undertaken during the implementation cycle to facilitate the use of *bebook*. For various reasons outlined in this chapter and elaborated on in *Chapter 8: Managing uncertainty in residential homes: The emergence and consequences of the digital media, e-safety and the Scarlet Pimpernel* I had for the most part become the young people's audience. Our relationships developed because of this and appeared to be a source of enjoyment. This statement is evidenced by the young people rarely missing *bebook* facilitation sessions. From my time as a practitioner I was aware of the value of simply spending time with young people and valuing their company. Sometimes this time was spent by participating in activities such as watching football matches, Hollyoaks, baking scones as well as playing football, basketball computer games and card games. On other occasions I would agree to arrive earlier or stay later to include joining the young people and staff for evening meals. I would taste young people's cooking and also regularly pack some sportswear in my car in case a spontaneous game of football occurred. Such activities were initiated by the young people but enjoyed by all. This meant that although on many occasions the young people chose the dance, I tended to bring my dancing shoes.

My background in residential care also allowed me to quickly build relationships with various staff members. During the earlier cycles of research when meeting staff teams I would regularly emphasise my previous residential experiences in an effort to distance myself from being labelled as an academic or researcher. When first arriving at the various residential homes I was required to sign into the visitor book kept in the homes offices. This gave me a brief opportunity within the backstage environment provided by the residential homes offices to catch

up with staff members. Due to the weekly nature of my visits, these informal chats became a regular occurrence. Staff members knew I was not familiar with the young people's case files and chronologies and did not seek to be. However, they would provide me on occasions with warnings of any issues in the house or lives of the young people I was working with when appropriate.

In some cases I was aware of what Goffman (1959:160) called visiting-fireman complex whereby: "...teammates treat their visitor as if he had suddenly come into very intimate and longstanding relationships with them." This meant that I could be treated as a member of the home staff teams. Though a privileged position, this was something I wished to avoid since I was not a member of the home's staff teams. This is where referring to myself as Simon from the UEA allowed me to manage my positioning within the home. Nevertheless my relationships with the young people meant I was sometimes knowingly and unknowingly placed to assist staff teams. For example on numerous occasions I was asked to come in at slightly different times to those I had arranged with the young people. Whilst I was not always aware of the reasons for these changes upon agreeing to them, such changes were commonly made with the proviso that my presence would occupy a young person keeping them away from another they had fallen out with.

I was constantly aware of the need to manage and negotiate my own boundaries with young people and staff members. Despite being encouraged by those homes I was engaged with for longer periods to 'just walk in' the back door as opposed to ringing the front doorbell, this is something I resisted. I would go to the back door and knock and wait for it to be opened or hear someone tell me to come in. This was something questioned by the young people. Yet as I explained to them, if you came to visit me in my house you would not just walk in the backdoor would you? Of course on many occasions young people delighted in telling me they would just walk into my house. This truth operated mainly as a humorous challenge to the construction of the boundary I created. On reflection the construction of this boundary and the scenario used, demonstrated I wanted to respect their house as I would want them to respect mine. This was just one example of how I negotiated my long-term weekly engagement with residential homes over a number of months, maintaining status as a visitor, but as a visitor who had become very familiar. This was seen as critical to help me manage my own boundaries as well as also control my position as outsider and/or insider to both populations of young people and staff alike. I was neither, and yet was privileged with the ability to be both as the situation allowed. In this way

recruiting Simon from the UEA provided me with a positioning repertoire to use as I needed. When I dropped the 'from the UEA' part of this label the familiarity was emphasised. When it was not, I could employ it to strategically emphasise my connections to an external organisation, reminding all that I was in many ways an outsider regardless of our relationships.

5.7.3 Ending research relationships

When working with a population who are not always granted permission to seek resolution when a relationship ends, the ending of relationships established between myself and the young people was of paramount importance to me. From my own experiences as a residential worker and having witnessed how young people can be denied closure to relationships, it seemed apt to try to create a palatable ending. Due to the nature of the research, I was chronically aware that endings to stories are not always created on their terms or in a way that enables them to have closure. This was something I was keen to avoid. Managing these endings was aided by the aforementioned presentation of certificates and DVDs. In such cases the meals shared after the reflective focus groups/interviews became goodbye meals, providing all a chance to reflect and reminisce about their engagement and contributions to the project. For some young people these endings were permeated by wishes to stay in contact with me, with a few asking me to allow them to add me on Facebook. Ironically this was not something I agreed too since this was not a medium of communication I felt comfortable contacting them through. I did encourage those who did want to keep in contact with me to send e-mails to my work address or phone my office number. For those young people I was in contact with the longest I agreed to play football in a Tuesday night league team run by one of the carers which they attended. I was willing and wanted to continue dancing but this time the rhythm of the song was different.

5.8 Managing ethical considerations

As highlighted throughout this chapter ethical considerations were at the forefront of attention from the beginning to the end of the research. In seeking to engage looked-after adolescents in the sharing of potentially sensitive narratives about their lives, there was a clear need for all concerned to ensure participants were able to make informed decisions about their participation and their level of participation. The welfare of the young people involved was of paramount importance; as such this research was guided by the ethics committee within my department at UEA. Additionally, the research was also undertaken in accordance with the research governance procedures stipulated by the partnership care provider. By pioneering new ways of

collecting potentially sensitive research data *bebook* and podwalking created numerous potential ethical issues.

The online nature of *bebook* opened up numerous additional questions surrounding data protection, confidentiality, freedom of information and ownership of material. *bebook* users each had their own unique usernames and passwords, which both had to be entered each time a user logged into their section. *bebook* also featured a 'Time-out facility' meaning that after a determined period of inactivity it would log itself out. On the log in screen of *bebook* (see figure 6), young people were made aware that by logging in they had agreed and understood conditions of use. By logging in the young people agreed that if they elicited or illegal content was uploaded they would be reported as appropriate and their participation may have had to be stopped, content removed and passed onto the relevant authorities. Additionally if the young person disclosed for the first time that he or she for example had been sexually abused, self-harmed or feels suicidal it was made clear that this information had to be passed on to those responsible for their protection and welfare. Throughout the project two such disclosures occurred. Having followed the procedural protocol (see appendix 3), I contacted the relevant home and spoke to a member of staff, who informed me that both disclosures were already known.

5.8.1 Complexities and paradoxes

“Any guarantee of anonymity is, of course, a rather blatant claim that his client is in need of it and is willing to make use of it.” (Goffman, 1959:155)

In a research project collecting a range of audio and visual and audiovisual data with looked-after populations, dilemmas relating to recognition, confidentiality and anonymity demanded attention. From my practice experience I was aware of the practice of referring to young people in documents by their initials, and in research settings the tendency to protect participant's identity through the use of pseudonyms and removal of potentially identifying information (BPS, 2009). The suitability of such requirements when working with disenfranchised vulnerable populations presented the project with a complicated paradox. The central ethos of working in partnership with marginalised groups is the contribution participants make. The contributions of the hard to reach group I was working with were essential. Working in positive partnership with young people and their carers to pioneer new approaches to digital life story work, resulted in each making positive contributions worthy of recognition. Adolescents in care are rarely given

the chance to gain positive recognition, being able to offer young people an opportunity to see their name used in presentations, journal articles and books may have provided one such opportunity. This potential was not viable however as a result of research governance and university/professionally based ethical standards and guidelines. As Goffman (1959) indicates, those marginalised will remain marginalised as long as they are deemed in need of protection. I of course recognise the need to be sensitive to the potential consequences of recognition. However I do feel that using someone's first name in a publication would not overly endanger participant reputation or safety. Perhaps an opt-in 'un-anonymise my data' box could be used by psychologists moving forward as the discipline continually seeks to increase public engagement and as the use of visual methods increases.

Mindful of this recognition versus anonymity paradox, I created a resolution within the project that I was satisfied with. I got the young people to select their own pseudonyms and to allow them to see the contribution they were continually making towards the project. I would often print out the transcripts of my sessions with the young people to show them and for them to keep if they so wanted. This was also a mechanism to ensure young people understood what their participation meant and how the recordings I was taking were being used and represented. In terms of my responsibilities to the care provider and residential homes I worked with pseudonyms were also used. Additionally when staff members would enter a room in which I was working with young people using a Dictaphone, I would make them aware of this as soon as possible. This in itself was an interesting research dilemma. From a discursive perspective informing somebody they are being recorded at different points in time during an exchange, could indicate to the recipient that they need to know they are being recorded, immediately opening up reflections and possible anxiety as to why they are being informed of this. On such occasions transcripts were also shown to staff members who had contributed, perhaps unknowingly in the first instance, to exchanges being recorded.

The most notable paradox between anonymity and recognition was highlighted by an article recently published in *Community Care*, a free and widely read online social care publication. The article *Technology to keep looked-after children safe online* highlights how a named care provider uses remote web filtering in an effort to keep its looked-after populations safe online (Pemberton 2011). In this article different examples are given to show how the new technology has apparently been employed and kept two young people safe. In the article the young people's names are replaced by pseudonyms and yet the care provider, a project head,

residential staff member and residential care home are named and recognised for the positive ways this has been working. Understandingly due to the negative connotations of the events featured in the articles example, young people's names were removed.

A point worthy of further unpacking is whether the names of young people would have been used if the article had featured a positive facet of young people experiencing the same technologies. Would the same population have gained recognition for example in an article about a three year long research project they had been involved in? Perhaps a project which created two approaches to a new way of working with young people like themselves known as digital life story work, which could potentially help young people like themselves create personalised digital time capsules. I suspect not. This irony was also illustrated to me on numerous occasions when speaking to staff members about anonymising their own identity and that of their residential homes. As several staff members pointed out to me, residential homes tend to be named after the street they are on and appear in local phonebooks where they are named as residential homes.

5.9 Data analysis

This thesis is not about the development of the tools *bebook* and *podwalking* per se, although the development of the tools was an integral part of stimulating discursive data. The development, implementation and evaluation of two contrasting forms of ICT were used to trigger and map the emergent discourses. In other words, in of and of itself it was not the purpose of the thesis to develop tools and innovations, but they had to be developed to access the ways people experience such technologies. The primary interest of the analysis is in the telling and the occasion of telling, rather than in the life which came before the telling (Edwards, 1997; Gergen, 1994; Taylor, 2010).

5.9.1 Levels of analysis

In exploring how residentially placed adolescents experience ICT, how these experiences are mediated by residential relationships, and how institutional constructions of care impact upon these experiences, it becomes necessary to locate instances of talk. In analysing how being involved in reflective relationships were cultivated, experienced and facilitated young people's working up representations of the self, attention turns to Gergen's (1999) relational-self, more specifically his comments on the work of Mikhail Bakhtin (Bakhtin, 1984). For Gergen (1999) to

move away from individualism and its ideology is to break away from the binary of self and others. To move towards the proposition of relational-self is to encourage a move away from what he called systemic blindness, which he saw as inherited by the proposition of self-contained individuals (Gergen, 1999). Through inheriting individualistic paradigms:

“We fail to explore the broader circumstances in which actions are enmeshed, and focus all too intensely on the single body before our eyes....It’s as if we have become enormously sophisticated in characterising individual pawns, rooks, and bishops, but have little way of talking about the game of chess.” (Gergen, 1999:121-23)

To this end the analysis will focus upon what was achieved in relationship contexts. Informed by social constructionist ideas and discursive approaches to analysing talk, the work of Doise (1986) will provide a location mechanism for this analysis. Doise (1986) proposed that within social psychology there are different levels of explanation. These levels of explanation allow the analysis to locate talk as situated social action across intrapersonal, situational, positional and ideological domains. As shown in figure 1, analysis was undertaken with an appreciation to how talk can be taken up at different levels across the framework provided.

Accordingly, young people's use of the *bebook* website and the facilitative relationship I shared with them will be analysed in terms of its promotion of social performances as representations of self, in essence what the relationship collaboration enabled the relational-self to do at a given point in time. Using Doise's (1986) framework, analysis of these relationships will orientate at the intrapersonal level. Young people's experiences of the relational context created during the podwalk process with myself and invited guests will be analysed with an emphasis on the continual negotiations of the self and such relationships at situational level. Finally how wider digital technologies are understood and experienced by young people and staff members living and working in the context of residential care will be analysed. This analysis will focus primarily on how staff members negotiate and experience young people's relationships with a wider range of digital technologies at both a positional and ideological level.

5.9.2 Considerations when transcribing audiovisual data

Collecting audiovisual data creates new challenges for researchers who analyse talk. Non-verbal communications such as gestures and cues are suggested by some to form a large part of the way we communicate and express ourselves (Hinde, 1972). Such ways of understanding do not mesh well with the linguistic turn. The linguistic turn characterises a move in the philosophical focus of the social sciences towards language as truth constructing, as opposed to truth giving (Rorty, 1967; Wittgenstein, 1978). The increasing use of digital technologies as research tools in approaches such as Cyber-ethnography (Browne, 2003; Hine, 2005), mean debates of representation via the transcription of audiovisual data demand attention due to their interactional and discursive implications for this thesis.

For those who use discourse analysis, Jeffersonian transcription which moves beyond orthographic or play-script representations of interactions, is seen by many as offering a thorough representation of interactions via the modality of text (Potter & Hepburn, 2005). The Jefferson transcription system uses an array of symbols to represent interactions in a way which seeks to make subtle features of situated social exchanges available to analysis (see appendix 10 for symbols employed by this transcription method). Non-verbal communications occur and yet are absent in traditional interviews. They are not recorded or overtly sought to be represented by Jeffersonian transcription methods (Jefferson, 1984). The debate surrounding Jeffersonian transcription, Jefferson Lite (a simplified form of the original Jeffersonian transcription method, see Parker, 2005), and orthographic versions of transcripts has been rich. To summarise the arguments and counterpoints raised by Griffin (2007a), Potter and Hepburn (2007), Henwood (2007) and Griffin (2007b) in *Discourse Studies* volume 9, the recruitment of methods which allow researchers to capture verbal and non-verbal communication pose questions for discursive psychological approaches and how representations of each can be integrated into modes of transcription.

The recruitment of video-based social research invites the use of multimodal transcription methods (Norris, 2004). The commentary of Bezemer and Mavers (2011) proposes that the transcription protocol adopted by researchers needs to be critically reflected upon. They encourage researchers who use video-based social research methodologies to be transparent in terms of how different emphases make gains and losses in their analysis, and the theoretical

implications of their chosen transcription method. Through the recruitment of the Jeffersonian transcription methodology with video-based research, a disjuncture between discursive psychological approaches and non-verbal communication emerges, as does the potential need to move beyond Jeffersonian transcription when attempting to discursively analyse video-based accounts. The current analysis recruits a proposition taken from the work of Bezemer and Mavers (2011), in that by taking a theoretical stance which primarily focuses on talk: "...evidence for an argument ought to reside in the transcript, and other, ethnographic, sources of evidence may be considered as 'supplementary'." (Bezemer & Mavers, 2011:204). Hence whilst the non-verbal communicative implications of visual interactions are accorded as relevant, the focus remains on talk with evidence gleaned from transcripts.

To this end the current study will employ the Jeffersonian transcription methods as detailed in Jefferson (1984)¹⁸. Other sources such as the visual elements will be transcribed as necessary¹⁹.

Though this may open up the overall analysis to greater debate and in some cases criticism, encouraging critical reflection is not negative. Such occurrences encourage and lead to what Gergen (1999:115) refers to as reflective inquiry, which encourages researchers to: "...reflect appreciatively on our condition, our traditions, institutions, and relationships." The recruitment of such methods allows those who work from discursive paradigms, to focus critically upon addressing such challenges and move forward embracing digital technologies and the approaches they make possible.

5.9.3 Authoring my power in the field, analysis and reporting

In placing this project and my own roles within it as instigator, contributor, analyst and author, sensitivity is required as to how such accounts are conveyed. Claims of objectivity are typically aligned with individuals arguing and constructing meaning in data from realist perspectives (Rorty, 1998). This analysis is not concerned with claims of objectivity; it is concerned with the reporting of subjectivity via critical reflexions. Gergen (1999) highlights objectivity is performed via distancing in modernist reports through rhetoric which incorporates the 'mind as mirror

¹⁸ For readers unfamiliar with the symbols used in the Jefferson transcription system please see appendix 10.

¹⁹ Unfortunately the submission of short video clips to supplement the Jeffersonian transcription of extracts was unfeasible as University procedures/regulations for storing such material were not in place at the time of thesis submission

metaphor'. Gergen (1999) continues that such documents are written to show how the reflection found, can be found in all mirrors and detail how the mirror was positioned to allow this to occur. For Potter (1998) the managing of authoring, particularly in the reporting of experimental social psychology, obscures the subjectivity from accounts to gain authority. Gergen (1999) contests that rhetorical work replaces subjective words and phrases with those pertaining to objective realities; the presentation of an unbiased mirror is worked up and authenticity manufactured. In a constructionist view there is no way of separating mind from mirror, no means of knowing objective truth. The mind as mirror metaphor achieves objectivity when there is no interference or indeed stake reported (Potter, 1996). As Gergen (1999) suggests the experience of a single person is suspect, yet subjectivity does not detract from the need to author accounts reflexively (Potter, 1998).

5.9.3.1 Enter Simon 'from the UEA'

By positioning myself in the field as analyst and reporting this presence, how can I author this presence as contributor? Clearly I have a stake and indeed an interest in how I am represented, and how I author this representation. This admission of stake cannot be produced outside of language, thus it is too exposed to stake admission as a discursive strategy deployed for various gains (Potter, 1996). A consistent feature of the audio, visual and audiovisual data stimulated across the three studies is my talk and visual presence. Though such a presence can be unproblematic in qualitative studies where pseudonyms or initials are used to differentiate between contributors to an exchange, the multilayer, multimodal and participatory aspects of this research add additional dimensions of complexity. This is particularly so when one's presence in the research data is more than an interviewer role. In producing the transcripts for analysis the temptation to refer to one's self via the labels of researcher or SH is tempting, yet is entrenched distancing characteristics associated with strives for objectivity.

The researcher label obscures the analysis to my contributions to exchanges in the relationships I shared with young people and staff alike. Simon from the UEA was a former residential worker and now PhD student exploring the usefulness of digital technologies in adolescent approaches to life story work. As described previously I was also Simon or 'baldy' (to some young people), a 'bloke' who spoke a bit differently from everyone else who sometimes stayed for dinner, played games and watched TV. To refer to myself and my role in the research via the labels researcher, interviewer or SH omits my relational presence. To this end the term

used to refer to my presence in the transcripts, analysis and the reporting of this research will be Simon. This label was used by those I experienced relationships with during the project and highlights my presence and investment within it at various levels. When reporting my own involvement and presence in the analysis, it is necessary to differentiate between Simon in the context of the project and my own reflections as Simon in the now. This shall be done via writing and referring to Simon in the third person. As talk is situated social action (Edwards, 1997; Potter & Wetherell, 1987), the use of writing in the third person when referring to past talk represented in the transcripts allows my role to be illustrated and analysed accordingly.

Chapter 6: **bebook**: Promoting reflective dialogues with adolescents in residential care

6.1 Introduction

The idea for the *bebook* website was inspired by my practice experience and the ability of nominal websites to promote reflections and aid the retelling of narratives. Shaped by the partnership working, technological and practical issues as outlined in *Chapter 5: Methodology*, *bebook* emerged as an online approach to digital life story work. Positional and ideological considerations also shaped the way *bebook* was progressed, discussed at length by *Chapter 8: Managing uncertainty in residential homes: The emergence and consequences of the digital media, e-safety and the Scarlet Pimpernel*. The current chapter focuses upon young people's use of *bebook* and the facilitative relationship I shared with them and its promotion of social performances as representations of self. In a sense, what the relationship collaboration enabled the relational-self to discursively accomplish via the opportunities to share narratives created by being involved with *bebook*. Analysis of these relationships will orientate though not exclusively at the intrapersonal level (Doise, 1986). This focus is reflected in the chapter's research aims:

- 1.1 Analyse talk stimulated by the *bebook* website as the location for active discursive work involved in the continual construction and reconstruction of biographical narratives
- 1.2 Explore how young people experience coherence and the chronological nature of connections amongst their everyday and wider life events
- 1.3 Examine how young people experienced the sharing of narratives via Information Communication Technology (ICT) in on-going relationship contexts
- 1.4 Make a contribution to knowledge to inform policy and practice with regards to how *bebook* can be used to engage young people in reflective, self-knowledge enhancing dialogues

6.2 Who used *bebook*?

Eight out of the ten young people who became engaged in the overall project used the *bebook* website, six out of these eight contribute to the extracts used in this chapter. The relationships Simon shared and experienced with each young person were continuously negotiated. A synopsis of the relationships Simon experienced by being involved in the facilitation of *bebook* with the young people and the homes in which they lived is now offered:

- Phil (15) lived in the Gateford Road residential home, the first and longest home involved in the research. Phil was very much the pioneer user of *bebook* and actively involved in its usage the longest. During the nine months data collection period Simon would regularly visit Phil on Tuesday evenings to facilitate his use of the website. Phil uploaded a variety of file types to his *bebook* pages, including eight webcam diaries. The locations of these recordings varied, however they tended to be downstairs, with all apart from his final one recorded in my presence.
- Anne-Marie (15) and her Carlton Road residential home were the second young person-home pairing to become actively involved in using *bebook*. Although Anne-Marie was the only young person to record and upload a webcam diary in Simon's absence, the remaining nine were recorded and uploaded on the Monday nights Simon visited her to facilitate *bebook*.
- Billie (15) lived in the Gateford Road residential home. After being involved in the developmental cycle and creating the *bebook* name, Billie's use of and engagement with the website was the most sporadic. He did regularly appear on Tuesday evenings when Simon visited the home to work with Phil and would often hang around before, after and sometimes during these sessions. As such the four webcam diaries he did record and upload were produced in my presence, usually recorded on the laptop Simon provided.
- Simon first met Stan (15) of the Newcastle Avenue residential home in Spring 2009 and invited him and his carers to contribute to the developmental research cycle. Unfortunately for various reasons he and his carers were unable to attend. Due to the Newcastle Avenue home being the furthest away and lacking the internet Simon did not meet Stan again until Spring 2010. Despite these obstacles Stan engaged with the

project and recorded three webcam diaries, regularly returning to the home to record them.

- At 18 John was the oldest young person involved in the research. At the time of the project, John lived in the Newcastle Avenue residential home, however he was due to move out soon having reached his 18th birthday. Despite having no internet access in the house John became involved in the project, recording four webcam diaries and uploading several pictures from his mobile phone.
- Ivy was 14 and lived in the Bridge Street residential home. This home was the final home to become involved in this aspect of the research. It also housed the most young people to become involved in using *bebook*²⁰. As the first one of these three young people to become involved, Ivy was very much the home's pioneer. In this regard due to the home's computer being regularly damaged and the infrequent internet connection, Ivy used the laptop Simon provided to record her five webcam diaries.
- Nikki (15) was the second Bridge Street resident to take part in the research. Nikki was confident in using the webcam and perceived as very computer literate by the home's staff team. Her involvement in the research was tentatively suggested by staff, whom cited her volatile behaviour as reason for caution. Despite such anxieties Nikki recorded four webcam diary entries and took many pictures using the webcam's dual camera/webcam functions. Nikki also used the laptop Simon provided to record data since she could not access the website from her residential home. Because of this Simon would regularly facilitate using *bebook* on Thursday afternoons with Nikki and Ivy. The girls would regularly send Simon away and play with the laptop. This play time would usually last around thirty minutes and involve the girls recording joint webcam entries, taking photos of each other pulling faces, and on some occasions see Nikki using the webcam as a mirror to help her apply her make-up. However, once asked both Nikki and Ivy would record reflective, and in some cases prepared webcam diaries.
- Lynk (15) lived with Ivy and Nikki in the Bridge Street residential home. Simon would regularly visit him separately from the girls on Friday evenings to facilitate *bebook* due to

²⁰ Three young people in this home became involved in using *bebook*. Potentially the staggered nature and on-going critical reflection cycles honed the *bebook*'s implementation and engagement in the latter homes recruited.

his different placement circumstances. Although not involved for a large amount of time in the project, Lynk recorded seven webcam diaries and provided Simon with several pictures and mobile phone camera clips to upload onto his *bebook* pages.

6.3 *bebook* analysis

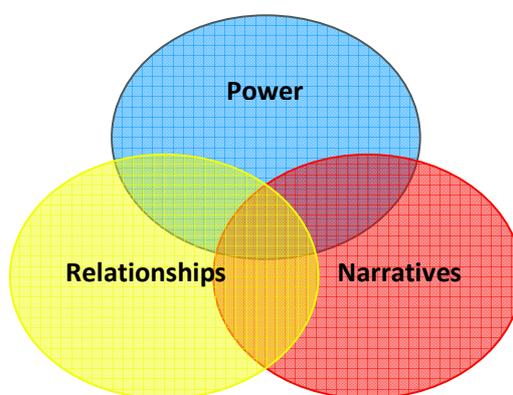


Figure 10: Representation of overlapping and interrelated discursive themes emergent through *bebook* facilitation visits.

Data in this chapter primarily comes from the webcam entries/diaries known from this point forward as vlogs, which were recorded and uploaded to the young people's *bebook* pages. This data is located and analysed, though not exclusively at an intrapersonal level according to the levels of analysis provided by Doise (1986). Due to the innovative use of webcam technology, the *bebook* nominal website and the amalgamation of both within an on-going action research project, this analysis had access to exchanges taking place before and after the record button on the laptops had been pressed. Viewing this talk as social performance this analysis also recruits Goffman's (1959) theatrical metaphor to locate this talk. In analysing social performances, themes of power, relationships as resource and the construction of on-going narratives emerged. These themes structure this chapter and were present throughout my involvement with the *bebook* aspect of this research, the young people and their staff teams (see figure 10). The themes were inextricably linked, influencing and being influenced,

negotiated and played out in talk across a myriad of relationships and situations before, during and after my visits and indeed involvement with the homes themselves.

6.3.1 Negotiating power: To claim and reclaim

The reflective space provided by engagement with the *bebook* project and myself as facilitator, was recorded as social performance via the flexibility of webcam technologies. This bypassed literacy weaknesses and invited young people to express themselves as they desired. The young people controlled the webcams, choosing when to start, stop and in some cases re-record vlogs. The brief for the vlogs themselves was heavily participant driven, aiming to empower the young people to become actively involved. This was an aim and research agenda Simon brought to the interactions recorded. Young people and on rare occasions staff members, also brought theirs. The following section analyses how these agendas were claimed and reclaimed.

6.3.1.1 Claiming power through refusing it: “Good little girl”

The following account is taken from an implementation meeting aiming to facilitate Phil’s use of *bebook*. When recording vlogs for his section of *bebook* Phil relied upon Simon to ask him questions to, in his words “jog his memory”. Because of his own empowerment bias, Simon would often want Phil to play a more active role in independently constructing his performances. The power on offer was often actively refused by Phil in a playful way, yet in a way it is suggested allowed him to claim power, rather than accept it as offered. Extract 1 is taken from an exchange before the webcam was recording and was enabled due to the use of a Dictaphone and the embedded nature of *bebook* in the on-going action research project. Extract 1b presented after extract 1, illustrates the implications of the exchanges from extract 1, and was recorded immediately after such negotiations took place. This enables Phil’s claiming of power over his performance to emerge.

Extract 1

Simon: Do you want me to sit back, and be quiet (0.8) so you can [sort]
of

Phil: [No]

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Simon: (1.0) Wh:at do you want (.) me to do?
(1.0)

Phil: °Say about what I am doing° (0.3) an-d that

Simon: Ask you ques::tions?

Phil: ↑Yea

Simon: (1.2) Ok::ay that's fine

Phil: (.) Good little girl heh heh [heh heh heh]

Simon: [heh heh Cha]rming

Implementation cycle: Phil 15 and Simon

Extract 1b

((music))

Simon: So, (0.4) what've you been ↑up to:?
(0.4)

Phil: Er::m, (1.0) on my new bike,

Simon: You gotta new BI::ke, (0.6) w- when >did ya< get tha:t,
(1.0)

Phil: A wee- (.) a week ago:,

Simon: Oh tell me abou::t it, tell me all about it
(0.4)

Phil: ↑E::rm, (.) hhh cos I <going to> bike to Eton °College°,

Implementation cycle: Phil 15 and Simon

Collecting audiovisual data creates new challenges for researchers who analyse talk. Non-verbal communications such as gestures and cues are suggested by some to form a large part of the way we communicate and express ourselves (Hinde, 1972). Such ways of understanding do not mesh well with social constructionist ideas, raising issues that warrant attention here due to their interactional and discursive implications. Though the recruitment of the Jeffersonian transcription methodology employed here highlights a disjuncture between discursive psychological approaches and non-verbal communication (Jefferson, 1984), as well as the potential need to move beyond Jeffersonian transcription when attempting to discursively analyse video-based accounts. This analysis recruits a proposition taken from the work of Bezemer and Mavers (2011). In that by taking a theoretical stance which primarily focuses on talk: "...evidence for an argument ought to reside in the transcript, and other, ethnographic, sources of evidence may be considered as 'supplementary'." (Bezemer & Mavers, 2011:204). This supplementary information is transcribed according to additional guidance provided by Jefferson (2004) and Hepburn (2004).

To unpack how Phil claimed power and to explore how involving another as co-constructor influenced his performed narrative we return to analysing extract 1. To address how power was worked up as claimed by Phil's talk in extract 1, the extract will be explored across differing levels of analysis with the discursive consequences of the exchange examined.

At an intrapersonal level in considering talk as the site where identities are taken up (Wetherell, 1998), it is worth noting what sort of people are generally interviewed. Though interviews take place in a variety of everyday contexts, job interviews and so on, those interviewed 'on camera' as it were, tend to be people in positions of power, status and importance. As the expression goes they 'give' an interview. To give something is to have it to give, and as such to have claimed it in the first place. Therefore through his exchange with Simon, Phil's talk is able to work up an identity for himself as powerful and important. This becomes more apparent when viewing the power of this exchange at a situational level. Phil refuses the power on offer associated with creating his webcam entry independently, as seen in the first two lines in extract 1. He does so by interrupting this offer, working up his power through the act of refusal and his interruption of Simon's talk. To this end the construction of the webcam entry was to be on his terms not Simon's, to paraphrase Phil, he wanted Simon to: "°Say about what I am doing° (0.3) an-d that".

Considering the interactional nature of the relationship context and situational level focusing on the negotiation of power, an attempt by Simon emerges to regain some power. This is sought through the validation of Phil's choice of action through agreeing with this course of action: "Ok::ay that's fine". The course of action constructed is therefore accepted through Simon working up himself as a partner in the relationship context. Hence as a partner who has the power to validate such decisions. By moving the focus to the positional level of analysis proposed by Doise (1986), how Phil disregards Simon's attempts to readdress this power balance and claim power for himself are crystallised.

The positional level of analysis explores the relative social positions of the contributors, and its use here illustrates how Phil dismisses Simon's attempts to work up his notion of partnership and claim power for himself in a specific way. Phil's use of the term "Good little girl" followed by his laughter indicates its tentative and possibly controversial use. In accordance with their relative social positions, its success was dependent upon how much Phil could get away with in the context of the relationship he shared with Simon. In an action research project which relied heavily upon the input of the young people and one in which Simon had a large stake, the relative power balance of Simon as the researcher and the young people as participants was ambiguous. On the one hand a participant was incentivised with material rewards in the form of vouchers for completing a certain number of tasks per month; as such Simon was the one who had the power to reward participation. Yet the ethos of the project meant that the young people's longitudinal enthusiasm and contribution to the project was vital. Young people were aware of this and concurrently their importance to the project's success. This is evident in Phil's use of the term "Good little girl" and his accompanied laughter (either humorous or nervous). At the positional level Phil is testing the boundaries of the relationship he shares with Simon and the power he is negotiating within it.

In considering Phil's use of "Good little girl" in relation to the ideological level as conceptualised by Doise (1986), the culture in which the exchange is situated becomes pivotal. Younger members of Western cultures tend to be socialised in a way which deems them to be respectful to those older than themselves (Giddens, 1997). Yet Phil at 15, is able to challenge an older member of this society in a way that works to detract from the inherent power resonating with an older member of this society. Phil achieves this in extract 1 through recruiting the repertoire of the "Good little girl". A repertoire ensconced with discursive devices relating to compliance, age and gender.

Initially by referring to Simon as “Good” Phil works up Simon’s identity as compliant and submissive to his request. Coupled with the use of the words “little” and “girl” the compliant component gains a more depowering and submissive momentum. In accordance with this momentum, the word “little” resonates further with the power dynamic in the exchange. By referring to Simon as “little”, Simon’s physical stature and chronological age are excluded from the account. Now constructed as “little”, Simon loses the power associated with physical stature and age. Phil on the other hand is able to work up a claim to the power associated with being the biggest and subsequently oldest contributor to the exchange. His physical stature (or bigness) is worked up through the binary nature of language. Physical stature is often linked to physical strength and power, both particularly potent features of masculinity and subsequently of male gender identity. As too is the deployment of humour by younger males argue Kehily and Nayak (1997), who suggest that it is often deployed to negotiate masculinities and hierarchies. Thus at an ideological level Phil’s working up of his identity as powerful, and its claim to such power, operates to weaken Simon’s as a male. This attack on Simon’s masculinity is reinforced through Phil referring to Simon as a member of the opposite sex.

Consider the shared belief system in which Phil, Simon and their talk are situated. Both were white males, traditionally a demographic towards which power resonates highly (Hearn, 2004; Ray & Rowson, 2010). Additionally both white males were from a working class background, albeit with differing chronological ages, life experiences and educational levels. As such for one male to call another a “Good little girl” could be considered an acceptable humorous verbal attack. The foundations of this acceptance feature in Simon’s response in the final line in extract 1 “[heh heh Charming]”. In mirroring the laughter which followed Phil’s “Good little girl” remark, the irony of being spoken to by a younger member of the same culture in a quasi-disrespectful way was accepted by Simon. Reasons for this possible acceptance could be as a result of the previously mentioned longitudinal importance of the young people’s contribution to the project.

Ideologically it would appear to be more culturally acceptable for a less powerful individual and/or social group to ‘have a pop’ at a member or members of a social group who retain more power. This is mainly as a result of the overall weight of the power dynamic staying in favour of the dominant group. In popular culture, for example the film “White Men Can’t Jump” perhaps

would have not been as well received if the title would have been “Black Men Can’t Swim”. In linking back to the gendered nature of Phil’s use of the “Good little girl” repertoire, it is necessary to consider whether a similar gender swapping exchange would have been received in the same way if a male and female, or indeed two females had partaken in the same exchange. It would seem not due to an ideological legitimacy of attacking possible oppressors. The attack or indeed Phil’s claim to power in context, made sense. Phil was able to work up his identity as a powerful person and claim the power associated with it. He would give Simon, the interviewer and “Good little girl” an interview. Simon would ask Phil questions about his week and Phil would answer them.

6.3.1.2 Reclaiming power: “...and then it like accidentally came out...”

Young people experimented with recording vlogs in different ways. Some, like Ivy who features in the following extract, grew in confidence as her involvement with Simon and the *bebook* project progressed. Young people would record their vlog in front of Simon, others would send him out of the room to record it, and some like Phil relied upon him as co-creator. From examining Phil’s use of the webcam technology and the facilitative relationship he shared with Simon, his ability to produce a narrative account was scaffolded in a way which he dictated. Negotiations of power often took place off camera, with the consequences of this talk played out on camera. The following extract is taken from a vlog and is a rare example of a young person recruiting a staff member as a co-creator, illustrating how the re-narrating of accounts on the front stage enabled the young person in question to reclaim power in an institutionally based relationship.

Extract 2 is taken from Ivy’s first vlog entry and feature Mo, a member of her residential staff team. Its recruitment here will be used to illustrate how *bebook* created opportunities for re-narration and implicitly how this re-narration facilitated the reclaiming of young people’s power over accounts experienced in institutionalised relationships.

Extract 2

Ivy: Schoo:l’s, poo (.) don’t like school (.) they want try and move me to
Saint Andrew (0.3) bu:t I don’t want to go:, (0.8) °so°,
(2.8) ((draws line on script))

Mo: Is that ↑a:ll you want to say on the sub↑je:ct (.) [ye:s]

Ivy: [Yeah]

MO: So perhaps you'd <li:ke to talk about ou:r>, (.) .hh our outing to the doctor's yesterda:y,

Ivy: Went to doctor >and had to wait< like an hou:r and ha:lf, (.) and then when we eventually got seen, (.) and we were only in there like ten minutes (.) and they gave us loads of leaflets and stuff like tha:- and we had to make an appointment with the asthma clini:c, (.) >who wanted to see if I've got< asthma (.) a::nd, (0.4) and then (.) they gave us a bit of paper saying what date we've got to go ba::ck, (0.4) a:::nd, (0.4) that was it I was <really bored> (.) so I got us a drink and was messing about (.) .hh pretending to pour it on Mo's head (.) and then it like (.) accidentally came out (0.4) so: (.) she had loads of >water on her< head (0.4) and I thought it was quite funny

(1.0) ((scribbles on her script out of camera shot)) (2.8)

Mo: Bu::t, (0.6) I actually saw the funny side of it a well, (.) um I'm glad it was only water (.) and not orange ↑ju:i::ce, o:::r (.) anything like tha:t but um (.) yes it was a ↑long way to the docto:r's but I have to say Ivy wa:s (.) quite patie:nt ↑u::m and I think she feels better now that she's ↑bee:n, (.) and discussed all her (.) little ↑problems with the doc↑to:r, (.) I think she's probably pleased that um (.) something's going to be done for he:r

Ivy: ↑Mm

(.)

Mo: U:m because I know she was a little bit worried (0.4)

Ivy: ↑Mm,

Mo: ↑u:::m,

Vlog entry: Ivy and Mo

From Goffman's (1981) work on footing, Ivy appears to be performing numerous roles; she was composer and addressed, whilst also recruiting Mo as the animator. Throughout the exchange, Ivy relies upon Mo to structure the narrative account. More subtly it would appear that Ivy was structuring the account through her role as composer. Ivy, like her friend Nikki, sometimes used prepared scripts to guide and structure vlog entries. The girls²¹ would use scripts as starting points when recording vlogs, returning to them sporadically if further guidance was needed. In this way the shared narratives were explicitly given as performed and purposeful social action, a performance for the webcam as an addressed recipient with the girls bringing their own agenda to this audience (Goffman, 1981).

Talk in extract 2 is taken towards the end of an account in which Ivy spoke about being made to move schools: "they want try and move me". Such a narrative is unfortunately fairly familiar to care populations, particularly those placed residentially (Jackson 2002; Jackson & Martin, 1998; Jackson & Thomas, 1999). Ivy's resistance to this move is apparent and allows her to position herself against her opposition's intentions. This defiant stance begins to illustrate how the reclaiming of power is facilitated by her use of her script. As composer, Ivy may control when a topic within the narrative was finished; this was marked subtly through nonverbal action by her drawing upon the script²². This signalled the end of her response to Mo's question regarding school. This last point is reinforced in talk by Mo's invitation to Ivy to furnish the narrative with more detail. Though Ivy's closing of this topic begins to hint at the continual negotiation of power in relationships and for *bebook* to create opportunities for renarration in accounts, this is most clearly articulated through Mo's invitation for Ivy to talk about their trip to the doctors. Whether or not the next topic of conversation was a feature of the script or not is beyond comment. What can be analysed is Ivy's response to Mo's question and what this achieved discursively.

Ivy's description of her visit to the doctors with Mo allows her to reclaim the prominent feature of the narrative in a way which removes intent. This abdicates her responsibility within the situated and relationship context within which the water pouring took place, allowing her to present the account in a way which projects Ivy's narrative identity favourably. Ivy begins by furnishing her

21 'The girls' this is a term used here to capture the relationship the two young people shared. They lived together and in particular when engaged with the *bebook* project tended to play together. Whilst this labelling may be seen by some to have depowering connotations since it is my label, this is my account of the relationship and also allows me to express the non-institutionalised nature of the relationship between me and both Ivy and Nikki. For those reasons and those reasons alone I use it here.

22 A claim which becomes weakened due to an inability to present audiovisual aspects of clip here

account with detail which appears at first glance fairly familiar, waiting times at doctors being an available trope within repertoires relating to visiting the doctors in the UK. In so doing she works into the account the discrepancy between waiting and consultation times: "had to wait< like an hou:r and ha:lf, (.) and then when we eventually got seen, (.) and we were only in there like ten minutes". This background information enables Ivy to construct a plotline which she can revisit later in the account, enabling her to introduce the incident in a way which illustrates her boredom as a consequence of the aforementioned waiting time. Her ability to reclaim power over this account through the renegotiating of responsibility for her actions is further reinforced by their stated accidental nature. This enables her to remove the intention behind the incident which culminates this narrative and also align this feature with being a consequence of the waiting time itself. Having constructed a detailed scene in which boredom results from the long waiting time and how this boredom led her to pretend to pour water on Mo's head, the narrative becomes somewhat less detailed around how the water got onto Mo's head. More prominent features are the descriptions of intent, the amount of water ending up on Mo's head, the hesitations before Ivy's assessment of the incident as humorous and the re-emergence of the non-verbal invitation for a response: "pretending to pour it on Mo's head (.) and then it like (.) accidentally came out (0.4) so: (.) she had loads of >water on her< head (0.4) and I thought it was quite funny (1.0)((scribbles loudly on her script out of camera shot)) (2.8)"

Within residential homes numerous records and logs are kept, upon which staff members are charged with recording the daily activities of young people and the home. Therefore it is conceivable, that the incident relating to Mo ending up with water on her head at the doctors was recorded by Mo upon returning to the office, and if not by Mo by another member of staff on duty with the responsibility of recording such events. As such the incident was recorded in a way which directs power towards the recorder, the recorder being a member of the residential staff team. The power to record the narrative resides within the realms of the care staff as opposed to with the young person who also shared in the experience. In the vlog Ivy is able to reclaim an account of this experience. It allows her to remove intention, abdicate blame and label this is an accident. An accident which occurred as a result of the aforementioned waiting time. So by constructing the event as an accident, a construction not challenged on the front stage by Mo, Ivy is able to flag up the incident's humorous connotations before "((scribbles loudly on her script out of camera shot))(2.8)" issuing a more explicit non-verbal signal to invite a response from Mo.

Ivy's use of her script as a non-verbal prop allowed her to be both composer and recipient of Mo's co-constructed involvement. This prop also served to allow Ivy to mediate Mo's talk and steer this talk onto topics as desired. In this way the power of the performed account within the shared institutionalised relationship resonates within the realm of the young person, allowing in this case Ivy to reclaim power in relationships via her re-narration and its front stage nature.

Within the closing elements of Ivy's narrative construction there are numerous hesitations denoted as "(.)". Whilst commenting upon the motives behind such hesitations are beyond the epistemological and ontological positions of this analysis, within the situated exchange it is possible to suggest such pauses offer opportunities for interjection. Mo is not forced to accept the narrative as given and yet due to its front stage nature, to challenge it would have implications for the account and her professional identity as represented within it. How could she have challenged it? Could she have asked Ivy to stop recording and hence addressed the undesirable characteristics of this narrative on the backstage? Could she have got up and left the stage mid-account? How would each of these responses have looked to the external visitor 'Simon from UEA' and impacted upon her professional identity? When Mo does respond to Ivy's non-verbal invitation "((scribbles loudly on her script out of camera shot))(2.8)", she moves to validate the humorous nature of the incident as opposed to challenging its intent. Within this talk, Mo works up a warrant for her lack of challenge to the narrative constructed by Ivy. This is accomplished by highlighting a worse scenario, reinforcing the waiting time feature of the narrative shared and moving onto to add more professionalised discourse to the end of the account.

As noted at the start of this analysis staff member participation in the *bebook* project was usually minimal. Extract 2 featuring staff member Mo was the only vlog recorded in which a staff member was present throughout as co-constructor. This offered Ivy the ability to reclaim power in the account but also inform her narrative identity through this renegotiation. When opportunities for the renegotiation of power were created simultaneously so were the connotations of this renegotiation. Staff involvement in the *bebook* project as identity agents was a desirable if unavailable feature.

6.3.2 Representation in on-going relationships

Young people's use of *bebook* offered them a flexible identity resource. The digital characteristics of the technology enabled young people to record, review and re-record as desired. Such reviewing was instantaneous and so too was the ability to delete any vlog entries which they did not consider worth keeping. A vlog provides a social actor with a chunk of visual and discursive material from which to construct and reconstruct accounts in a purposeful manner. The ability of vlogs to be used as discursive resources in the continual construction of accounts and the premise that such technology displays 'truths', makes them an ideal resource in the working and reworking of narrative accounts. Throughout the recording of the vlog entries, a live stream of the young person/people recording the entries could be continually displayed on the laptop²³ screen. This meant that when the young people were involved in using the laptop they could see themselves when using and recording via the webcam. Additionally this also meant that those near were also privy to the laptop display, depending upon screen orientation.

6.3.2.1 Representations of the self in on-going relationships: "My hair looks really brown there..."

In many ways from the perspective of Simon and indeed 'me' as the situated analyst, vlog entries were the vehicle for allowing my relationships with the young people to develop. Quintessentially the aim of the research based relationship was to create the vlogs. This in turn provided young people with a resource from which representations of the self could be explored in a non-judgemental and empowering fashion. One legacy of this relationship was the vlogs as digital artefacts, which could be shared and reconstructed as desired. In this way through engaging young people in reflective dialogues about their life stories in the now, the relationship itself could foster dialogues about past, present and future narrative selves. In this way the on-going relationship offered the young people a discursive space in which to construct representations of the self.

The ability of this analysis to access the reflexive realm of this relationship is made possible by young people's tendency to immediately review the content recorded. Though such screenings and dialogues were frequently recorded on the Dictaphone, due to the situated nature of *bebook*

23 Although some recordings were made upon desktop computers, most were done on laptops. This opened up the filming possibilities and locations. This was added to by the webcam hardware being external, meaning the operator could orientate the webcam as they chose.

within the wider action research project, this reflective realm was only recorded once via webcam. Extract 3 is taken from an exchange recorded on a vlog which was unintentionally recorded by Lynk moments after he had finished recording an intended vlog. It was recorded by Lynk without his or Simon's knowledge, only being discovered by the pair when using the webcam's dual functionality to take a picture. In essence the recording allowed the reflective nature of the reviewing process to be accessed by this analysis.

Extract 3

Simon: What like what bits do you have to revise?=-

Lynk: Don't know, (.) just have to see, (0.4) ↑oh

(5.4) ((video playing))

Lynk: >Do you wanna come and watch it,<

(8.8)

Nikki: ↑Starting my ↓week

(3.8)

Lynk: I look sleepy don't I?

(0.4)

Simon: ↑↑U::m, (.) not massively (.)

Lynk: My hair looks >really brown< the:re,

(3.2)

Simon: U::h (0.4) it's da:rker there than it is in real life (0.4)

Lynk: How light is it now?

Simon: It's pretty li:::ght,

Lynk: Is it?

Simon: (.) You seen Emily

(2.8)

Lynk: °Huh°

(5.2)

Lynk: >Huh huh< >I didn't< see [(you the(h)r:e)]

Simon: [Yea:h yea::h] .hhh

Lynk: My fringe looks darker

Simon: Yeah it's darker on there (.) than it do::es on your head (.)

Reviewing vlog: Lynk and Simon, also present Nikki, Emily (staff)

Extract 3 begins at the start of the reviewing process with Lynk issuing Simon an invitation to review the vlog entry recorded moments previously. Lynk cues up the vlog so Simon as audience can view it from the start. During the viewing Lynk's talk begins to recruit the *bebook* relationship as a resource for the performing of representations of the self. The relationship and vlog are oriented as a resource with Lynk seeking to validate the self as portrayed via the vlog. The delivery of Lynk's reflective request is rhetorical; the question seeks to confirm the knowledge presented within it "I look sleepy don't I?". Yet Simon's response differs from the knowledge presented in the question "↑↑U::m, (.) not massively (.)" It navigates itself from the inherent binary nature of the question. It permits Simon and indeed the *bebook* relationship as entwined within this interaction to negotiate a middle ground, a ground from which its initial neutrality can be renegotiated according to Lynk's reaction to it. It is not a total disagreement nor is it a confirmation. The implications for the rest of this exchange orientate around this negotiated middle ground and its consequences for Lynk's continual construction of self.

To validate the label of "sleepy" can have negative connotations in that its recipient is opened up to being represented or representing themselves as tired, fatigued, sluggish and inactive. By working up his neutrality Simon avoids disagreeing with Lynk but also avoids validating the label. In viewing this as an on-going research-based relationship, a participant who is tired and inactive in a research project reliant upon the active participation of a small number of young people is problematic. In re-orientating the on-going relationship to being one experienced by a young person living in residential care and a former residential practitioner, for the latter to

validate the former's negative self-representation is also undesirable, as too is a disagreement issued from an authoritarian other.

Following this exchange Lynk comments upon the disparity between the self as represented by the vlog on the laptop screen as opposed to in the now "My hair looks >really brown< the:re", opening it up to discursive attention. The way in which this information is delivered is different to how the representation of his sleepiness was performed in talk. This is a description without an element which issues an inherent need for reply within the exchange and relationship. This is a descriptive statement neither a question nor an order. It does not warrant a response but his use of the word "the:re" highlights the disparity and invites one. An implicit invitation is a subtle one; the implicit aspect of it permits it to be omitted. Yet being receptive to such cues works up the on-going relationship as both attentive to the representation of the self being constructed in the present and the disparity being constructed as a feature of the vlog. Therefore any disparity becomes a feature of the hardware used to record the vlog, for instance the differing lighting as a virtue of the orientation of the recording device as opposed to a disparity in self-knowledge. A proposition which is supported by Simon's talk "U::h (0.4) it's da:rker there than it is in real life (0.4)". This disparity of representation between the vlog and the self in now is reinforced by Simon and the "in real life" element of his response. The on-going relationship supports the colour orientation and the disparity being constructed in talk as assigned to the realm of the vlog as opposed to a gap in Lynk's own self-knowledge. The performative orientation of the talk also demonstrates to its recipient that by picking up and responding to the implicit, the relationship is engaged and attentive.

In moving to explore and confirm his representation of self in the now Lynk issues a request which is rhetorically weighted to support the construction being worked up, one revolving around the disparity between the vlog and the now in relation to his hair colour. In seeking further confirmation "How light is it now?" the response given "It's pretty li:::ght", is confirmative yet slanted in a way which is less than committed, again indicating a move towards the middle ground. Such ambivalence works up an engaged neutrality within the relationship. This neutrality is further developed in avoiding replying in a way which would require a more committed and informative response. In seeking more information about the lightness of his hair a follow up question is issued by Lynk: "Is it?". This question is not answered by Simon who directs the talk towards another aspect of the vlog.

This neutrality is only abandoned once Lynk's talk evokes an invitation which is more directional "My fringe looks darker". On this occasion Simon's talk is more committed, confirming the darkness of Lynk's fringe: "Yeah it's darker on there (.) than it do::es on your head". Under closer inspection the strategy used to confirm darkness in talk is reciprocal of the confirmative request. Simon's repetition of the "looks darker" aspect of Lynk's talk provides the speaker with a route back to neutrality if necessary, as the talk reflected the terminology used by the account's protagonist.

The analysis of extract 3 is characterised by numerous footing shifts towards neutrality by Simon as embodying the *bebook* relationship (Goffman, 1981). For Goffman (1981:128) footing is the amount of alignment we take up to ourselves and others, and a footing shift is the way that we as social performers: "...manage the production and reception of an utterance". By highlighting how such footing shifts were achieved in talk the obvious question which emerges is why? In an attempt to provide an answer to this question the work of Potter (1996) becomes pertinent. In exploring how neutrality was achieved via footing shifts by television journalists, Potter (1996:144) comments that:

"...the practice of footing shifting means that it serves, in part, to constitute the item as sensitive or controversial. Put another way, a display of neutrality through shifting footing is, at the same time, and ironically, an indication that the news interviewer is treating something as controversial or sensitive."

In approaching sensitivity as emergent through Simon's footing shifts towards neutrality at the intrapersonal level, Simon's nuances leave Lynk to direct talk on aspects of his self-representation. As the situated analyst and the reflective reporter of this account I have an obvious stake in the accounts analysis and reporting²⁴. In managing the middle ground in this way Simon's talk and neutrality encourages Lynk to utilise the relationship as a reflective mirror and the vlogs as representational resources for on-going reconstructions of the self.

Ryan and Walker (2007) indicate the importance of this other person in the process of life story work and highlight that this therapeutic relationship enables young people to explore traumatic aspects of their life experiences. Although the exchange reflected upon in extract 3 is by no means traumatic, the issuing of the invitation does highlight the pervasive nature of the

²⁴ As much as I would like to report that my empowerment ideals led to the working up of this middle ground, I think at the time I did not know if he wanted his hair to be seen as light or dark, I did not know which way to go.

consistently available adult and the influence of the on-going relationship as a discursive resource which can be recruited. The relationship emerges as a reflective space where questions about identity and self-concept can be played out. A vlog provides a social actor with a chunk of visual and discursive material from which to construct and reconstruct accounts in a purposeful manner. As well as being a resource for representations of the self, vlogs equally became a resource for the reconstruction and representations of the other.

6.3.2.2 Representation of the other in on-going relationships: “...the thing about Jim is...”

Within residential care consistently available adults may not be as stable as those in medium to long-term foster or adoption placements (Fletcher-Campbell 1997; Jackson & Sachdev 2001; Moses, 2000a; Moses, 2000b; Petrie & Simon 2006). Yet residential staff members can also fill the consistently available other requirement in conventional life story work approaches. If staff members are to be able to fulfil this role when using *bebook* then they may not always be in control of when they enter and leave the front stage. As shown by Ivy and Mo’s exchange in extract 2, appearances on the front stage can place staff members in positions of professional vulnerability. Once recorded they and their relationships with young people are represented via the vlogs, and as such are open to reconstruction, a theme continuing into extract 4.

Extract 4 features two segments; the first indicates how young people represented the other as their peers. The second begins to unravel the engagement dilemma facing staff members, whose engagement with digital technologies could positively influence how young people experience *bebook*, yet in so doing, they leave themselves vulnerable to being represented in a less than positive manner.

Extract 4

Nikki: Yeah, (0.6) toda::y on duty is (.) Jimsophin:::e, the (?) wa- (.) the
good (.) one and only,

Ivy: And EMILY BILLINGT:::ON,

(0.6)

Nikki: Yes (.) hu:::h .hh (.) A:::nd, (.) yes (.) we we we had ur:::m (.) I
had soup for tea

Chapter 6: *bebook*: Promoting reflective dialogues with adolescents in residential care

Ivy: I had veggie °pie° and mashed potato and sweet°co:rn°

Nikki: And >the rest of the staff had what she had< (.) [Cos they]'re greedy

Ivy: [.skuh] [.skuh]

Nikki: [Huh huh] huh

Ivy: [.skuh] ↑WA:::::OW OW WO::::AH

Nikki: [Huh huh]

Ivy: WOA::::h that is a stonky fa:rt,

Nikki: >Huh huh< (.) would you like Jim to come and say hello: (.) °↑can you go get Jim please?

Ivy: °Fo::r God's sake° no ↑not when you're going to reco:rd it like that and when you fa::rted and it stinks

Nikki: ↑Hu:::::h huh huh

Ivy: Play another one (.)

((Start of new rerecorded clip))

Nikki: Care home (.) thumbs up (.) ↓e:r um (.) to↑da::y on (.) duty who's sleeping i:n is Jimsophi::ne the one and only a::::nd

(0.4)

Ivy: Emily Warburton (0.6) [Yu:h]

Nikki: [E:rm]

Ivy: (.) she's boring=

Nikki: =°I know° (.) u::::m,

(0.4) would ↑you (.) yea:h we've been ↑up to (.)Nothing toda:y have we?

Ivy : No:, (.) .hh I've been at home all day

Nikki: °Hu:h°

Ivy: [huh]

Nikki: [And]

(.)

Ivy : >Huh huh< hu:h

Nikki: Shall >we go and get Jimsophi:ne?<

Ivy : Yeah okay

(2.8)

Nikki: One second (.) he'll be here soon

Ivy: Jim Nikki wants you↑

(0.4)

Jim: Me?

Ivy: Yeah (.) obviously (.) unless your name's not Ji:m unless you've been
ly:ing to us all these (.) [Months]

Nikki: [Jim] come and say hello (.) we've said
your name now

Jim: Come and say hello↑

(0.4)

Ivy: Say hello Jim

Jim: Hello,

Nikki: (?)↑A:::::GH Jim (?)

Ivy: You've got to get down so we can actually see your face

Jim: ↑I don't know if I want my face on there

Nikki: [Jim come on in] the middle in the middle

Ivy: [You do though]

Nikki: (.) come back (.) >in the
middle there< this is Jimsophin:e

Jim: Hello:[:::,]

Nikki: [↑>Huh] huh huh< (.) >huh huh huh< ↑look at his face .hhh

Ivy: °Oi Oi° (.) You can go now Huh huh huh [Huh huh huh huh]

Nikki: [huh huh huh huh] HA HA HA HA

HA: .hhh (.) (?) (.) Alright

Ivy: °E:rm the thing about Jim is° (.) his [his eye]

Nikki: [↑Huh huh] huh huh huh huh

Ivy: His e:yes looks like he's been on dru:gs (.) but he don't do drugs
right (.) better say he doesn't do drugs >just in case he gets sacked<
but if you look at his eyes they're like (.)

Nikki: Huh huh

Ivy: Hello: my na:me's J↑i::m,

Vlog entries: Nikki and Ivy, also present Jim

Extract 4 illustrates the performed nature of the girls' representation of other as experienced in peer relationships. In this case the girls were able to recruit a script and each other as co-constructors to produce an account. The account produced in the first segment one of extract 4 shows how incongruent representations of the self as other, in this case feminine identity, could be navigated by the re-recording of an account. This enables the power and indeed the control over representation of the other to be clarified. In this context Ivy's talk to "Play another one"

avoids excessive discursive work associated with resolving a potentially problematic narrative performance.

The second part of extract 4 features numerous narrative links to the first, underlining the scripted aspects of this vlog. It also features the repetition of a less than flattering construction of a particular staff member. Nonetheless the next section of the analysis will focus on the member of staff more favourably represented in the clip, the implications of his summoned presence on the front stage and the construction of this staff member as other once he had exited the stage. This second segment also begins with the girls introducing themselves, identifying where they live, briefly outlining their day before Nikki moves to identify staff member Jim as: "Jimsophi:ne the one and only". This begins to work up a positive construction of Jim through his more favourable introduction in comparison to the other staff member, but also through being labelled as: "the one and only". Ivy then leaves the front stage (i.e. the gaze of the webcam) to get Jim, with Nikki informing the audience of his imminent presence. Upon entering the front stage Jim initially remains largely out of shot, before moving to engage with the vlog and indeed the girls' experiences of it. Though his partial presence was greeted with immediate approval, this left Ivy and Nikki as immediate audience wanting more. This request also begins to build up the girls as composers and recipients of Jim's performance. They instruct Jim to come and say hello which he does, they then instruct him to repeat his performance in the middle so his face can be seen which he does.

Through revisiting the rationale behind the need for this repeated performance, the vulnerability of Jim's engagement becomes clarified. Whilst Nikki orientates the laptop, the webcam and concurrently the audience's gaze towards the part of the set where Jim's physical presence can be viewed more completely by the lens of the webcam, Ivy issues directional instructions: "You've got to get down so we can actually see your face". The "we" element of this talk works up Ivy and Nikki's dual roles as composers and recipients, but also aligning their experiences of viewing the laptop screen with those of potential future audiences. With the spotlight now firmly on him, Jim's talk begins to work up a position from which he can orchestrate some ownership and control over the exchange. The expression of his dilemma however does little to detract from the pursuit of his presence on the front stage, as personified by his "face" being seen.

Within the exchange and clip the talk recruited by the girls is akin to an authoritative position as opposed to that of request from an equal or subordinate. The girls controlled the orientation of the webcam's lens and with it the gaze of potential future audiences. In attempting to work up ownership and concurrently control over his engagement with the vlog, Jim's initial partial engagement becomes clarified. By being physically and discursively present and yet not allowing his face to be displayed, Jim is able to view the live stream as displayed on the laptop screen and yet remain removed from it through managing the appearance of his face.

There are many examples of where having one's face seen can be both a positive and negative phenomenon. A change to French law highlights the different ways in which face is constructed across cultures (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-13031397> accessed on 30/01/12). With a ban upon women wearing full-face veils commonly associated with Islamic beliefs and views which see full-face veils as oppressive to women, the importance of face in society emerges. In contemporary fashion, a hooded sweatshirt also referred to as a 'Hoodie' has emerged as a popular garment of choice. The ability of this garment to offer anonymity to its occupant by hiding or covering the majority of their face has become popular with youth culture. The 2011 London riots were synonymous with young people wearing hoodies and in particular the ability of this item of clothing to cover the face. In this sense offering anonymity to its wearers (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/aug/09/power-of-the-hoodie> accessed on 12/09/11). These examples show the sociocultural importance placed on face within the ideological context within which the exchanges between Ivy, Nikki and Jim occurred. As such this also sensitises the analysis to the reluctance of Jim to having his "face" seen on the webcam and offers some rationale for how this was negotiated in talk.

Despite initial reluctance Jim appears as directed by the girls. His appearance in the webcam and concurrently the vlog demonstrated engagement with potential audiences both present and future. Jim's manner of engagement is also guided by the girls: ">in the middle there<". By appearing on the screen Jim opens himself up to being represented by others, others in this scenario relating to Ivy and Nikki. After his brief performance Jim quickly leaves the front stage, at which point his performance and more explicitly his face begin to become reconstructed almost instantly.

Ivy begins to whisper to the webcam "°oi oi°" before turning to check to see if Jim has left the set completely. Whispering is commonly associated with informal gossip, attempts to limit the

hearing of those nearby and aims to exclude certain audiences. By whispering Ivy begins to construct her talk as potentially sensitive. The sensitivity of the message to be conveyed is further highlighted through Ivy's switch in volume when addressing the webcam and when turning to address Jim. In issuing the following instructions to Jim "you can go now" Ivy ensures he leaves the set before continuing. This order highlights her position of power as performer, but also begins to illustrate the forthcoming accounts relationship to Jim. Thus independent of whether or not the next utterances were about Jim, they were not to be heard by him. Moments later the reasons for Ivy ensuring Jim had left the stage emerge: "...the thing about Jim is° (.) his...e:yes looks like he's been on dru:gs (.) but he doesn't do drugs (.) better say he doesn't do drugs right..". Ivy's construction of Jim's facial features works up a representation of them which is less than favourable, which in the context would have serious implications for Jim's professional identity.

The sharing of such potentially sensitive information with the webcam works up Ivy's engagement with it, and potential future audiences in a fascinating manner. The delivery of this information and her return to the hushed tones constructs its sensitivity, and the sensitive nature of this admission also begins to illustrate a level of trust with her audience. Despite this admission Ivy quickly moves to re-represent Jim and indeed her suggestion of drug use: "but he don't do drugs right (.) better say he doesn't do drugs >just in case he gets sacked< but if you look at his eyes they're like (.)". The tone of this representation begins to reveal the institutional context and indeed her power to represent Jim as other, due to his engagement with the vlog. Sensitive to the contextual ramifications of her representation of Jim as a potential drug user, she repeats her clarification of Jim's lack of drug use. This sensitivity to potential future audiences also indicates Ivy's awareness of the potential professional harm her representation of Jim as other may have, and her wish to avoid Jim getting "sacked<" because of this. Such a footing change highlights Ivy's awareness of how digital technologies impact upon socio-spatial and temporal boundaries (Rennecker, Dennis & Hanson, 2010), but also her responsibility and awareness of the need to modify boundaries of acceptability.

In the context of professional residential care, to be represented by young people as looking like a drug user is potentially seriously damaging for one's career, and indeed, one's livelihood. By engaging with the girls and their experience of using the webcam, Jim made himself vulnerable to having this engagement reconstructed in a damaging way. The potential consequences of

this professionally harmful construction was immediately reconstructed and reworked by its author. Such vulnerability begins to justify reluctance on behalf of staff team members to become involved with young people's experience of using *bebook*. The connotations of professional involvement with digital technologies are discussed at length by *Chapter 8: Managing uncertainty in residential homes: The emergence and consequences of digital media, e-safety and the Scarlet Pimpernel*. The remainder of this chapter moves to explore the *bebook* context as the discursive site for on-going narrative work.

6.3.3 On-going narratives

The development of coherent narrative identities has long been associated with the goals of life story work. The process of producing, editing, sharing and then reflecting upon narrative accounts is suggested to cultivate greater self-understanding and coherence (Fahlberg 1994; Rose & Philpot 2005; Schofield & Beek, 2006). Though the term narrative coherence suggests that such things are fixed, or at least reworked at formative developmental stages when capacities to process experiential learning are said to develop. This section will conceptualise accounts as created at a point in time and to fulfil a social action. The analysis will focus on talk represented in the extracts and not on the lives of the young people who shared them. This section explores how the young people structured on-going narratives, how these on-going narratives allowed young people to negotiate adolescent narrative identity and reconcile difficult accounts.

6.3.3.1 Developing structure

In order to find meaning in life narratives it has been suggested that the sequential arrangements of individual events and how these events are related is crucial. Crossley (2000:10) underlines the relational aspects of these strings of events as crucial, commenting that: "In order to define and interpret 'what' exactly has happened on any particular occasion, the sequence of events is extremely important". To understand an event as meaningful is to be aware of what came before and how this previous event is played out in relation to the preceding event. It allows a connection between isolated events to form a relationship to be understood by the teller.

As an approach to life story work, the production of vlog entries is viewed here as a way to promote narrative coherence and understanding through making available an array of discursive

resources. Simon's role as the *bebook* facilitator and the relationship which developed with each young person as a result of this role was one such resource.

In the residential context, a staff member's appearance in the day-to-day life of young people is mediated by amongst other things the rotas of residential homes. Rotas organise the day-to-day appearance of staff members within the home and their shift patterns. Ideally rotas will facilitate the routines and daily flow of residential care homes, for example with mealtimes being at regular times and staff handovers meetings fitting in with the dynamics of the young people who live in the home. Yet across the residential sector the ability of rotas to distribute staff evenly across the week is understandably influenced by the demands staff members themselves bring.

Rotas can add unpredictability to the rhythms of homes and young people's lives. Specific rituals which link days to particular events bestow some form of order; however young people's relationships become linked to this order and not to the infrequency of the individuals present at the rituals. Rarely will a staff member appear on a rota in the same place on the same days every week, particularly when such days coincided with weekends. Therefore rotas can obscure the rhythm and flow which come to define the home's relationship with young people living within it. For example if Tuesday night is football practice and/or Sunday afternoons are the matches, a residentially placed young person is unlikely to have a regular companion, carer or face watching them play or providing transport. Not only does this have implications for their ability to use temporal features when creating narratives, but adds another layer of complexity when talking to confused peers and others at the activity.

Though this may well be considered unattainable best practice, what does become clear from this observation and indeed my own reflections from practice, is the relational stability of those workers within the homes who work Monday through until Friday. The predictability of this relationship as experienced between young people and domestic workers, maintenance and admin staff is often overlooked. Yet it could be suggested that this is a relationship which is stable and consistent across a range of temporal factors. For the most part although on a short-term basis, Simon bought this temporal regularity to the residential homes through his *bebook* facilitation visits. The impact of this regularity in the temporal structuring of accounts is illustrated by extract 5.

Extract 5

(5.0)

Phil: (?)

Simon: (?)

(0.4)

Phil: Hello::? (0.6) Ah I went to: (.) NTS on Monda:y, (2.6) Tue:sday
I helped in kids, (.) at school, (0.6) Wednesday we're having
Christmas dinner,

Simon: >Is it< tomorrow, (0.8) ni::ce

Phil: Thursday I've got lesso::ns (.) bo:::ring, (.) Fri:day (.) we're
leaving, (.) school early, Ya:::y, (.) >huh [huh huh<]

Simon: [↑Huh huh](3.0)
°Excellent°

Vlog entry Phil and Simon

Extract 5 is taken from the second vlog Phil uploaded and presents as a marked contrast to the interview style which was negotiated and featured in extract 1b. Recording of this vlog occurred on one of Simon's regular Tuesday evening visits to Phil's residential home. From the talk performed it is possible to discern when this recording took place due to Phil's recruitment of *tenses*: "Tue:sday I helped in kids, (.) at school, (0.6) Wednesday we're having Christmas dinner". Also note that Phil starts his reflective account on Monday and produces a projected account of the rest of his week, which concludes at the end of the school week on Friday. This enables Phil to make use of the available temporal strands in creating relationships and understandings between events and days of the week. The influence of the time of recording in relation to produced accounts becomes clarified when Phil's narrative is presented in contrast to that of Lynk in extract 6.

Extract 6

Lynk: Hi it's Friday agai:n, (0.4) er Simon's come rou:nd I taught him a game of ma[↑]gi:c, (0.4) he whipped my a::rse, (.) we didn't finish the ga:me (0.4) he: (.) beat me by::: nine[↑]tee:n, (.) which is (.) really bad considering I had the better de:ck, (0.4) u::m (.) he dropped o:ff (.) my reward money, (.) which I ea:rned from doing the web[↑]ca::ms, and starting my (.) week (.) li::ke last Saturday (.) I went to the forum (.)

Vlog entry: Lynk, also present Simon

In constructing his account, Lynk begins to work up associations between the day of the week in which Simon visited, the repetition of this event and his continual relationship with his audience. Through coupling a day of the week with repetition of recording the vlog "it's Friday agai:n" his account begins to work up its routine. Through this talk without watching the previous clips it is possible for the audience to ascertain the regularity of this event and its association with this particular day. He then begins to build up a relationship context which links the regularity of this event on this particular day with Simon's presence. Having built up this relationship and its association with this day of the week Lynk recounts an anecdote which occurred moments previous to the recording of the vlog. This in itself is interesting due to the short vlog entries only representing a small component of an overall implementation visit. More pertinent at this phase of the analysis however, is the use of his consistent narrative starting points. The characteristic of narrative is that it provides a temporal framework, a way of organising the complexity of experiences. This structure organises and links chains of events so that chronological order becomes coupled with causality.

Different genres of narratives tend to demand starting points, for example 'Once upon a time' is a frequent starting point for fictional narratives, whereas in an academic genre an abstract is a typical starting point. Lynk, like many young people, had a tendency to start his vlog entries in a particular fashion. In his case Lynk's narratives tended to start as follows: "starting my (.) week". From this starting or push-off point he was able to work up a reflective account of his week, an account which like Phil's makes use of the days of the week as temporal reference points. Yet unlike Phil's account, Lynk's starts his account at the previous Friday. In this way Lynk's reflective account begins after the point in which his last vlog entry was recorded. Although some projection may have occurred during the last point of recording (i.e. the Friday before this recording) by linking this account back to the previously shared one his accounts

overlap and in many ways provide a reflective conclusion to it. Projection works up suggestions of events that may happen, whereas reflections work up accounts of what did happen. In this way Lynk structures his account in a way which, though making use of temporal landmarks such as days of the week, he renegotiates these in relation to his experience of using *bebook*. In issuing his push-off point as “starting my (.) week” he is able to work up an ownership of his week’s differing structure. Hence in his accounts, his week started on a Saturday and ended on the Friday’s when he recorded his vlog entries.

Within this modified weekly framework Lynk’s rationale for his reflective account starting on the previous Saturday and ending on Friday emerges. In comparison to Phil’s use of a Monday to Friday framework in which he records his accounts on a Tuesday, the structuring nature of the *bebook* relationship, its association with a particular day of the week and the influence the point of recording becomes clarified. This clarification is added to when we think of these relationships as on-going and also consistently associated with a particular day of the week. In this sense, the regularity of the relationship allowed for temporal coherence within accounts to be created. Had such a relationship occurred on different days, the discursive work to join up the accounts in a meaningful way would have required much more attention. In this regard the regulatory of the audience, allowed the accounts created to recruit the audiences as knowledgeable. As Goffman (1959:216) suggests when giving a performance: “...the performer will have to take into consideration the information the audience already has about him.”

In this way Lynk and Phil use their audience’s previous knowledge of them as performers to produce accounts in relation to this audience. Lynk’s talk in particular personifies this aspect; he does not need to go into detail to explain what day it is nor does he need to introduce himself by name or elaborate on who Simon is. In working up an on-going narrative, his relationship to his audience allows him to start off where he left off rather than returning to the beginning. As Goffman (1959:27) elaborates: “When an individual plays the same part to the same audience on different occasions, a social relationship is likely to arise.” The social relationship created by *bebook* and by Simon’s facilitation of the vlog recordings, Lynk and Phil can make use of this relationship when constructing their accounts.

Implicitly the weekly nature of Simon’s visits and the regular appearance of four webcam tasks on the *bebook* mission task sheets meant most young people chose to narrate their past week from the point at which they had last seen Simon. Some would also choose to narrate their

expectations and anticipated events for the week forthcoming. In this sense the *bebook* mission sheets alongside Simon's weekly visits presented a narrative structure to the young people which could be recruited to structure accounts. This was perhaps easier for those young people visited upon days of the week usually associated with its beginning or end. For example Simon would visit Anne-Marie on a Monday night and Lynk on Friday night. These are the days of the week in Western cultures which signal the beginning of the working week, and also its end. For young people these days can also be related to the beginning of the school week and again its end. In this way the construction of the narratives can utilise such structures accordingly. This is not to say that the accounts of those recorded on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays did not make use of the days of the week in narratives, merely to highlight that such narratives required more discursive attention.

As the situated analyst I am able to reflect that the accounts produced by young people visited on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays appeared less focused in their production of weekly reflections. This is not to say that the narratives of young people performed on Mondays and Fridays were more coherent per se than those performed by young people on other days. Simply to highlight that such young people were able to recruit the implicit nature of the *bebook* mission tasks and my regular weekly visits more readily in their accounts. As mentioned, the brief for these vlogs was participant driven, with only implicit directions from Simon. To this end the implicit weekly associations of the tasks may have been more explicit to those experiencing this relationship regularly at the beginning or end of the week.

6.3.3.2 Negotiating on-going adolescent narrative identities:

"...messing around as an 18 year old would..."

Societally available narratives inform young people viewed as adolescents by a society as to how their story should sound and the components it is expected to contain. As Gergen (1999) remarked, we identify ourselves through narration. Narrative structures inform and contain our lives. This narrative identity can be problematic for young people who have traumatic elements to their life stories, viewed here to impact upon constructions of narrative adolescent identity. For those young people who did not recruit the implicit nature of the weekly mission tasks, the vlog entries represented a time and discursive space in which they could work up narratives of adolescent identity. The vlog entries produced by such young people tended to be reflective of constructions emerging from a period of time more distant than the last seven days. These

accounts offered young people a chance to reconstruct and interpret these events in the present, in a context which allowed them to share biographical narratives unchallenged.

The narratives of young people living in care are shaped by, amongst other things, their pre-care experiences, reasons for being in care, as well as societal expectations of them as adolescents and in turn adolescents in care. The complexity and additional discursive attention required to negotiate adolescent narrative identity formation when in care, emerges in John's vlog entry in extract 7. In this extract John describes recent events in relation to his car breaking down and him "messing a[↑]round" with his friends: ">as an eighteen< year old [↑]would". The analysis will start by examining the developmental nature of John's shared account in relation to his adolescent narrative identity construction, before linking this to an added layer of complexity added to by what Von Korff et al. (2010) labelled a care identity.

Extract 7

John: E::r (0.4) (car) bro::ke, (0.4) agai:n, (0.4) front (?) on it this time, (0.4) again (.) n:ar actually it's the (third) ti:me, (0.6) had the car for four mo:nths broke down three times [↑]no::w, a record now (.) at the mo[↑]ment, (.) .tch for anyone else but yep and e::r, (0.4) last [↑]ni:ght, tried filling up for the first time, (.) first time it ever happened to [↑]me,(.) filled up, (.) couldn't afford to pay for it (0.4) .tch had to get my carers come [↑]down (.) fi:ll her up for [↑]me, so: that was quite fu[↑]nny, (0.6) bee:n (.) basically ge:nerally (.) h-having a good laugh with [↑]frie:nds, been staying out (.) er sleeping round my cousin's (.) <Jo:es Ste:ves> playing (.) Call of Duty with them a lot (.) had good times with all [↑]the:m, you know just generally (.) having messing a[↑]round, (0.6) >as an eighteen< year old [↑]would, (0.6) yeah it's been quite good, (0.4) I've bee:n, (.) quite enjoying myself (0.4) a:nd just can't wait fo:::r, (2.8) n' thi:nk (0.4) can't wait until I get my car all so:r[↑]ted, (.) make it all look ni:ce, (0.8) once I make that look nice enter it in sho:ws and that and just sho::w o:ff with other people who just generally like modifying [↑]ca:rs an-tha:t, (0.8) yeah sounds pretty cool

Vlog entry: John 18, also present Simon

For young motorists, particularly those from a socio-economic background similar to John's, owning an older car and as such one which is prone to breaking down is a relatively familiar narrative. By referring to the breakdowns in relation to the number of months he had owned the car, John works up his narrative account as subtly different from others and invites sympathy from his audience: "a record now (.) at the moment, (.) .tch for anyone else but yep". Talk being the site where identities are negotiated and taken up (Wetherell, 1998), John's talk begins to move his account and identity away from conventional early motoring experience narratives and results in him working up his as worse. It was "a record", one he held for having the most unreliable car. Owning an unreliable car has connotations for identity in relation to socio-economic status, adolescent searches for independence and masculinity. People of higher economic status tend not to have unreliable cars, those from working class backgrounds do. Working up his identity as working class was added to by the potentially embarrassing element of the narrative, in relation to being unable to pay for his fuel. In his talk this episode is constructed as: "quite funny". Through constructing this event as "quite funny", he begins to distance himself from the negative consequences that this series of events may have had for his emerging independence and masculine identity. Despite the unreliability of his car, having to get his carers to pay for his fuel was not a common occurrence; it was the "first time it ever happened" to John.

Being from a working class background, having little or no money and yet paying your way is a socially credible adolescent narrative due to its strand of independence. For an adolescent from this background having one's parents/carers pay for items is a less socially desirable developmental narrative because of its failure to perform independence²⁵. The rarity of this event stands in contrast to the high number of incidents of his car breaking down. This comparison moves to work up John's identity as a working class young male seeking independence, with the lack of independence experienced in the fuel payment incident as an isolated event. John's claim to this adolescent narrative identity was made available due to the sharing of this car related incident (Bengry-Howell & Griffen, 2007). The adolescent narrative resurfaces towards the end of the account, performed in relation to John playing a computer game in his friendship group. This time the narrative permits John to work up legitimacy in his account claiming his adolescent narrative identity.

²⁵ As a 28 year old working class male in education following an already extended period of education, analytically I am perhaps more sensitive to deviations from conventional development narratives; after all knowledge is not divorced from context (Galatzer-Levy, 2002).

John's justification for spending time with his friends begins to open up an extra layer of complexity in need of resolution in the discursive work of looked-after populations, similar to what the work of Von Korff et al. (2010). John's justification attempts to legitimise his constructed narrative identity. Here his talk claims an adolescent narrative identity in line with societal expectations of what it means to be an 18 year old. This legitimisation is further reinforced through a subtle footing shift (Potter, 1996). This shift allowed John to move from recruiting talk at an individual level in relation to his friends "been staying out (.) er sleeping round my cousin's (.) <Jo:es Ste:ves> playing (.) Call of Duty with them a lot (.) had good times with all ↑the:m" to appealing to the ideological via what Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1971) termed a universal audience "you know just generally (.) having messing a↑round, (0.6) >as an eighteen< year old ↑would". According to Billig (1997) the use of appealing to a universal audience contains clues regarding the prevailing ideological common-sense at the time of the talk.

In this extract John as an 18-year-old, is able to make use of this shared knowledge to claim his account through a combination of complementary dynamic discursive devices. In the first instance his appeal to the universal audience, aligns audience awareness to the ideological common-sense contained within his individual level of talk. More specifically, in relation to the commonality of young males his age play computer games and spending time together. In so doing, he simultaneously works up his category membership of this group through carrying out an activity associated with it (Potter, 1996). In this way the ideological expectations and the associated mutually sustaining symmetry of this group which informs those within it how to act and those on the outside what to expect is maintained (Gergen, 1999), not only through John's membership to it but also through his actions when in it. This membership informs the narrative produced and constructs it and his adolescent narrative identity as normative. John's talk works up a legitimisation of the narrative shared and in turn works up his claim to it.

John's claim to an adolescent narrative identity aligned with the ideological common-sense of the time, is suggested here to be akin to him working through the extra layer of complexity added to the narratives of care populations. It could be argued that claims to similar narratives of adolescence are perhaps not the sole preserve of care populations. This said, the importance of normalising adolescent narratives and adolescent narrative identities are perhaps more pertinent to them. Stan's talk in extract 8 begins to outline how even when producing accounts

that are relatively routine, additional discursive work may need to be performed by care populations.

Extract 8

Stan: .skuh (.) Hi: (.) e:r (.) this week I've (.) u::m, (0.6) .tch this week I went to my Mum's for the week, e::rnd (0.4) er, (0.6) just been (.) that was (.) >pretty good< because I 'aven't seen her for (0.4) e:r (0.4) quite a few months, (.) >cos I only get to see here six times< a mo- o- a yea::r, (0.6) and er (.) we done (.) er it was pretty good to (0.6) see 'er and all that, (.) I've seen my brother as well at the same time

Vlog entry: Stan, also present Simon

Here a relatively straightforward sharing of a narrative becomes laden with additional discursive work when Stan begins to talk about visiting his mum. Stan provides additional descriptive information to contextualisation why visiting his mum was ">pretty good<", which highlights its deviation from conventional adolescent-parent narratives. Similar work may also be undertaken by adolescents who no longer live with both birth parents, but here Stan's talk goes beyond explaining why he does not live with his mum.

In comparison to the interview style that Phil negotiated, Stan like many young people produced his accounts independently, though with Simon present on this occasion. In contemplating what Stan's talk achieved as social action, it worked up the complex nature of his relationship to his mum and indeed the brother he mentions, but also clarified it. He could have just said he saw his mum in the week and that he enjoyed it. This may have led to questions from the immediately present audience. Hence by containing information in the narrative performed relating to spending time with his mum, Stan's narrative took into account what the audience may have already known about him as a young person in care and produced the narrative which headed off potential questions²⁶. In this way Stan constructed his account and therefore his relationship with his mum and brother as he wished. In spite of this the increased complexity of this relationship emerges. In comparison to more available adolescent narratives of relationship with parents, even those available to young people with divorced parents, the

26 I (and in this sense Simon) intentionally did not read file histories or chronologies 'about' the young people and hence do not now know why the young people' entered care. Whether the young people knew that I did know this information was at no point made explicit by me or them. Staff members may have informed the young people of this, but this is beyond my knowledge as the situated researcher (Simon) and the analysts/writer.

additional discursive attention in explaining and reflecting on such complexities emerges. Again this additional discursive tension allows the young person producing the performance to author a narrative which constructs, repairs or reconciles deviations from those which are more widely available.

6.3.3.3 Creating opportunities to renegotiate narrative traumas: “...my mum and my family insist I can’t cope with family and that lot (pause) but I do like it”

The recording of vlog entries for the *bebook* website and the relationship such activities cultivated provided opportunities to work up adolescent narrative identities through the sharing and reconstructing of narratives. As previously mentioned young people who Simon visited on days less readily associated with temporal beginnings or endings, vlog entries produced appeared less focused in their production akin to weekly reflections. As the analysis of John and Stan’s vlogs demonstrates this left young people free to recruit the opportunity and the audience as they deemed suitable at a point in time. The real or imagined audience vlogs provided, allowed the young people an opportunity to bring their own agendas to the stage. The following extract provides an example of a young person taking this opportunity, using it to share and renegotiate a narrative account unchallenged.

Extract 9

Nikki: I go to >Education Plus< and have some grea::t mates here (.) I think, (.) ↓the care home >that I’m in is< (.) ↑pretty cool, (.) the carers are nice, (0.8) yeah, (.) I think it’s quite ↑cool yeah (0.4) U::M, (0.4) <every::,> (0.4) o:nce a week twice >a week sometimes< .hhh(.) Simon from UEA comes to see us a::nd (.) we do a little work like.= =>blah blah blah,< (.) u::m, (0.8) ↑a:fter u:m (1.8) after that >°well we° just °do boring stuff really° well I do< hu::h (probably) watch tee ↑vee::, go ou::t whatever blah blah blah, (.) ↑u::m, (1.8) U:M I used >to live with my< mu:m (0.8) and then I moved out (.) because I got (0.4) a- a- hhh °abu:sed° (.) abu:sed a::nd attacked and that a lot (.) ↑a::nd (.) then I moved into my dad’s but my ↑da:d didn- it didn’t go very well with my dad a::nd (.) I moved into a care, (.) foster ↑home, (0.4) my foster home (.) was grea:t (.) just didn’t get on as ↑we::ll like next one I didn’t get on but this care home I (.) I’ve not left

yet °huh° it's not been the longest care foster home I was in (.) I was in foster home for like, (.) a yea:r in (.) a year (.) ↑u::m (0.4) yeah I ↑think I really, place I'd really <like to> (0.6) go is where my nan used to work (.) or where my nanny lived (.) because my nanny p- (.) passed awa:y >she was only< forty nine but she died (.) o:f (.) a heart attack I think it was (0.6) u:m (.) September (0.4) last year um, (0.6) and it really (.) it really, (.) upset me (.) ↑a::nd, (0.4) ra:ther be::: seeing that than (.) doing anything else (0.8) I think my, (.) my mu:m and my family (?)insist that maybe I can't cope with family and that lot (.) but I do like it (.) alright tha:nks (.) bye

Vlog entry: Nikki

Extract 9 demonstrates the discursive space which engaging with the *bebook* project created for young people to share and reconstruct traumatic narratives. Being comfortable with Simon and slowly building a relationship in which accounts could be produced, indicated the positive impact the *bebook* facilitative relationship Simon and many of the young people experienced. The extract also highlights how young people were able to control and produce a social performance driven by what they brought to the narrative accounts they shared.

When called upon to tell a story, particularly when this story has a personal sensitivity, narrators tend not to dive straight in. Nikki's talk shows an appreciation of this since the most sensitive part was introduced after her talk had navigated through what appeared to be a necessary preamble. Her talk constructs her narrative as purposeful and set within a conventional narrative structure. The performance begins with necessary introductions which set the scene. Once the introductory pre-requisites dictated by conventional understandings of narrative structure are dealt with, Nikki's talk moves the narrative account towards its main topic. The construction of the interim aspects of the shared account as "boring stuff really" is reinforced by her talk's use of: "blah blah blah". Nikki's use of "blah blah blah" suggests these elements of the narrative are uninteresting. By recruiting "blah blah blah" in her performance she is able to convey to her audience that she herself is bored of it, enabling her to close down these parts of the narrative. These narrative elements appear to ease the author and indeed the audience into the main topic, also working to segregate the narratives superficial elements from its more personal ones.

The main topic of Nikki's vlog entry is clearly one of huge sensitivity. In this analysis the narrative will be recruited to highlight the opportunity that involvement with the *bebook* project presented to young people such as Nikki. In this particular vlog entry, Nikki was able to renegotiate traumatic elements of her biographical narrative at a particular point in time and with an audience familiar enough for her to comfortably perform it. Though there was no immediate audience presence on this occasion Nikki was aware, as all the young people were, at some point this vlog would be watched by Simon. This creates the question of did she record this for Simon? The answer to this question may or may not have been yes. One could argue that in her talk's reference and introduction to "Simon from UEA" evidence would suggest that this was not the case. Alternatively an argument could be made that this recording was within the context of the *bebook* relationship, and therefore Simon was a part of an imagined future audience.

Pursuing an answer to this question detracts from the role of the discursive space created. Regardless of the intended future audience, Nikki was able to author an account which allowed her to renegotiate traumatic elements of her on-going biographical narrative. She was also able to use the opportunity provided by the *bebook* project and most specifically the vlogs to reflect upon information unchallenged: "I think my, (.) my mu:m and my family (?)insist that maybe I can't cope with family and that lot (.) but I do like it". Such reflection took place at a particular point in time which was pertinent to her and was recorded in a way which allowed her voice to be heard.

6.4 Summative comments

The analysis of the narratives performed by young people suggests that there are extra layers of complexity added to the biographical life narratives of care populations. This can be added to by a residential care context which may obscure readily available temporal landmarks in relation to the continuity and predictability of continuous residential relationships. Through the introduction of *bebook* tasks and indeed the *bebook* facilitative relationship, such complexities were played out in talk and are represented by this analysis. The consistent availability and predictive nature of the *bebook* relationship as well as the range of reflective prompting tasks enabled adolescents to engage in the renegotiation of power over their produced accounts and the reconstruction of representations of the self. As well as engaging in the sharing and structuring of on-going narratives of adolescent identity.

This analysis evidences extra layers of discursive difficulty permeate into adolescence and possibly throughout the life course. Also emerging from this analysis and *bebook's* introduction was the importance of the facilitative and predictable relationship shared between the young people and Simon. *bebook* was a vehicle to elicit reflective talk akin to traditional life story work. Yet its inception and integration with the internet appeared to distance workers, a theme fully explored in *Chapter 8: Managing uncertainty in residential homes: The emergence and consequences of the digital media, e-safety and the Scarlet Pimpernel*. For now attention turns to how those who lived and worked in the residential context responded to the introduction of the offline approach known as podwalking.

Chapter 7: Podwalking: Generating and analysing reflective talk via process driven method

7.1 Introduction

The podwalk cycle was driven by the idea of young people being able to actively record shared memories onto a DVD, which itself could be shared. The podwalk process, methodology and analysis elicited from this goal evolved and became more refined as the cycle progressed. Because of its iterative development podwalking evolved into a complex, multilayered and multiperspective technique. In this regard the chapter begins with an overview of the podwalking process and the young people involved in its development. Consideration is then given to each discrete phase within the podwalking process leading to the creation of a podwalk DVD, before moving to analyse the talk of those involved in their production. More specifically, focusing upon how podwalking was experienced as a way of creating opportunities for the performance of discursive identity work in the context of interpersonal relationships with Simon, staff and significant places. The focus of the chapter is reflected in its aims:

2.1 Ascertain how the podwalk process can access different streams of discursive enquiry

2.2 Examine how young people experienced the sharing of narratives via digital technologies in context of situational relationships with place and present others during the podwalk process

2.3 Analyse the talk stimulated by podwalking as the site for active reflections involved in making and remaking young people's autobiographical narratives and coherent connections amongst their life events

2.4 Make a contribution to knowledge to inform policy and practice in terms how staff can support and empower young people during the podwalking whilst managing risk

7.2 The context

During car journeys to previous neighbourhoods in which the young people I worked with had lived, they would frequently recount stories stimulated by the places visited. Their former neighbourhoods were filled with narrative prompts from which they could begin to share stories from their past. Such prompts allowed the young people to construct their connections to place and the communities in which they once lived. These prompts could be physically present and have their meaning constructed in talk, or indeed have their physical absence act as a prompt for constructive talk. For instance, a swing in a local park or indeed the place where the swing used to be, in such cases absent prompts would evoke a description of the missing object as well as its meaning to the young person. The technique known as podwalking developed from this practitioner background, my frustration at a lack of communication tools to capture such dialogues and through my reading of Pink's (2007) article *Walking with video*.

The term podwalk is conventionally used to refer to downloadable audio-based files used to guide tourists around places of interest. In her article, Pink (2007) creates reflective dialogues with her participants, a married couple David and Anne, about how a community garden project had developed over time. Through amalgamating the idea of producing audiovisual guides of important places and Pink's (2007) dynamic and reflective process, podwalking as a way of creating opportunities for the recording of reflective life stories developed.

In contrast to Pink's (2007) work and conventional podwalks as informative audio guides, I aimed to develop an emancipatory approach to engage participants as tour guides sharing with a camcorder and invited guests' places that are important and the talk such places elicited. In this way the digital technology and podwalk process grants the story teller (also known as podwalker) with a flexible guide to undertaking this process, providing a starting place, tangible products and discrete end points. For a population widely acknowledged as being disadvantaged in terms of educational attainment, the usefulness of digital technologies as a modality from which to begin sharing narratives becomes more prominent because of its ability bypass and adapt to communication difficulties.

The emergent and developmental aspects of podwalking result in this section being overtly reflexive. To this end I shall be referring to my retrospective reflections on the emergent process as a reflexive writer using first person terminologies. Whereas in discussing my own role as a

situated agent as the process emerged I shall refer to myself as Simon, writing in the third person and past tense as established in *Chapter 5: Methodology*.

7.3 Who went on the podwalks?

The evolution and crystallisation of podwalking owes much to the young people and staff involved. The chapter features seven out of the ten young people who became engaged in the overall project. All seven young people who chose to start this cycle of the research completed it. These young people and their staff members were recruited from three of the four different residential homes engaged with the overall project. The Newcastle Avenue residential home was the only home not to be represented in this chapter. A brief synopsis of each of the young people is now presented to allow extracts used in this chapter to function in context:

- Phil (15) lived at the Gateford Road residential home and was a young person who enjoyed technology. Phil was the first young person to undertake all elements of the emergent podwalk process and is responsible for the idea of including music between scenes in the podwalk DVDs. Phil undertook two filming sessions, the first being in and around the neighbourhood where his mother and sister currently lived and the second around a place where he, his fellow residents and staff members had shared special occasions. His first podwalk planning and filming phases were mainly facilitated by Ricky (staff), with the second planning and filming phases facilitated some months later by Maureen (staff). Phil managed the other phases by himself. Phil had specific learning needs however these were not labelled, nor were labels sought.
- Anne-Marie (15) lived at the Carlton Road residential home. Though she was the only young person involved in the project in her residential home, her staff team and particularly her Key Worker Sabrina, were instrumental in facilitating her three podwalk filming sessions. Anne-Marie lived about an hours' drive from her school and best friend Amanda, whose house was visited on the final filming phase. Anne-Marie and Sabrina shared a close relationship, with Sabrina present in all phases of Anne-Marie's podwalk. Anne-Marie had specific learning needs, but again no diagnostic labels were sought.
- Billie (15) also lived in the Gateford Road residential home; his podwalk had the potential to be the most sensitive. Originally plans were made for Billie to visit his home town, the place where a serious and traumatic crime involving a member of his birth family had

taken place. Though he had spoken excitedly to Simon about showing him around his home town the night before the filming was due to take place, on the day itself arrangements changed. The reasons for this change remained unclear; instead Billie shared places he and his friends played in walking distance of his residential home. Billie's filming phase was the only one undertaken with only the podwalker and Simon present. Billie's editing and production session was shared with Polly, who frequently remarked throughout how she was unaware of the places Billie and his fellow residents played as shown on his podwalk.

- Chris (17) had lived in the Gateford Road residential home for around six years. Approaching eighteen around the time of the podwalk Chris saw his podwalk DVD as an opportunity to say thanks to his staff team before he moved on. He was accompanied on his one and only podwalk filming session by Jez, a worker Chris had known since he had moved into his current placement. Although not a proactive advocate of technology Jez had been a strong supporter of the research from the outset. Chris attended the editing and production phase alone, frequently remarking how he was looking forward to making his carers cry when they watched his DVD. Chris had a range of specific learning needs.
- Nikki (15) lived at the Bridge Street residential home. She enjoyed technology, with her skill and interest in it being frequently cited by members of her staff team. The day before Nikki was due to undertake her first of two filming sessions with her chosen staff member Jim, she had been informed that she was to be moved to another residential home due to her behaviour. Amongst the places Nikki chose to visit were the neighbourhoods where her former foster carers and her mum's house were located. However, she had been informed that she was not allowed to visit either of them on her podwalk. Such boundaries were attended to by her talk and transcended across the podwalk DVD. If it were not for staff member Jim and his relationship with Nikki, she could have missed out on a potentially positive experience, an experience at a crucial point in time since she was shortly to be moved into another residential home, leaving behind staff, fellow residents and these relationships.
- Ivy (14) lived in the Bridge Street residential home and undertook two podwalk filming sessions, one in her bedroom and one around an area where she had spent the majority

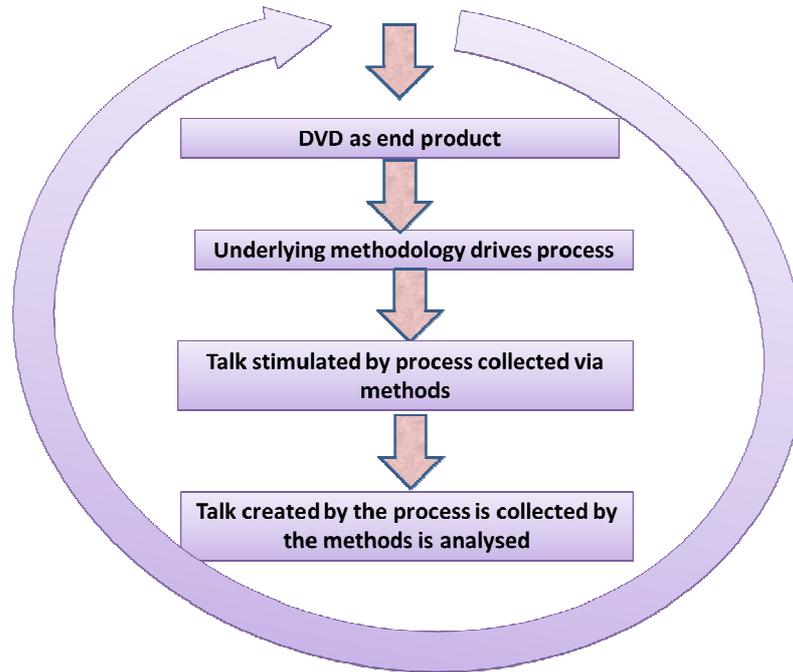
of her life. Ivy like others who filmed aspects of their bedrooms did this alone, yet was also confident in using the camcorder in the presence of others. In filming her former neighbourhood Ivy preferred to leave the camera recording giving her podwalk a much more fluid feel. Ivy's self-selected member of staff as invited guest was Kim, who played a part in each of Ivy's podwalk phases.

- Haze (14) lived in the Gateford Road home and decided to undertake a podwalk despite not being involved in *bebook*. Haze undertook one long filming session in which she filmed her residential home, her Mum and Grandparents house's and the stables where she worked part-time. Her podwalk was facilitated by Debs throughout each phase. Haze, Debs, and Simon were also accompanied to Haze's grandparent's house by her birth mother. Haze produced a detailed podwalk despite having a range of learning needs.

7.4 Podwalking: The process

The involvement of participants throughout the various phases of podwalking was crucial in achieving a sense of ownership. The process which emerged was able to operate in line with the institutional features of the client group it sought to engage with. Critically, from an emancipatory standpoint young people's ownership over data produced and the notion of invited guests, meant that podwalking was able to function as both a method of generating data and a life story work process. Podwalking developed into a complex, multilayered and multiperspective technique; its differing layers will now be introduced.

The participatory methods driving the development of the podwalking process are represented by figure 11. This illustrates the place of the methodological layer within this chapter and indeed podwalking itself. As podwalking developed discrete phases of process emerged; these are illustrated via the phases located on the methodological layer in figure 12. This representation also indicates that progression towards the showing of a completed podwalk DVD had linear aspects, but that progression through process phases were driven by participatory methods. In this way linear aspects were descriptive rather than prescriptive. Figure 12 also introduces data generated when undertaking the podwalk process and locates these themes of discourse where they became most prominent. Analysis will be picked up later in this chapter, for now attention turns to the podwalk process.



alking process and its discrete



methods used. This representation here they became most prominent

7.4.1 Pre-planning and planning phase

The podwalk cycle of data collection began via informal conversations with staff members and/or the home's managers. This allowed Simon to ascertain how settled the individual young person and residential home was overall. At this point informal pre-emptive conversations regarding places and/or people the young people would and would not be able to visit were discussed. This was key since Simon had no chronological information regarding the young people's past or reasons for entering care. What information of this sort he was privy to was gained via young people volunteering such information during informal conversations, the young people's vlog entries for the *bebook* website and finally through informal conversations with staff members²⁷. In initiating the podwalk cycle Simon needed to be careful not to set up conflicts between young people wishing to visit certain places staff teams would advise were to be avoided. Though noticeably distinct from the *bebook* data collection cycle, the podwalk cycle was nested within it and was introduced to the young people upon a *bebook* mission sheet as illustrated by figure 13. The familiarity of these mission sheets in terms of their *bebook* branding and their task based format, provided a platform for engagement in the podwalk cycle. From this point the general idea of the podwalk was introduced to the young people as being an opportunity to share with an invited guest(s) places of

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This month's mission if you choose to accept it is to complete the following tasks.....

- **Upload at least 2 webcam diaries, each a minimum of two minutes in length.**
- **Upload 3 pictures of people or places that are important to you.**
- **Talk to Simon and key worker/staff member you feel close to about places you might want to visit on your Podwalk.**

GOOD LUCK!!!

Figure 13: bebook mission statement launching podwalk cycle.

²⁷ It should be stressed that this last source of information was only provided at times when staff members perceived that a particular young person was extremely sensitive at a point in time.

importance. During this conversation Simon would give the young people the laptop, get them to turn it on, enter the password and then find and play the preloaded Participant Information Clip (PIC) associated with the podwalk cycle²⁸ (Hammond & Cooper, 2011a). This clip provided the young people with an understanding about what was involved and then if they consented to take part, which all the young people approached did, the young person was given the additional shortened podwalk consent form to sign (see appendix 5). The young person would then nominate an invited guest(s), before discussions would then begin to unfold as to where they would want to go on their podwalk. From this point the planning of the podwalk began.

The planning element of the phase often became linked with Simon, staff members and young people finding times and dates which fitted with the existing rotas of the residential homes, times the young people were free and finally fitted in with Simon's other commitments. These dialogues would revolve around the diary of the residential home and were in many ways determined by the availability of the chosen in-house guest. Whilst operating in this environment podwalking also had to be sensitive to its institutional demands. Different care providers tend to have different safe guarding policies regarding transporting residentially placed young people in one's own private car. Simon did not have business insurance on his car and therefore erred on the side of caution in this department. This meant he was unable to drive the young person and invited guests to selected places; hence a strong consideration during this phase was how to reduce the impact of the various filming trips upon the rest of the residential home. In some cases this dictated that places visited were in order of location rather than preference. This was not ideal, but the young people were assured they could rearrange recordings into their preferred sequence in the editing and production phase. Such time constraints sometimes meant young people were not able to film all the features of the places they were able to visit²⁹.

For young people being looked-after in different geographical regions to where they said they would like to go, many places were ruled out for reasons labelled as pragmatic, for instance the distance and time implications this would have. During this phase my own dialogues with staff members regarding the young people being able to gain permission to film in more sensitive places, were often dismissed by workers who preferred a more ad-hoc approach in such

28 PIC used in podwalk cycle can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCKhiVJJA6E>

29 In those places they were able to visit the accompanying staff members would often be encouraged to rush the young person by phone calls received from the residential home indicating that the car/staff member/young person were going to be late for another appointment and the implications this would have on the shift.

locations. This ad-hoc approach worked with varying success; perhaps seeking permission and making arrangements prior to arriving at such places may have resulted in bureaucratic barriers or removed the fluidity of the podwalk filming phase. Regardless of the motives behind such rationales, the young people's invited guests who were staff team members, tended to adopt this ad-hoc approach.

Interestingly though it was implied by introducing podwalking on the *bebook* mission sheet that invited guests could include staff members, this was not intended to be prescriptive. The podwalk PIC repeatedly used the phrase invited guest rather than staff member to avoid this appearing to be a stipulation. Yet all invited guests were members of the young people's staff teams with the exception of Haze's birth mother, who used the trip to her own parent's house (Haze's Grandparents) as a social call.

In reflecting upon the transportation aspect of the planning phase, I would suggest that this influenced young people's podwalk considerably, both in terms of what it enabled, or indeed prevented the young people filming and also saturation of invited guests being care staff. This transport based consideration did mean that staff members were able to become actively involved and invested in facilitating the podwalking process. Unlike *bebook* which became conceptualised as an activity undertaken between the young people and myself, podwalking offered staff members the clear role of invited guest. This assisted the podwalking cycle's success on various levels, not least in fulfilling my own desires for a more consistently available adult to be present throughout, something commented upon as key in conventional life story work (Ryan & Walker, 2007). This also enabled the shared nature of the young person-staff member relationship to be represented during the filming phase and reflected upon in subsequent phases.

7.4.2 Filming phase

This phase offered young people an opportunity to re-connect to the places visited. In recruiting a camcorder to facilitate this phase, each young person had the ability to play an active or passive role in front of and/or the behind lens. The filming phase also gave the accompanying invited guests the opportunity, and in many ways the responsibility to share in this process. There was no set limit to the number of separate occasions the young person could undertake filming sessions; however as highlighted in the pre-planning and planning phase, filming was not without its constraints. These filming trips or 'appointments' as staff members referred to

them, were always fulfilled by the young people. Sporadically arrangements would change on the day. For example it had been arranged for Anne-Marie to travel and film at her best friend Amanda's house. However, on the filming day the girls had fallen out, meaning that filming of Amanda's house was rearranged and Anne-Marie filmed her bedroom instead.

As a way of introducing the young person to this phase, they were given the camcorder to play with around their residential home. This experiential learning opportunity increased familiarity, confidence and a sense of ownership before embarking on the filming phase itself. This was an important aspect because it allowed the young person to develop a sense of responsibility for the camcorder, reinforcing this sense of ownership. It also enabled the young people to practice filming around their home if they chose. In this way residential homes acted as comfortable environments in which to become familiar with the technology and importantly the sharing of narratives on camera. This also enabled the accompanying guest to be briefed and concerns shared. This was important since the staff member playing the role of invited guest was not always an established point of contact for Simon or one he had built up a relationship with. Finally before setting off to begin their first filming trip, the young person was given an additional informal participant briefing. This briefing included restating their rights as participants and a discussion around the rights of members of the public not to be recorded.

The willingness of young people to be camera operator varied considerably during initial, more public filming with many preferring to narrate and direct. In some cases this was due to the young people being embarrassed about standing in a public place filming³⁰. In many cases this led to Simon becoming the camera operator.

As well as an awareness of the cinematic impact of being unable to orientate the camcorder to correspond with narratives about features of the visual environment being shared, Simon's own biases meant he often would position himself and invited guests as unable to keep up with the account being shared. If others on the podwalk apart from the podwalker operated the camcorder, important talk could be lost due to the microphone on the camcorder being too far away from where the narrator was positioned. This would have impacted on the production of the podwalk at a later stage since the young person's voice could become lost. Something to be avoided on both a practical and emancipatory level. A loss of voice due to wind noise did occur

³⁰ The heightened sensitivity of filming in public places seemed to be a contributory factor to this embarrassment, and was certainly an element of this phase that Simon and the accompanying guest were aware of. For this reason as well as walking, filming was also undertaken from the inside of stationary and moving cars.

on some occasions and caused the young people to edit these sections out of their final podwalks. In such cases it was suggested that the young person record a retrospective audio accompaniment for these sections to replace the disrupted audio. This meant that the young people could use their voice to create accounts for the visual environment they had filmed. On each occasion this was something declined by the young people, who showed a preference for deleting this section or replacing the audio layer of lost talk with a favourite song.

7.4.2.1 Implications and role of guest as audience members

During this filming phase guests were the audience with whom the young people shared their stories. In recruiting Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical approach and subsequent theatrical metaphor to locate and inform the role of guest as audience, during the podwalks the places visited presented the young people with a stage on which to produce social performances. These performances were given in front of audiences. Membership to these audiences occurred in three fluid domains, naïve, knowledgeable and future, it is important to differentiate between them since each could potentially impact on the performance given. Here I am reflexively labelling Simon as naïve audience. As outlined previously I had very limited chronological information regarding the young people's past and/or reasons for entering care. The information about places the young people visited and the talk produced was experienced by Simon as primarily a naïve audience. Invited guests who were members of the young person's staff team, are oriented here as primarily knowledgeable audience. Their institutional role required familiarity with the young person's chronology. Having developed a rapport with the young person which saw them selected as invited guests on the podwalks, it was assumed staff members knew the young person well and that they had some knowledge regarding how places visited might be experienced as meaningful.

The domain of future audience to social performances given during the filming phase were embodied by the ICT recruited to record it. As well as functioning as a storage device and being constructed as a symbolic representation of power due to its ability to enable the holder to orientate the lens and indeed gaze of the audience where desired. The camcorder also provided a constant link to the future audiences. When questioned about this audience's membership, young people often referred to it as made up of people who they would show the finished podwalk DVD. These potential audience members included fellow residents, staff members, wider peer groups and birth family members. The dynamic and powerful influence audiences

had on the filming phase of the podwalks will be analysed later in this chapter. Attention now turns towards the editing and production phase of the process.

7.4.3 Editing and production phase

After the filming phase had finished young people were invited to visit the University to edit the footage they had filmed. This tended to occur on weekdays after school and before the residential homes meal times. Chris (17) edited his podwalk unaccompanied on his day off from college. Due to the distance between her home and the University, Anne-Marie (15) and her Key Worker Sabrina tied this phase into a weekend shopping trip to the city centre. The invitation to attend this phase was also extended to invited guests, enabling them to act as a possible future resource for the reconstruction and retelling of this phase. This phase tended to orientate around a central question; what makes a 'good' story? Whilst an awareness of the broad and empirical connotations of this question is demonstrated by this process focused section, this question was critical during the editing and production phase. This theme featured, though not always overtly, through the various phases of the podwalks undertaken but became particularly salient in this phase, a point examined later in this chapter.

It is important to note that the young people had the potential to delete or edit heavily the data they had recorded. This was something Simon was aware of as an invested researcher, anxious at the potential loss of valuable data, but also as a former practitioner keen for the young people to produce an end product that was both desirable and meaningful. Balancing this invested interest Simon had to also keep in mind that these were not his stories to tell. For such reasons the young people were encouraged to take up editorial control managing the computer and associated software. The amount of editing varied. Some young people included all aspects filmed, while others carried out more fine grain editing in an attempt to produce a more cinematically pleasing end product. Once this editing had finished the production phase would begin. This involved the young people deciding in what order the short video clips would appear in the finished DVD. They were also encouraged to create associated aesthetic elements such as titles, credits, transition graphics, and music between their short clips. In so doing the young people were encouraged to bring in their favourite CD, which almost all did.

During the editing and production phase the role of the invited guest varied. Some would be responsible for facilitating attendance, returning when the young person had finished. Others attended the sessions, offering advice and comments of their own. Control over selecting

footage to be included and left out meant the young people had power to produce representations of relationships. As highlighted in *Chapter 6: bebook: Promoting reflective dialogues with adolescents in residential care*, representations of staff members in on-going professional relationships which are produced by young people can impact upon professional identities and reputations. For those staff members that attended and in some cases featured in clips being edited, the potency of future audience viewings and possible implications became more sensitised and powerful. They, and indeed Simon, had a stake in presenting idealised versions of their characters to audiences (Goffman, 1959). Who and how the young people's podwalk DVD would be viewed was not only the preserve of the young person, the DVD captured a situated representation of the interpersonal relationship between the young person, invited guest and Simon. The invited guest as audience were selected by the young person with both the PIC and *bebook* mission sheet (see figure 13) suggesting that this decision be informed by talking to: "...key worker/staff member you feel close to..." The situated exchanges between young person and staff member had the potential to represent their interpersonal relationship across situational, positional and ideological levels (Doise, 1986). The discursive resources and implications used to negotiate and locate this editorial power are explored further later.

The phased podwalk process and its nested nature as a discrete research cycle occurring within a larger on-going action research project, allowed the opportunity for further reflective dialogues to be analysed. This was enabled due to the time constraints of the editing and production phase in that once the young person's footage was edited and the finished podwalk was ready to produce the data would be burnt to a DVD. This would take anywhere between 45-90 minutes depending upon the file size and inherent complexity of the podwalk produced³¹. For such reasons Simon arranged to deliver the young people's podwalk DVDs to their residential homes upon his next visit. On reflection the premiere and time capsule phase of the podwalk process and indeed the analysis of the talk it triggered would not have been recorded if DVDs could have been produced quicker. The nested nature of the overarching research project coupled with this production time lag, created an opportunity to deliver the DVDs and for reflective dialogues triggered whilst watching them to be recorded.

³¹ File size is usually related to the complexity, type and length of the file created. Therefore, if additional music and editing had been added to the young person's podwalk, the size of the file increased and as would time taken to transfer or 'burn' of the completed podwalk to the DVD.

7.4.4 Premiere and time capsule phase

The premiere element of this phase refers to the first showing of the young people's DVDs, whereas the time capsule element refers to the ability for the DVD to be viewed numerous times after Simon's relationship with the young people had ended. In this phase Simon would visit the homes of the young people and present their final podwalk DVDs to them along with a podwalk certificate (see appendix 8). On these visits Simon would tend to get greeted by the enthusiastic young people who knew he had with him their finished podwalk DVDs. The social act of watching the DVDs differed; some young people hosted 'public' screenings, whilst others were more private. Those who opted for more private screenings held either 'invited' screenings, in which those who the young person selected were allowed to attend. Alternatively there were those young people who preferred, in the first instance at least, to view their DVD alone. This final phase of the podwalk process tended to signal the beginning of Simon's withdrawal from the homes and indeed the ending of his relationships with the young people. The delivery of the podwalk DVDs, associated certificate and reward for taking part in the podwalk, provided a suitable closure to the podwalk process but also the overarching action research project, discussed at length in *Chapter 5: Methodology*. The ability for DVDs to be produced as a result of the podwalk process was an intention from the outset due to its life story focus. Such a product allows for its contents to be continually reconstructed and reassigned meaning through longer term reflective dialogues. The premiere and time capsule phase provides a recognisable end point for the podwalk process, yet also marked the beginning of its potential longer term impact.

7.5 The analysis of talk

7.5.1 Analytical framework

Attention in this chapter now toggles to analysing talk elicited by the podwalk process and captured by its recruited methods. Locating occasions of talk stimulated by the podwalk process is done with an appreciation that discourses relating to power, ownership, relationships and audiences transcended each podwalk phase and indeed the interpersonal relationships with which they relate. As shown in figure 14, discourses sensitised throughout the process are located within the phase in which they emerged as most prominent in talk. The talk triggered is located and analysed, though not exclusively at a situational level according to the levels of

analysis provided by Doise (1986), as shown in figure 1. At this level, Doise (1986) considers situational relationships in context. In accordance with this level of analysis this section seeks to analyse the sharing of narratives via the ICT recruited in the podwalk experience and associated relationships.



Figure 14: Locates each phase of podwalk process developed as driven by the methods used. This representation also introduces discourses sensitised throughout the process and locates them where they became most prominent in talk.

Talk is understood and analysed in the context of situational relationships and will be examined with a focus upon the discursive work undertaken by the young people in the making and remaking of autobiographical narratives. In line with this discursive psychological lens, the primary interest of the analysis is in the telling and the occasion of telling, rather than in the life which came before the social act of telling (Edwards, 1997: Gergen, 1994: Taylor, 2010), since talk is the site in which identities are negotiated and taken up (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). This section will also draw upon elements of Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical approach, which argues that human actions are dependent upon time, place, and audience. Goffman's (1959) work provides a way of locating social performers and indeed their social performances, as delivered on negotiated front and back stages, whilst allowing the relationship elements and

performances for differing audience members to be considered in relation to the co-construction of the young person's accounts. The potential of the podwalking approach and DVD to act as a trigger for joint remembering (Edwards & Middleton, 1986), since autobiographical memory is socially constructed (Pasupathi, 2001) is also examined.

There is a need to establish a distance between conventional life story work, podwalking as a process and this analysis of talk. This distinction is necessary because of the location of the analytical interest being in the talk of social performers during an occasion of telling and performance. This is contrary to conventional life story work which focuses upon the experiences and events a young person's talk purports to describe. Podwalking sought to encourage young people to furnish their autobiographical narrative accounts with reflective triggers, triggers from which they could begin to share accounts with those around them in the present and future. In line with social constructionist and discursive psychological principles, this active construction of self-narratives was seen to encourage a continuity of connections from past to present and in some cases future projections. This is not an attempt to discount the therapeutic potential of the podwalk process, on the contrary this is precisely why the approach was developed and evaluated in this research. Podwalking granted young people an audience, communicative medium and opportunity to visit and share reflections about places they deemed important. This may have had therapeutic benefits but due to a lack of counselling expertise, this was not a commissioned piece of work in the conventional sense of the term life story work. The participant led ethos throughout the podwalking process was in contrast with traditional life story approaches, which sees the young person's role in the production of their autobiographical narrative as more prescribed due to its commissioned nature.

7.5.2 Negotiating power

The spontaneity and informality by which podwalking was introduced to staff members in the pre-planning element of the pre-planning and planning phase meant that talk in this aspect of the podwalk cycle was unavailable³². However, by introducing the idea of podwalking within the context of the facilitative *bebook* relationship, negotiations of the planning element of this phase were recorded and therefore open to analysis.

The podwalk process aimed to empower young people to take control over their autobiographical narrative accounts, but at the same time the process had to function within the

³² I was not about to ask for permission to record conversations over the phone or when signing into the homes visitor book.

situated institutional constraints of residential care. This care setting relies upon hierarchical power structures. These structures orientate power and subsequently control towards the domain of the staff team members. Through the introduction of the podwalking process and its attempts to create empowerment, talk became sensitised towards the power dynamics of the young person-carer relationship. A power shift that empowers young people can be facilitative of the very goals that such care settings and inherently their situated relationships strive for. Yet this shift is contradictory to the conventional power dynamics of young people-carer dyads and protectionist discourses (Jack, 1997; Spratt, 2001). Extract 10 taken from an exchange during the planning phase, begins to illustrate discursive strategies used to reposition power, also serving to unpack the unease with which this paradoxical power shift was experienced in the relationship context.

Extract 10

Rose: We'll have to look at the shift ↑won't we? (.) We ma::y have to
 get someone else in=cos we'll be out a go:::od (0.5) few hours
 [won't we?]

Simon:[Yeah (1.0) Do [you want]

June: [best to go] in the office
 (.)

Simon: Do you want to do [that Phil?]

Rose: [↑Yeah we::ll] go in the office
 (0.9)

Simon: Okay
 (0.4)

Rose: ↑↑It might have to be th::e (.) Easter↑ weekend wont it (.)I
 suppose?

Pre-planning and planning phase: Rose and June (staff) and Simon, also present Phil 15

In extract 10, which took place in the dining room of the Gateford Road site, the geographical relocation of June's talk "[best to go] in the office" evidences how once the young people had selected their chosen guest the logistics of planning the filming phase often became quickly dominated by the staff members. In the extract Rose's talk begins to position Phil, and to a lesser extent Simon, in the account being created as partners working through the problem together³³. In recruiting what Davis and Harré (1990) called interactive positioning, Rose's repeated use of "we" functions to position Phil and Simon as equals. At a situational level this enables the institutional power difference permeating Phil and Rose's relationship to be lessened. Rose's talk does refer to the labels associated with the institutional location of their shared relationship by her use of: "shifts". However this term is bookended by her uses of the inclusive positioning term: "we". In this situated talk Rose asks a question which she does not wait for the answer to, in many ways this works to underline the positioning elements of it. The question is rhetorical in both its use and content. In this way Rose's talk offers Phil the position as part of the team solving the problem.

In this way Rose's talk issues Phil with the opportunity to use the discourse associated with the institutional context of the subject position offered. Once offered this position Phil was invited to consult regarding the shift patterns of the home, something mainly resonating in the domain of staff members and this associated position of power. Latterly Rose encourages him to influence the provisioning of extra staff members to cover the shift: "We ma::y have to get someone else in". This invitation though also issued in Simon's presence, was reissued to Phil exclusively by Simon's talk, working up Phil's power and control in the exchange. This invitation is however prematurely interrupted by June's statement: "[best to go] in the office". In returning to the work of Davies and Harré (1990), the usefulness of positioning theory in this level of analysis is underlined. They stated positioning theory serves to: "...direct our attention to a process by which certain trains of consequences, intended or unintended, are set in motion." (Davies & Harré, 1990: 266).

In analysing June's talk a train of social consequence can be explored. Pragmatically June's directional and persuasive talk to relocate the geographical site of the ensuing interaction to the office works as an instructional device. Diaries, rotas and other institutional props are kept in the offices of residential homes, and such items would be needed to discuss logistics of the filming

³³ As established in *Chapter 5: Methodology*, I deliberately worked to maintain a dynamic role within the home, passing to and from positions as a former worker, researcher and visitor to the homes.

trip being planned. So instead of having to bring all those items into the dining room and subsequently having to go back for any forgotten items, the proponents of talk could go to them. Yet by analysing June's talk more closely in the situational context, the talk's train of consequence emerge. This instruction was issued to geographically relocate the future direction of the talk into the office.

Access to offices in residential homes can be restricted, and are mainly occupied by staff members. These rooms are the hub of a working residential home; because of the frequent number of staff members working in such offices, young people are attracted to them. In locating these spaces within Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical approach, the office in residential homes can provide workers with a backstage. Ironically it is the relaxed atmosphere of the backstage and presence of staff members which draw young people towards them.

In June's talk her relocating instruction silences Phil's voice from the account, undermining the position offered to him. By instructing the relocation of this dialogue to a region of the house entrenched with the hierarchical and institutionally based power associated with staff members, the potential of Phil's voice to be heard as equal diminishes. June's interruption of Simon's invitation to Phil also adds to the strength of this redistribution of power. By instructing a move to the office, June's talk begins to remove some of the neutrality offered by the living room and Rose's positioning of Phil as equal. A second invitation for Phil to contribute to this exchange and rework up a position within it as equal are again interrupted, however this time by Rose: "[↑Yeah we::11] go in the office". This statement still contains some positioning elements by her use of the word "we::11" to describe the collective group having the conversation. Noticeable by its continued absence in this exchange was Phil's voice. Though physically present during the conversations extract 10 is taken from, Phil remains silent. By negotiating the geographical site of talk and the closing down of alternative positions on offer within it, this exchange serves to illustrate how traditional power dynamics experienced in this institutionalised setting were maintained.

7.5.3 Empowerment via ownership

A central aspect of the young people led podwalk process was to reposition how power was experienced by care populations through the promotion of ownership opportunities. This was not always successful as the analysis of extract 10 illustrates. Opportunities to engage and promote ownership were present throughout the podwalk process, with the filming phase particularly presenting opportunities for ownership to be worked up, and with it, power repositioned. The analysis of the following exchange from Billie's podwalk illustrates how promoting ownership and with it the repositioning of power, can have beneficial consequences for eliciting accounts.

During the filming phase, in order to engage reluctant young people as camera operators, Simon would regularly disclose his inability to keep up with the narrative being shared. Simon often interrupted the young person acting as narrator in order to gain some directions as to where the features of the narratives took place, and hence fulfil his role as camera operator. In doing so he was able to offer the position of camera operator to the young people, due to his inability to perform both the position of camera operator and audience. By utilising what Davis and Harré (1990) called reflective positioning, the position of camera operator was offered to the young person. An example of this positioning and the subsequent negotiation between a camera operator and podwalker is evidenced by extract 11. This extract is taken from Billie's podwalk, after Simon had made several unsuccessful attempts to reposition Billie as camera operator. In extract 11 Billie is sharing a narrative from an industrial estate in which he and friends play 'man hunt' and is explaining the games rules³⁴

³⁴ 'Man hunt' has similar rules to that of traditional hide and seek, but involves the person who is on tagging the person hiding and returning to base before they can.

Extract 11

Billie: This bit is, (0.6) whe:re (0.4) we'll (.) count mostly, (.)

[all the way] up there ((points in front of camera lens))

Simon: [Do you have] like a specific place where you sta:rt then?

Billie: Yeah you start counting (.) >where that blue fence is<

right at the ↑to:p,

(0.6)

Simon: Mm (.) 'ang on a sec ((altering zoom on camera)) (.) do you wanna-

(.) cos you're telling the story do you wanna, (.) grab it?

Billie: ↑Right at the to:p

Simon: Ri[:ght you] ((passing camcorder))

Billie: [FOR GOD'S]=((taking camcorder))=SAKE you're useless you are,

Simon: I am useless

(.)

Billie: There's the bloody gate see that gate there [yeah]

Simon: [Yeah]=yeah

(0.4)

Billie: That one (.) that's the one we:'ll go to,

Simon: Right,

(1.8)

Billie: A::d, (.) we'll bike round in `e:re, (1.2) on our, (.) (push

bi::kes) y' know (.) cos we i:s clever

Simon: °Huh°

(0.6)

Billie: >Ah we come down 'ere once in the winter< (0.4) and there was a
bloke in his ca:r, (.)>he was at that blue [ga:te] he come=

Simon: [Yeah]

Billie: =fly::ing up 'e:re, yeah< (.) I was biking on this pavement >he
there he come there<, (.) you done a bloody handbrake ↑tu:rn mate
doing ↑douhgnuts I thought he was going to ↑crash into [↑me,]

Simon: [Huh] huh

Filming Phase: Billie 15 and Simon

In the extract Simon's talk indicates an inability to perform the role of camera operator and audience by interrupting the account being given through requesting directional information: "[Do you have] like a specific place where you sta:rt then?". In responding to this question Billie's performance provides Simon and future audiences with additional information in an attempt to clarify this query. This talk also enables Billie to direct Simon as camera operator whilst answering the question: "Yeah you start counting (.) >where that blue fence is< right at the ↑to:p,". In this way Billie as director provides Simon as camera operator and audience with two additional pieces of information. Billie reflectively positions himself as director and by virtue of this talk, manages Simon's position as camera operator, maintaining his own as director and narrator.

This example of what Davis and Harré (1990) called interactive positioning, is successful because of the occasioned nature of talk. On Billie's podwalk only he and Simon were present. By positioning himself and Simon in this way, Billie is able to maintain the status-quo of their relationship and their roles within this phase of the podwalk process. This talk meant that Simon continued as before and began to attempt to follow Billie's directorial information. Despite this Simon reoffers the position of camera operator to Billie. On this occasion Simon's talk works up his lack of mastery as camcorder operator, coupled with an invitation for Billie to work up his position of power through narrative ownership and orientating the camera's lens. These are subtly done in Simon's talk by stating his needing to halt the account to find the features of Billie's directions: "'ang on a sec ((altering zoom on camera)) (.) do you wanna-

(.) cos you're telling the story do you wanna, (.) grab it?". On this occasion Simon's repositioning is successful and results in Billie becoming the camera operator.

In revisiting Simon's repositioning talk it featured two pauses in which the position of camera operator is tentatively offered to Billie, both used as an opportunity for Billie to take the position and power associated with it rather than being given it. When this does not occur the talk becomes more directional "grab it?" the instruction is for Billie to "grab" the camcorder and associated power, not to be given it. Billie accepts the position of camera operator and accounts for taking this up due to the Simon's inability to successfully fulfil this role. He seeks to reaffirm Simon's lack of mastery and therefore work up his own position by repeating the direction of the insult within talk: "[FOR GOD'S]= ((taking camcorder))=SAKE you're useless you are,". In this way Billie ensured Simon could follow the direction of his talk on this occasion and accept the lack of power associated with being positioned as: "useless". The position of "useless" dictated through Billie's interactive positioning was accepted and reinforced by Simon's own reflective positioning: "I am useless".

Statements which surround the power of adult researchers to 'give voice' to child or adolescent participants has been well documented (Mayall 2002; Renold & Barter 2003). Perhaps it is not about 'giving' but encouraging these groups to take the tools which allow their voices to be heard. This value of this giving is illustrated by extract 11. The repositioning of power experienced during Billie's filming impacted upon his subsequent narrative sharing. In this extract the point in which Billie begins to zoom back and hence assert his control over the camera, his social performance becomes assured. As camera operator Billie embraces the power and growing mastery associated with his new position. This change of performance is accompanied discursively through a confident declaration in his account, denoted in extract 11 by: "cos we i:s clever". In having accepted the position of camera operator Billie changes how he expresses his talk. His narrative account becomes more detailed, emotive and dynamic. In the narrative shared which began with ">Ah we come down 'ere once in the winter<" there is a notable increase in the speed of his talk. The performance becomes more confident. In this way Billie's ability to generate narrative is enhanced since he is no longer interrupted by a camera operator seeking direction. His account and therefore his performed autobiographical narrative becomes ensconced in additional detail.

Attempts to reposition power via the use of technological advocacy are gaining increasing attention as the range of digital media continues to expand (Thackeray & Hunter, 2010). In extract 11, the role of camera operator in influencing how power was experienced becomes overt. This can be seen through the relationship generated by the podwalk process, and in the context of the situational relationship it generates. Although in this context Billie as the podwalker had the power associated with the roles of narrator and director he was still reliant upon the camera operator's cooperation. He could narrate and direct, but the success of this performance and its power to represent a given account was reliant upon the camera operator. It was they who controlled the lens of the camcorder and with it gaze. Yet the position of camera operator does not in itself have inherent power residing within it; it is in many ways the antithesis of a subordinate, one who follows directions. Within the exchange in extract 11, being able to control audiences gaze could be constructed as powerful. However, the role of camera operator only becomes segregated in talk from director and/or narrator when mistakes are made. At this point talk focuses upon realigning the visual with the director's and/or narrator's talk.

The filming phase offered the young people the opportunity to re-connect to the places they had negotiated and chosen to visit; these social performances needed an audience. As will be illustrated, the role of the guest as audience had the potential to facilitate the co-construction of the young person's connection to place. Conversely, a disengaged audience could hamper the account being created by the young person. Elements of this are illustrated by the exchange between Simon and Billie. Instead of the focus of the audience³⁵ being on Billie's relationship to this place, this section of his podwalk becomes oriented towards the relationship dynamic between a reluctant camera operator and a frustrated director.

Billie's podwalk was markedly different from others undertaken across the sample. For various reasons Billie and Simon were the only two people involved in the filming phase of his podwalk. The relationship between Billie and Simon was being continually negotiated and renegotiated during the filming. Simon needed to be an engaged audience as well as the camera operator responsible for recording Billie's social performance. When he could not do this, their talk became about their relationship rather than about the potential for Billie to reconnect to place. For such reasons the continual negotiation of positions became more important as there was no other immediate individual who could become audience during filming. This was not the case in

35 In this case most immediately Simon. But since this talk was captured on the podwalk's audio, future audiences would also be exposed to this talk and possibly distracted from Billie's account of place.

the other podwalks, in which an accompanying staff member was present. The powerful nature of audience in the reconnecting of young people to place is now explored.

7.5.4 Power and audience: Influences on relationship to place construction

The power of the guest as audience had the potential to facilitate the co-construction of young people's reconnection to place. Conversely a disengaged audience had the power to distract from the account being shared. When an audience becomes disengaged, talk resonates towards the relationship between the audience and performer. This tended to obscure connections to place. In returning to Goffman's (1959) theatrical metaphor, the places visited during the podwalks presented the young people with stages on which to perform. Such stages were filled with potential discursive inducing props, as discussed in the process section of this chapter. According to the work of Goffman (1959) for social performances to be successful, individuals can use props and other actors to convince audiences that their roles are genuine. In this case props acted as reflective triggers from which young people could begin to share autobiographical narrative accounts as social performance with those around them.

In analysing data from 20 narrative interviews undertaken to explore the contemporary importance of place in the lives of her participants, Taylor (2010) refers to what she calls a 'born and bred narrative'. This narrative resource is the history implied in references to origins and roots; being able to claim being from a certain area. In using this discursive-narrative approach Taylor (2010) views narratives as discursive resources. These narratives have subject positions attached to them which one can orientate towards, or distance oneself from. In agreement with the work of Davis and Harré (1990), Wetherell (1998) commented that one can be both positioned by others and by the self. Available narratives make certain identities, normative sequences and value positions available to social performers (Wetherell, 1998). In revisiting their old neighbourhoods and places that were important to them, young people were provided with opportunities to construct, claim and reclaim connections to place via narrative accounts produced. Through being able to construct and share knowledge of geographical areas young people were able to position themselves and others as being 'from' certain neighbourhoods, working up and negotiating identities as desired. For this group of young people, being able to use a range of discursive props to furnish narrative accounts with detail which constructed their temporal connection to said props and indeed the neighbourhoods was particularly salient. In

this, way the use of props during podwalks enabled the construction of relationships to place. It also recorded representations of props visually making them available to future reconstructions.

The key to a successful social performance is the ability to convince audience members that the roles being played are genuine. In applying this rule to podwalking, a successful performance relied upon being able to construct an account which convinced audience members of a genuine connection to place. Extract 12 begin to illustrate the use of props in claiming connections to place. The extract itself is taken from Ivy's podwalk, in which she was accompanied by Simon and Ivy's invited guest, staff member Kim. This tripartite relationship was more typical of the interpersonal dynamic situated in the podwalk process, enabling the power of audience to be examined more closely. The extract will be used to explore the use of props and the dynamic and powerful influence of audience.

Extract 12

Ivy: ↑↑That's the field I had my tenth bi:rthday party there,

(0.4)

Simon: In there?

Ivy: In the field yeah

Simon: ↑Awesome

Ivy: We got (.) >you need to turn< left=

Kim: =°Belt on,°

Ivy: I don't need to put my belt on

(0.6)

Simon: You will do if Kim's driving,

Ivy: Ar:h as if they still live there stop at the blue garage just stop

here(.)that's my o:ld house (.)at the blue garage just keep going a

little bit, (0.4) stop you see that X ma:rk?

Simon: Yes

Ivy: My Dad did that

(0.8)

Ivy: Ages ago: and all th- all the ma:rks in it my sister did, (.) a:nd
tha:t's (.) the (.) the [↑]ga:te never used to be there (.) but
everythink else used to be, and [↑]number fou:r is my Mum's mate Dia (.)
[Diana] she lives [↑]there (.)

Simon: [Yeah]

Ivy: [↑]U::m (.) <numbe:::r (.) sixty seven,> (.) i:s (.) Mike's old house
th::e number, (.) number one, (0.4) is Vicky's hou:se

Simon: Number [one] Vick:y?

Ivy: [No]

Ivy: Number o:ne's Vicky number two is gay Pa:ul's old (.) hou:se, (.) he
used to live there with his mum (.) you know gay [↑]Paul, (0.4) we're
[↑]not mo:ving, so I don't need my seatbelt on (.)[↑]you know gay Paul
don't you Kim? (0.4) yea:h you can talk you know (0.4) you don't need
to (.) m:ess about like a spaz

Kim: >hhhhhh<=

Simon: =°That's outrageous°

Kim: Not PC

Simon: I can't believe it=

Ivy: =Right keep going now [↑]bye old hou:se (.) my old bedroom's at the back

Simon: Is it? [↑] (0.4) [what at]the fie:ld?

Ivy: [Yea:h] Yeah (.) Go up, (.) slowly (0.4)

°that's that's Maz's° (.) sister's house (.) that's Mrs Brown's
house, >go slowly< that's Becky's house

Filming phase: Ivy 15, Kim (staff) and Simon

In this exchange Ivy begins to construct her connection to this place as historical. She works up knowledge of how specific props were created in the past and maintained in the present via the: "x ma:rk". Her claim to this position in her talk is made stronger by the characters in the narrative being immediate family relations: "My Dad did that". Furthermore, she also illustrates how "the ga:te never used to be there (.) but everythink else used to be", information available only to a select few. The current occupiers may not know the gate was not an original feature. Ivy constructs a relationship to place due to the timeframe in which the narrative shared is nested. She uses the narrative shared to set up a connection to place and also an element of her past. The speaker presents a memory, and the act of remembering as evidence of a relationship to this place (Edwards & Middleton, 1986). The dynamic and powerful influence of audiences on given social performance and inherently constructions of connections to place also emerge, both in a facilitative and damaging way. In the exchange about the "x ma:rk" the audience being addressed, in this case Simon, reacts in a way which is predictable and simple for the performer to manage. Had the audience reacted with a 'no' the response elicited may have orientated the audiences gaze to the location of the prop. By being engaged the audience allows Ivy's relationship to place to be further constructed in her talk.

The label of audience has multiple meanings running throughout the podwalk process. During the planning phase for example, awareness was shown towards the desired construction of the finished product. The presence of this audience or indeed the idea of this audience's presence had the power to shape accounts produced. This co-constructive element influences what is talked about, what sort of interpretive statements and emotions are connected with the event as it is discussed (Pasupathi, 2001). The different domains of audience are explored in more detail at a later point in this chapter.

According to Goffman (1959), conventionally an audience would not be aware of backstage work. Yet during the podwalking process some potential audience members could become involved in this work at various points. In extract 12 Kim was an audience member with this potential. The role of audience here becomes increasingly complex, since in comparison to

Simon and his research-based relationship with Ivy, Kim's relationship is influenced by professional and institutionally based boundaries. Kim frequently reported her desire not to be recorded, stressing her discomfort at hearing her own voice at various points. In considering Kim's reluctance to reveal her backstage presence on the front stage it is suggested that this may be linked to the on-going negotiation of professional boundaries, since when Kim's talk does permeate beyond this negotiated back region, its emergence is concentrated upon fulfilling professionalised responsibilities. In this case, this is played out through interrupting Ivy's account and instructing her to put her: "°BeIt on°.

Ironically, this professionalised identity does not continue beyond its boundary maintenance and begins to inhibit Kim's role as engaged audience member. Moments after the exchange relating to the "x ma:rk", the disruptive power of a disengaged audience emerges. During this account Ivy speaks of others who inhabited the same place at the same point in time as she did. In so doing she seeks to engage staff member Kim as what Goffman (1959:88) would call a team mate: "...someone whose dramaturgical cooperation one is dependent upon in fostering a given definition of the situation." Ivy attempts to recruit Kim as a supportive team mate, someone to strengthen her social performance and consequently her constructed relationship to place. Ivy issues an invitation to Kim to emerge from the back region in a facilitative fashion, one which moved beyond the professionalised nature of Kim's front stage involvement.

As illustrated in extract 12 the discursive consequences of a physical presence yet discursive absence, underlines Goffman's (1959) comments regarding the damage done to a social performance by unsupportive team mates. Ivy issues two separate positional invitations to Kim as a team mate. Kim's role in this team is to support Ivy's construction of "gay Pa:ul" and concurrently her relationship to place through her knowledge of its inhabitants. Yet Kim, invited and positioned by Ivy as a team mate, maintains her silence. The potential of Kim's failure to accept Ivy's invitation becomes potentially damaging to the account being constructed since as Goffman (1959: 91) states: "Once the teams stand has been taken, all members, may be obliged to follow it." This causes Ivy to reissue this invitation "yea:h you can talk you know (0.4)", an invitation which again fails to elicit talk. In an attempt to repair damage done by Kim, Ivy continues: "you don't need to (.)". After a brief pause, seemingly a last invitation for Kim to contribute, Ivy distances herself from her former team mate through issuing a parting insult claiming Kim was: "m:ess (ing) about like a spaz". Goffman's (1959:89) concept of social actors as team mates, underlines why the discursive repair work was undertaken by Ivy:

“..it is just because he is part of the team that he can cause this kind of trouble.” If Ivy had not positioned Kim as a team mate, the damage inflicted by Kim’s silence would not have needed as much repair. In considering Kim’s discursive absence and yet physical presence during Ivy’s repeated invitations in extract 12 the power of different audience members emerges. Additionally when Kim does emerge discursively onto this front stage it is again through the claiming of a professionalised identity via boundary negotiation: “Not PC”.

In contrast to the facilitative response issued by Simon, Kim as a disengaged member of Ivy’s audience distracts from the social performance being given. Instead of assisting Ivy’s construction, Kim as a disengaged audience not only impacts upon the account being produced but also diverts talk from place construction to their relationship. The nature of the responses given by Kim to Ivy’s repeated invitations were in themselves particularly damaging. By remaining silent Kim gives no talk for Ivy to respond to. A denial could have been repositioned; an admission of not remembering could have prompted Ivy to issue additional information to furnish the account. As an audience, to remain silent when prompted is a powerful sign and on many occasions will lead to the ending of a performance. Performers can either attempt to repair aspects of their performance or leave the stage. In the podwalking context leaving the stage and concurrently place prematurely was particularly undesirable, since the idea of visiting each place was to construct some sense of reconnection to it. Yet after this exchange Ivy’s position upon stage becomes untenable.

Moments later Ivy begins to leave the stage by issuing the following instruction to Kim as the driver of the car: “=Right keep going now”. As this action begins to take effect Ivy gives her audience a final chance to save her performance stating: “my old bedroom’s at the back”. Simon responds to this prompt, offering to co-construct an account. By using his knowledge of the orientation of Ivy’s old bedroom in relation to the site of her tenth birthday party, featured in the opening exchange in extract 12, he works to position himself as an engaged audience member³⁶. Distancing him from the disruptive position he had become orientated to via demonstrating his previous attentiveness, Simon works up his position as attentive audience once more. Like all good performers Ivy is not one to leave an audience wanting and accepts

36 In reviewing this account I cannot claim to remember what I was thinking at the time, to do so would be misleading. In writing this I would suggest that I was invested and that reengaging Ivy in this account was desirable, using her “old bedroom” prop worked to achieve this.

the position offered, continuing her performance and consequently her reconnecting to place. Despite this the account relating to Ivy's old bedroom remained absent.

In beginning to consider the podwalk process as digital life story work the nature of undertaking this particular podwalk within a moving car becomes more pertinent, as too does its impact upon the narrative produced. The car was leaving the stage much quicker than if this podwalk was undertaken on foot. If audience members had a more therapeutic alliance, the generation of different narratives could have been facilitated by dwelling more closely on Ivy's old bedroom and indeed other places visited on podwalks undertaken. Time restrictions, constraints and institutional demands when undertaking the filming phase of the podwalk process within residential care settings emerge. Undertaking this podwalk within a car allowed for more ground to be covered and in so doing a greater range of narratives to be told. Alas processes need to be based upon quality of the sharing experience rather than quantity of narratives.

7.5.4.1 Influence of audience domains on performance

As outlined previously audience membership orientated across three fluid domains naive, knowledgeable and future, each of which had the power to be facilitative and distractive. Typically the filming phase was experienced in the immediate as a tripartite relationship since the young person, their invited guest and Simon were immediately present during the majority of the filming. The invited guest and Simon were mainly situated in the knowledgeable and naive domains respectively. Explicitly recognised was also the possible presence of fluid future audiences, embodied by the camcorder and with the potential to be both naive and knowledgeable.

In conceptualising the podwalk process as a vehicle to engage adolescents in conversations akin to conventional life story work approaches, attention needs to be focused on how social performance can be constructed as credible. Goffman (1959) states that the aim for any performance is for it to be believed. He continued, suggesting that this authenticity of performance is desired by both the performers themselves and by members of its audience. In approaches to undertaking life story work, the authenticity of life stories created is vital. Fahlberg (1994) suggests that this can help steer the child from fantasy thinking, which she conceptualises as when the child rejects certain truths in an attempt to construct a more favourable view of events. Whilst the age of the care population she refers to is different from

the one with which podwalking seeks to engage, the work of Fahlberg (1994) does present a possible dilemma for knowledgeable members of the podwalk audience. In seeking to work up editorial power located in the podwalker role, seemingly this can open up possibilities for reconstructing events which may feature frequent occasions of Fahlberg's (1994) 'fantasy thinking'. Yet Goffman (1959) states that performers will attempt to present idealised versions of their characters which reflect the values of society. One could argue then that when the editorial power becomes relocated with the podwalker Fahlberg's (1994) fantasy thinking may arise. Such terminology would appear to require the young person to be steered away from what Goffman (1959) suggests we all do as social performers, that is, to present idealised versions of our characters. Ergo presenting oneself in the best possible light is not a phenomenon exclusive to care populations. Furthermore, discursive psychology does not treat memory as emerging from an underlying or testable truth (Edwards & Potter, 1992). Individual's memories which are truth telling are products of talk that perform as truth telling (Edwards & Middleton, 1986).

Despite seeking to create opportunities to reposition how power was experienced and in this context reassign editorial power, the institutional nature of the situational relationships between the young person and the staff member impacted upon performances given. As Goffman (1959:216) suggests: "...the performer will have to take into consideration the information the audience already has about him." In this context the editorial power of the social work professional still manifested itself via the pre-existing knowledge present in the audience domain of those labelled as knowledgeable by the performer. This point will be considered using a podwalk undertaken by Chris 17, Jez (staff member) and Simon. The following extract and clip were created by Chris and demonstrate how audience domains impact upon performances during podwalks. Extract 13 portray an account given in the presence of Simon, Jez representing the knowledgeable audience domain in this case, is more distant from where the performance is given. During Chris's podwalk he chose to return to his cousin Davy's garage, a place he states he used to visit as little boy with his Dad. Though the garage itself was locked up there were cars under covers out the front which Chris begins to describe.

Extract 13

Chris: I- if you look yea::h, (0.4) you got his (.) other \uparrow ca::r, (.) which
is (4.6) which is the::re,
(0.4)

Simon: Is that an old Fiesta?

Chris: I Dunno,

(1.8)

Simon: Er:::r looks like a Fiesta

(0.4)

Chris: You got his other car which is there (.) a:::nd, (1.6) you've got, (.)

his other one, (.) which is there as well (2.2) it's that white one-
that red one the:re, (0.4) yea:h (0.4) that red one there used to be
mine (1.0) ['til it] broke

Simon: [Really?]

(.)

↑↑Did it?

Chris: Yeah I used to race ((spits))

Simon: Oh you're banger, (.) >tell me about your< banger [raci]ng

Chris,

Chris: [Yeah]

(0.4) I used to race until I e:::r had an injury I come out the
front window (0.8) and I landed a:t (0.8) in the back in the
fr- (.) back of Davy's car (0.4)

Simon: A:::r

Chris: Didn't put me harness on properly,

Simon: °Oh dear° (0.6) When was that Chris?

(1.6)

Chris: This was e:r, (0.6) before I moved into Gateford=

Simon: =A::h right

Chris: I was with me Da:d, (2.8) I dunno how the hell he got that ca:r
in that ski:p,

Filming phase: Chris 17 and Simon

Chris's performance on this occasion was given to an immediately present audience orientating in a naive domain and raises important issues if podwalking aims to function as a life story work process. It would appear that extract 13 contains elements of the 'fantasy thinking' of Fahlberg (1994). Yet in a participant driven process which aims to relocate editorial power and hence ownership, to conceptualise this social performance as fantasy thinking alone is short sighted. The exchanges at the beginning of extract 13 show Chris's naïve audience failing to fulfil the naïve requirement through asking a question which demonstrates technical knowledge: "Is that an old Fi_esta?". The question is as much a statement of rhetoric as an inquiry, offering Chris an invitation to validate it. Chris turns down this knowledge and rather than accepting and/or correcting it and risk losing credibility, he creates a neutral position for himself within the exchange. In this way regardless of the resultant exchanges he is neither right nor wrong. Chris relocates the talk to his constructed meaning of the car discussed. In so doing he moves to share a narrative allowing him to perform ownership and mastery in relation to the car identified as "an old Fi_esta?", and making his construction more difficult to challenge.

This narrative may have been embellished with fantasy elements to show his character in an idealised way³⁷ (Goffman, 1959), but as the extract demonstrates his talk did manage to reaffirm his power over the performance. This he accomplished by linking the ownership and mastery features of the narrative produced with temporal elements preceding a move into care, as well as offering a justification for why he ceased racing. He presented a narrative in need of no further questioning. He reinforces its credibility through the relationship he shared with his Dad.

The narratives pre-care timeline and its relationship links to experiences he shared with his Dad make his account harder to challenge and more credible to the naïve audience than his

37 As a reflexive researcher positioned within this analysis and as the naïve audience to which this account was originally produced, I still am unsure as to the authenticity of the events portrayed in Chris's account.

preceding statements of car ownership and racing career. Such features work in creating a more successful performance. By positioning his account as preceding the knowledge held about him by potential future knowledgeable audiences, his carers who may view his finished podwalk, Chris is able to pre-empt future damage to his performance.

Chris saw his podwalk DVD as his way of saying thank you to the staff team at his residential home. As such his performance had to also take into consideration the information that staff members, as knowledgeable audience, already had about him (Goffman, 1959). Chris also positions this account in relation to his late father. Although Simon as naïve audience was not aware of his father's death at the time of the performance, through mentioning a birth family member in his account Chris reinforces his power over the narrative, his relationship to it and the stage on which it occurred.

The sole presence of the naïve audience in extract 13 is in contrast to the rest of Chris's podwalk in which Jez (staff) was present. It could be argued that Chris performed in order to appear as 'cool' to the older researcher, or to present an idealised version of himself (Goffman, 1959). His response to Simon's apparent superior knowledge to an object/place he found important was to produce a performance that could supersede this knowledge. Through widening the level of analysis momentarily and situating the exchange at an ideological level (Doise, 1986), the relative social positions Simon and Chris brought to the situational relationship and their impacts on the flow of the account emerge.

In Western cultures it is suggested that younger members of society are socialised to be respectful to those older than themselves (Giddens, 1997). At this ideological level both were white males, traditionally a demographic towards which power resonates highly (Hartsock, 1983) and both were performing in line with culturally normative ideals of male behaviour (Connell, 2005). However as Giddens (1997) suggests their positions as older and younger, make available certain expectations which could act to furnish each differently. In considering this exchange and its performances of masculinity, theories of hegemonic masculinity and entitlement also need to be addressed. The theory of hegemonic masculinity suggests that there is a culturally normative ideal of male behaviour (Connell, 1987). The theory of entitlement suggests that masculinity is not: "...the experience of power; it is the experience of entitlement to power..." (Kimmel, 2007: 100-1). One could speculate that both white males were from a

working class background, albeit with differing life experiences and educational levels. The key differential here appears to be chronological age.

In returning to this exchange Simon's performance of superior knowledge, according to theories of hegemonic masculinity and power entitlement sought to maintain his dominance over Chris. This dominance was sought to be maintained as a result of Simon's entitlement to power as being both older, male and indeed the combination of these two social categories. Subsequently Chris was a younger member of this society and also a representative of a marginalised group. Entitlement theory would suggest that, as a group, adolescents in care tend not to experience entitlement to power. In this way Chris's talk can be constructed as an act of resistance, an act orchestrated to protect his emerging masculinity in response to the threat Simon's talk poses, rather than simply being a product of fantasy thinking. This threat is most potent in the exchange when Simon repeats his questioning of Chris's former car ownership, ergo his entitlement to claim this position and the masculinity resonating within it. The repetition of Simon's question demonstrates that the social performance on display is losing credibility and with it so too is Chris. This threat is responded to in talk by Chris reaffirming his former car ownership, a statement of masculinity enacted through claiming a racing career and through ending this utterance by spitting: "Yeah I used to race ((spits))"

In the sociocultural habitus of contemporary Western cultures, the social act of spitting is predominantly conceptualised as a social taboo and has come to be associated with adolescent males. In many contexts due to its anti-conformist social connotations, spitting is seen as a display of rebellion and/or disrespect (Lindstrom, 1980). Indeed spitting towards or on someone is one of the most disrespectful things one can do in many Western cultures (Millie, 2008). As situated in the ideological context of the exchange, this spitting accompanies Chris's doing of masculinity through a potent combination of power and ownership following the challenge from an older male. This performance shows Simon that Chris is a powerful male.

This social act worked to demonstrate that any further doubting of his performance or threat to Chris's doing of masculinity was not in Simon's best interests. This was a statement of power, masculinity, ownership of the account and also his connection to place through this narrative. Chris was physically and discursively boundary marking. Neither the account, nor its credibility was to be questioned again. Sensitive to this power display, Simon then moves to reposition

himself as co-constructor in the domain of naivety rather than knowledgeable challenger: "Oh you're banger, (.) >tell me about your< banger [raci]ng Chris"

Before moving to analyse how editorial power manifested itself and was experienced, this account pauses momentarily to acknowledge how audiovisual elements of the filming phase were able to record the social act of spitting and its direction. In so doing the audiovisual data enabled the exchange to be analysed at various levels of analysis. Crucially this also encouraged me as the analyst to revisit the exchange visually as well as discursively, reconnecting with lived experience via audiovisual data and adding to the depth of analysis³⁸.

7.5.5 Constructing meaning: From mundane to meaningful

Once their prevalence ceases the everyday nature of social events can begin to resonate with increased meaning. Casual acquaintances and small talk experienced when commuting to work for example may be missed when one works from home. On podwalks, the everydayness recorded via ICT recorded the place and the characters in that place at a particular point in time. It represented the relationships between place and characters, as well as the relationships between characters present in place at a point in time. Truths are not sought or captured, what is recorded are occasioned social performances. Recorded social performances as audiovisual data can be continually reconstructed and reassigned meaning through talk performed during future viewings. Through these future viewings, meaning can be negotiated and accounts worked up dependent on the goal of the social performance given in the viewing context.

This working up of meaningfulness was demonstrated in the talk produced in extract 14. Extract 14 was taken from a podwalk editing and production phase held one week after Ivy (young person), Kim (staff) and Simon had been filmed Ivy's podwalk. This extract orientates around a section of Ivy's podwalk labelled within it as 'get out the way love'. This section recorded an everyday event, in this case a pedestrian walking out into the road in front of the car Ivy, Kim, and Simon, which occurred during Ivy's podwalk. This seemingly mundane event was preceded by Simon playfully teasing Ivy about the number of former boyfriends she had mentioned in

38 As the analyst and contributor to this account I am powerless to present my own version of my acceptable truth about Chris's performance. I did not challenge Chris about his performance further nor did I question staff members later about his racing career. This is why podwalking as a participatory process works, but also why the focus of analysis is on talk, not what this talk purports to describe.

various places during her podwalk. Having spotted a former boyfriend 'Ben' dressed in a way she deemed embarrassing (Simon holding the camera at the time) was keen to tease Ivy about this, so much so that he proceeded to produce the mock interview. Towards the section of Ivy's podwalk a pedestrian walks out into the road without looking. Yet during the editing and production phase, the clip's meaning begins to be constructed and used by each contributor to extract 14 as a performative resource. Extract 14 illustrates how each person viewing the clip was able to achieve purposeful social action in the now.

Extract 14

Ivy: Heh heh he::h This is when the women walks in front

Kim: ↑↑This is her favour::ite bit you know↑

Ivy: heh heh [heh heh heh]

Kim: [This is her] favourite bit of us (.) and she's got me on
there as well I don't know how that [happen::ed] (.)

Ivy: [Simon's fa:]ult=

Kim: =that is b:ad

Simon: >Well I'm interviewing you pretending to be Ben< (.) it's important
you're on it I think (.) like you were there (.) you're part of the
memory aren't you?

Kim: Yeah well that's alright thought [I don't let (??)]

Ivy: [↑↑Shush Listen] List]en Listen↑ heh
heh (.) You're like ((mimicking Simon's accent)) GET OUT WA:Y LO::VE
heh

Simon: I should have pointed it at her thought should[n't I really]

Ivy: [heh heh heh] heh

Simon: Do you want to e::rm (.) So what we gona call that section?

Ivy: I dunno

Kim: This is my favourite bit of the Podwalk↑ heh

(0.3)

Simon: Ur::m

Ivy: I'm actually not gona put that (.) that's gay

Editing and production phase: Ivy 15, Kim (staff) and Simon

The role of consistent other in collaborative remembering has illustrated how adults aid children's learning of how to remember in conversation via instruction (Edwards & Middleton, 1986; Miller, Mintz, Hoogstra, Fung & Potts, 1992). In traditional life story work the role of the consistently available adult is also widely acknowledged as important (Baynes, 2008; Ryan & Walker, 2007). For Kim, the consistently available adult in this podwalk, the playing of this video clip served as a resource for constructing this particular section of the podwalk as Ivy's favourite.

The importance of this favourite position in the context of residential care and indeed Ivy and Kim's relationship should not be overlooked. In residential care the ability of staff members to enjoy close relationships with the young people with whom they work can be weighted heavily towards popularity (Rees, 2006). Being able to develop and maintain relationships with young people can be a critical part of being a member of a residential team and a strong asset of any individual worker. From outside the four walls of residential homes this basic element can be overlooked. Contemporary preoccupations with professionalism and the comments of Petrie and Simon (2005), indicating that English workers can tend to adopt a procedural approach to working with young people, support this view. However as the comments of Hammond and Cooper (2011b) highlighted, being able to cultivate and maintain relationships with young people can provide a buffer between the young people and an institutionalised procedure orientated care system. The playing of this section of the podwalk in the editing and production phase enabled Kim to work up a construction of the "get out the way love" clip as Ivy's favourite. By virtue of Kim's repeated attempts to position this clip as Ivy's favourite, she too can uptake the privileged position of favourite through her presence within it. This is a valuable position.

Ethnographic research conducted by Emond (2002) in which a research assistant spent six months living in a residential environment, demonstrated that for young people there can be a

noticeable change in atmosphere when unpopular members of staff are on shift. Anecdotally my own experience of working on shift alongside staff members perceived by young people unfavourably, reinforce in this analysis possible gains in being seen as a favourite member of staff. Institutionally, being seen as a favourite member of staff in regards to the work of Emond (2002) would seem to indicate that once worked up as favourite, a staff member may be treated more favourably than those perceived as unpopular. Within this context a favourable staff member may be able to deliver unwelcome news to a young person since they are more likely to be receptive to it as a function of this preferred interpersonal relationship. From a group dynamic perspective it is suggested that a worker on shift with a favoured member of staff would also benefit.

In this way gains made through working up this podwalk section as Ivy's favourite could have benefited Kim's relationship with Ivy, other young people and her colleagues alike. However, as emergent towards the end of extract 14 Kim's repeated attempts to position the section and herself through association as favourite, are dismissed by Ivy. This may be as a result of the damage resulting from her unsuccessful attempt to recruit Simon as what Goffman (1959) called a team mate in her working up of this position. In this account Kim's states: "↑↑This is her favour::ite bit you know↑.[This is her] favourite bit of us". In so doing her talk seeks to position Simon's and her own presence, in effect their team, within the podwalk as favourite. Yet as highlighted previously, an ineffective team member can damage the working up of an account and/or position (Goffman, 1959).

The success of working up this privileged and meaningful position in the longer-term was however enabled due to Kim's presence in the original Podwalk filming. The podwalk's audiovisual format and the inclusion of the "get out the way love" clip in the final edited DVD provided a continual resource for the working up this position. Kim was keen to ensure Ivy included the 'get out the way love' section as part of this finished DVD as shown by extract 14. The talk in extract 15 is taken moments after Ivy had dragged and dropped the clip onto the final podwalk story board, and hence had chosen to include the clip in her final podwalk DVD.

Extract 15

Kim: This this this this is Ivy's favourite one >but she hasn't put
this bit in<

Ivy: ↑↑It is watch it watch it (.)↑watch it (.) heh heh

Editing and production phase: Ivy, 15 and Kim (staff) also present Simon

The negotiations regarding the clip in question, its audiovisual nature and its inclusion in the final podwalk DVD begin to pull together what the clip potentially represented to Ivy. The audiovisual nature of the clip and the relationships performed in it represent social performances at a point in time. The playful performance captured by the clip culminates in an everyday mundane occurrence, a pedestrian walking out into the road. For Ivy, her talk within the section and from the editing and production phase, shown in extracts 14 and 15, begin to illustrate the enjoyment of the filming trip and in her reviewing of the clip. The clip allowed her to revisit the playful social performances given during it and the associated relationships. In this way this narrative's inclusion alongside other perhaps more poignant narratives provides a resource for the retelling of the events from the day of filming. Its inclusion underlines its meaning and potential to stimulate future reflective dialogues about the process itself, perhaps something traditional story books are unable to do adequately. The DVD was able to represent the process within the product itself and allowing the meaningful relationship context to be reflected upon and reconstructed.

7.5.6 Reflection as coherence promotion

Talk triggered by the final phases of the podwalk cycle was understandably reflective. From my own perspective, as analyst and contributor, I perceive these to be driven by Simon's desires to draw the podwalk cycle to a close. As mentioned, Simon's final visits and delivery of the DVDs and the podwalk certificates in some cases were one of the last times Simon would see the young people. It marked the end of Simon's relationships with the young people and homes, relationships that in some cases had been experienced over twelve to fourteen months. Understandably talk triggered by this phase orientated towards the experience of the process, the sharing of the behind the scene narratives relating to those shared on the podwalk DVD and indeed those featuring on the DVDs themselves. Opportunities to access talk during this phase were driven by young people's desires for audience. As alluded to in process orientated discussions, there were a range of different screenings that took place.

Of those young people who did invite Simon to their screening, Nikki's reflective dialogues most suitably demonstrated the ability of podwalking to furnish self-narratives and autobiographical accounts with coherence promoting prompts. Nikki's podwalk occurred at a particularly poignant time. Days before her filming phase Nikki had been told that she was to be moved from her current residential home to another, something she remarked was not an unfamiliar experience for her. The screening of Nikki's podwalk was public, undertaken in the living room of her residential home, with both Simon and her fellow resident Ivy present. Extract 16 is taken from Nikki's premiere and the reflective dialogues which emerged, this allows the reflective nature of the premiere to be illustrated and analysed.

Extract 16

Nikki: ↑I wonder how I met Cal?

(0.8)

Simon: Who's ↑Cal?

Nikki: My ex boyfrie:nd,

Simon: At school? (.)

Nikki: ↑What?

Simon: At school? (.)

Nikki: No (.) He used to live up ere (.) He still does he lives with his dad

(.) and then liv- (.) (he lives with his mum and then lives with his

da:d) at weekends

Simon: °Right° (0.4) >Do you think you met him on the park maybe<

Ivy: [huh huh huh]

Nikki: [huh huh huh] ↑No (.) I don't know↑ (0.3)

Simon: Maybe your eye meet across the slide

Ivy: huh huh

Simon: huh huh

Ivy: huh

Nikki: No I met him

(3.0)

Ivy: O:::h I see

Simon: Huh huh (0.8) huh brilliant Ivy

Ivy: huh

Simon: You need to get back to school girl am telling y(hh)ou↑

Nikki: O:h I met 'im cos (.)Ja:ke was wal- walking with to the pub (.) to the
pub with us cos we were meeting Stu and Elaine there↑↑

Simon: A:r

Nikki: And Ja:ke's >↑mum and dad< (.) a:::nd, that's how I met him I met him
there

Simon: And Jake wa::s (.) your frie:nd?

Nikki: Yeah

Simon: °↑Oh right°

Nikki: °he's special° (?) (.) and Cal was just there (.) I °↓can't remember°

Simon: So Cal was Jake's mate?

Ivy: [(?)]

Nikki: [Yeah]

Premiere and time capsule phase: Nikki 15, Ivy 14, and Simon

Extract 16 illustrates the worked up and co-constructed nature of reflective dialogues occurring in the premiere and potentially the time capsule feature of this phase. Also reinforcing the potential power of audience. In the first instance Nikki's reflective question invites audience members to assist in the constructing of its answer. This reflective question was prompted by

the talk recorded during the podwalk filming and as featuring in her podwalk DVD. During this filming phase talk was produced as a response to an enquiry made by Jim, Nikki's invited guest. He asked her who she used to hang out with at the park being filmed. In this context Jim's talk demonstrated he was an engaged audience orientated as naive. His talk also prompted Nikki to construct her connection to place via the relationships experienced during her time in that place.

In the context of the premiere Nikki's response to her listing of the people she used to hang out with at the park during this filming, triggered reflective self dialogues: "↑I wonder how I met Cal?". At a situational level this talk invited audience members to assist in this narrative account construction, this invitation was taken up by Simon but not her fellow resident Ivy³⁹. In an attempt to assist in the construction and sharing of this reflective narrative the facilitative power of engaged audience members is again highlighted. By ruling out possibilities of where they met, Nikki is able to furnish the account being worked up with more details: "He used to live up ere (.) He still does". The reflective question originally shared pertaining to a gap in the under construction narrative is then resolved via her friendship with Jake and his association with Cal. Nikki states she met Cal through a mutual friend Jake, whilst they were on their way to meet her former foster carers and her friends parents.

In this extract the reflective performance and worked up narrative account stimulated by the replaying of the podwalk DVD, illustrates the complexities and multilayered nature of the phased podwalk process. Further still it underlines how podwalking can fulfil the requirements made upon it as both life story work process and a methodological approach to access different streams of discursive enquiry. From a temporal perspective, the analysis of this viewing of a young person's DVD suggests that it can function longer term as a discursive resource from which reflective dialogues can be shared. Due to the innovative nature of this proposal only speculation regarding its longevity can be made at this point, paving the way for further research using podwalking in various contexts and exploration of its longer term uses and applications.

39 Simon's familiarity with the film and investment in the process may have meant that he attended more to Nikki's talk in the premier (and therefore present) as opposed to watching the clip. This may explain why her fellow resident Ivy did not respond in this instance, since she was watching it anew.

7.6 Summative comments

This chapter introduced the emergent podwalk process as a vehicle for young people to become actively invested in producing an end goal, that of a podwalk DVD. By virtue this also enabled the performance of discursive work to be undertaken in the context of situational relationships shared with invited guests and the places visited. The chapter examined the audio and audiovisual data produced during the various phases of the podwalk and demonstrated how different modalities could be blended. This enabled podwalking to function as life story work process, a method to trigger different streams of discursive enquiry and to demonstrate how to manage the analysis of its complex, multi-layered and multimodal components.

The podwalk process and subsequent DVD is similar to life story books produced with younger children, in that it provides starting points from which stories can be retold. It is different however since it is not preoccupied with coming to terms with past abuse. Conventional frameworks also suggest that if someone can produce a coherent story about themselves, they are able reproduce the same story time and again. Yet narrative accounts, and indeed the language used to construct them is rarely coherent (Gergen, 1999). On the contrary, maybe it is not narrative coherence per se which should be the concern, but the consistent availability of discursive props and artefacts of importance to the young person. In other words, the consistency of available starting places from which narratives can be constructed.

Analytically whilst social performances may have been restricted and managed by the institutional nature of young people's perceived vulnerability and how this was experienced by those involved in the process, it would appear that podwalking enabled young people to share the accounts they chose with audiences. The young people were also able to reflect and fill in narrative gaps during and after podwalking, demonstrating the usefulness of joint remembering and co-constructors in the social construction of memories (Edwards & Middleton, 1986; Pasupathi, 2001).

Chapter 8: Managing uncertainty in residential homes: The emergence and consequences of digital media, e-safety and the Scarlet Pimpernel

8.1 Introduction

Information Communication Technologies (ICT) has become the way in which adolescents chose to communicate with each other and with those around them. Adolescents in care are no different from their peers in this regard. In spite of such trends, ICT use by social work professionals to engage with looked-after populations remains cautious, as partly illustrated by *Chapter 6: bebook: Promoting reflective dialogues with adolescents in residential care* and *Chapter 7: Podwalking: Generating and analysing reflective talk via process driven method*. The following chapter considers reasons for this caution and seeks to create knowledge to inform policy and practice, enabling meaningful engagement using such tools. The focus of the chapter is reflected in its aims:

- 3.1 Map the emergent ways in which Information Communication Technologies (ICT) are being constructed in the talk of young people and residential workers across a range of residential homes
- 3.2 Explore how residential homes mediate young people's access to and experiences of ICT
- 3.3 Consider the engagement implications of residential workers constructions of ICT in and across residential homes
- 3.4 Contribute to knowledge which can inform policy and practice in terms of suitable ways to engage positively using ICT, suggesting alternative internet monitoring strategies to actively engage residential homes and the young people living in them

8.2 Analytical focus

In using Doise (1986) to provide an analytical framework, attention is paid to how speakers draw on talk at positional and ideological levels. By focusing on discursive practices at these levels, the chapter analyses how the construction of ICT in the context of residential care is experienced by those living and working within it. Whilst exploring how dominant ideologies are ensconced in ordinary talk, the discussion will also unpack how context specific truths surrounding ICT and vulnerable populations are constructed as 'natural' or 'inevitable' (Billig, 1997).

From this discursive psychological position the popularity of ICT in adolescent populations has been, and continues to be, experienced by both young people and adults orientating in a risk society (Beck, 1992). Such a society is informed at an ideological level by the talk of the time, or what Foucault (1972) referred to as an episteme. For Foucault (1972) an episteme guides ways of thinking, talking and the state of knowledge at a particular historical moment. Therefore in a risk society and especially in a highly sensitised context such as state child care, discourses of governance and risk management are foregrounded. As such *bebook* and podwalking were constructed and operated in this highly risk averse context, one often dominated by governance discourses and subsequent safe guarding procedures (Jack, 1997; Spratt, 2001). The use of ICT to engage with young people looked-after, the sensitivity of this engagement and the risk averse context, intensified attention received by *bebook* and podwalking from gatekeepers orientating in discourses of governance, risk management and safe guarding. Ironically the use and promotion of ICT in *bebook* and podwalking meant that staff members, staff teams and the wider care environment would need to use uncomfortable, unfamiliar and yet widely used tools to engage with young people. But the reward would be that the care context could use *bebook* and podwalking to help promote self-reflection, communication and narrative identity in young people. Potentially such tools could also support transitions within and beyond care, the very goals care provisions strive for and seek to promote.

Whilst acknowledging these possibilities the current chapter focuses upon the world in which the introduction of the digital innovations *bebook* and podwalking occurred. In particularly how this care context responded, reacted, promoted and problematised the technology being used to facilitate the very goals such environments strive for. To this end the chapter begins by considering how individuals used available discourses to construct their experiences of ICT at

the positional level (Doise, 1986). The work of Davis and Harré (1990) will be used to consider how available discourses were used by individuals to work up and negotiate positions for themselves as well as others, and how these positions played out in relation to experiences and conceptualisations of ICT in these sensitised environments. Attention will then move to consider the consequences of the positions worked up at an ideological level (Doise, 1986). Foucault's (1972) ideas of episteme will be used to inform these discussions. The use of wider socially available interpretive repertoires will then be employed to conceptualise a realisation that the young people were accessing and would continue to access wider digital media with or without the assistance of their carers' and care context.

8.3 Discursive positioning strategies: Non-expert begets expert

Technological advancements and inappropriate use, such as happy slapping and cyber bullying, have meant technology's growing appeal to young people has not gone unnoticed in what Beck (1992) described as a risk society. In this society talk orientates around what Ashcroft (2003) reported as being accountable assessment, governance and management procedures. Being under the age of 18 in Western society permits one to be labeled as at-risk (Eckersley, 1988; Kelly, 2001; Tait, 1995; Withers & Batten, 1995) sensitising the focus of this regulatory discourse. Being under this age and living in care intensifies this focus further. In this way adolescents in care are different to their peers; their world is more highly regulated and risk averse. For those adolescents living in residential settings, the intensity of this focus increases again. Regardless of strict safeguarding procedures, residential care homes do not operate in a vacuum. The following section examines how young people's experiences of digital media are mediated by their immediate care environment and the individuals operating within them.

8.3.1 Positioning of the self and others: The talk of tech

In beginning to unpack positions worked up in the talk of young people and residential workers, the social implications of using the talk of tech resonated as a particularly useful way for social actors to work up their positions and actions. A frequent characteristic of social interactions with young people across the various residential contexts was their fluency in using technical

rhetoric. This was something present in their talk from the first focus group, as extract 17 demonstrates.

Extract 17

Chris: LG Touch screen ((taking phone from pocket)) ↑↑5 Mega pixel
camera

Development cycle: Chris 17, also present Billie 15, Jez (staff) and Simon

Although such statements rarely discussed the deeper workings of the various technologies spoken about, they did work up positions for the speaker as proficient within interactions. This performance illustrated that Chris was 'correct' in his identification of the technology he owned, and through the further statement of his phone's capabilities demonstrated his performance of expertise. This exchange happened in the early stages of the development cycle's primary workshop; hence Chris was able to work up an early position of expertise in the social exchange and subsequent relationship. Having watched and critiqued the participant information clip, Chris was aware that his help was requested in designing a website. So in many ways he had agreed to attend the workshop and contribute to the research project as an expert. By requesting his help, Simon had offered Chris, and indeed the other participants, a position of expertise. Having accepted this position by attending and proficiently using the talk of tech, Chris was able to manage, what Gergen (1999) suggests, is a mutually sustaining symmetry. So requesting assistance had offered Chris a negotiated position as knowledgeable, one he accepted in this exchange and continued to manage during the project. This position provided him with a guide of how to be in the context of the research project and also provided Simon with a guide of how to treat him. Hence the symmetry is maintained by both parties.

Davis and Harré (1990) refer to social performances such as the statement made by Chris, as a reflective positioning statement. Not all attempts to develop positions within exchanges using reflective positioning were as successful. Extract 18 demonstrates the difficulty in managing positions and how this symmetry can begin to breakdown when social actors attempt to distance themselves from positions previously worked up.

Extract 18

Chris: Have you ever been hit by a:, (.) [cricket ball]

Billie: [SIMON DO YOU] KNOW
HOW TO WORK COMPU:TERS?

Simon: Not rea:lly (.) what do you want me to do?=
=You mug

Billie: (.) you're a fucking idiot

Simon: [Well,]

Chris: [↑↑Huh huh]

Implementation cycle: Billie 15, Chris 17 and Simon

Here Simon, someone perceived as an expert, attempts to distance himself from an expert position in the account. Whilst it could be suggested that Billie has positioned the other in the exchange, his question would appear to be that of someone positioning themselves as non-expert. Crucially Billie's question is lacking an element of expertise, it is too general to be considered as that of someone attempting to use the talk of tech proficiently. Billie's use of the word "work" highlights his management of this position. He did not enquire by identifying a specific technical difficulty that required help, for example "Simon do you know how to connect to the internet?" his enquiry was general. The reply to his question acts as an attempt to work up a position for the respondent in the exchange as a non-expert. The failure of this reply highlights the consequences of deemphasising knowledge as a way to manage repositioning in exchanges where one's expertise has been previously worked up, by oneself or an other. The reply given by Simon attempts to work up a distance from an expert position, but then seeks specific information about the problem. Such a reply does not fit with someone who has previously been positioned by others or by the self as expert. Nor does the reply fit in the context of this exchange. A non-expert would not be needed to provide help, nor would the giving of more information about the problem turn the non-expert into an expert.

Billie's reply to this incongruent positioning attempt indicates the difficulties of renegotiating positions in exchanges, the powerful nature of mutually sustaining symmetries and how this can

cause one to lose face. His use of the word “mug” here is ironic, since mug is often used as a slang term to refer to someone’s face. But it works here to label Simon ‘from the UEA’, a PhD researcher perceived as an expert, as an idiot, but not just an idiot. In referring to what Pomerantz (1986) calls extreme case formulations, Billie was able to employ a discursive resource in his talk which presented: “...the strongest case in anticipation of non-sympathetic hearings...” (Pomerantz, 1986:227). Not satisfied with merely labelling Simon as foolish, Billie’s talk was able to place Simon at the extreme end of a discursively created idiot scale. By virtue of this formulation, Simon was an extreme, or: “fucking idiot”. Losing face through poorly negotiated positioning, illustrates the usefulness of working up a position as non-expert. This positioning begins to illustrate how interactions with individuals operating in the immediate care environment can mediated young people’s experiences of technology.

In general terms when an individual is positioned in an exchange by the self or others and labelled as an expert, errors can be made. Such errors are not so costly for non-experts who are seen as making mistakes as a result of a lack of knowledge, not errors in judgement. As seen in extract 17, the implications of claiming to be non-expert when this is believed not to be the case undermines social performance. In an institutional context the ability to deny knowledge assisted the majority of staff members to manage a socially safe position. Institutionally staff members had a stake in their ability to manage interactions regarding technology from a position in which mistakes made were not too costly. Potter (1996:109) refers to these as dilemmas of stake, suggesting that negotiations of stake are performed sensitively since: “Commonly they will involve a potentially undesirable or problematic identity”. In this context a staff member making an error whence positioned as expert would be much more damaging than if positioned as non-expert.

The usefulness of engaging in the talk of tech from a worked up position of non-expert is demonstrated by two workers with differing institutional positions and subsequently power. Sam was a residential manager in one home and Laura, a worker at another. Yet once each had worked up a reflective position in exchanges as non-experts, both were free to engage and rely upon the expectations and resources each position bestowed. This is supported by Davis and Harré (1990:262) who proposed positions provided available: “...metaphors, story lines and concepts...within the particular discursive practice...”. Extracts 19 and 20 are now presented together before each is analysed and comparisons made.

Extract 19

Sam: >I don't know cos I don't understand computers cos I'm a<
Luddi::te, (.) .hh but the wa::y to make it wo:rk would
be to have two compu:ters in here that you could all
use cos you could all have your own logins couldn't [you]
Simon: [M:m]

Implementation cycle: Sam (manager) also present Billie 15, Chris 17 and Simon

Extract 20

Laura: >I'm not very good at [computers<]
John: [Oh Go:d(.)] could be here for a
while
Laura: Yeah we could

Implementation cycle: John, 18 and Laura (staff) also present Simon

As extract 19 illustrates, once Sam negotiates her position as non-expert she is able to suggest a solution to an ICT based problem with the probability of losing face diminished. This is accomplished due to any mistakes being in line with her worked up non-expert position. As manager, Sam's stake in maintaining her institutional power through appropriate positioning meant in relation to the talk of tech, claiming of a non-expert position needed to be achieved sensitively. An admission of a lack of knowledge in front of Simon and indeed the young people would open Sam up to being viewed as ill-informed and ignorant. As Potter (1996) highlighted, her admission has potentially problematic implications for her identity. As the manager of a residential care home and the professional responsibility this brings, a lack of knowledge opens Sam up to being viewed as unaware of the risks of the internet. By navigating her talk away from the professional identity consequences that a lack of knowledge could invite, Sam recruits the term: "Luddi::te". Through her recruitment of this term, Sam's initial lack of knowledge is positioned in relation to a non-expertise positioning, but one informed through choice. Such a description guards against a lack of knowledge being constructed as emerging from professional negligence.

At the positional level extract 20 illustrates two points. Firstly that a non-expert position is offered as a defence in an exchange in which Laura (staff) is attempting to set up a computer for John (18). As such inefficiency in terms of time or end product (i.e. getting the computer to work) can be conceptualised as resulting from a lack of knowledge, not errors in judgement made by a knowledgeable person. Secondly that through its comparisons with extract 19, institutional hierarchies and professional identities can influence how such positioning can be mobilised. In contrast to Sam's subtle positioning, Laura's omission is simpler. Sam's institutional position meant she had more to lose and therefore her negotiation of non-expertise involved more subtle maintenance. In returning to extract 20, Laura's reflexive positioning attempt is accepted by John, becoming mutually sustained by his talk. He accepts the account on offer through making reference to the expectation of inefficiency in which the problem "could" be resolved. Laura saves face through validating this possibility, via her mirrored use of the word: "could". The non-expert positioning therefore acted to guide further exchanges, manage expectations of the situation and further illustrates the usefulness of working up a position as non-expert for residential workers.

During the same visit and having already mobilised non-expertise Laura (residential worker), is still attempting to get the home's computer working when the exchange in extract 21 occurs. It illustrates possible consequences of numerous workers in an exchange working up positions as non-experts, and how workers tended use what Davis and Harré (1990) refer to as interactive positioning to position the young people as experts, seen in Laura's reference to: "Stan the man".

Extract 21

Ann: I'll leave you to it Laura, (.) call me if you want,

Laura: Yea:h (.) I will

(0.4)

Ann: You know me and computers

Laura: Ye::h well it's alright when they do what they're

to::ld, (2.6) Stan the man's on the ca:se

Implementation cycle: Stan 15, John 18, Laura and Ann (staff) also present Simon

In this account Ann positions herself as non-expert and using the discourse available from such a position, works to distance herself from the situation through using Laura's prior knowledge of her relative non-expertise: "You know me and computers". Laura accepts this negotiated position and subsequent lack of help because an expert is: "on the ca:se". In this way Laura works up a position for Stan 15, not only as an expert, but through the creation of a persona for him. By referring to him as "Stan the man" Laura positions Stan not only as an expert, but also the engendered head of the household. This diminishes both her and John's position, but also their claim to a voice. This positioning illustrates how young people's immediate care environments have a tendency to work up positions for them as experts, resulting from staff member's negotiated position as non-expert. It also outlines available benefits to residential workers through working up one's own position as non-expert.

The desire to avoid misusing the talk of tech in exchanges in the presence of the young people is understandable and perhaps expected. But the potential for errors to be made within expert positions also came at a cost in dialogues between staff team members. In returning to extract 21, by leaving the room Ann is able to physically distance herself from the exchange as a result of her positioning as non-expert. Ann is no longer required since she is unable to help. By leaving the room she also allows Laura to maintain a positioning of non-expert. If both staff members were in the room, one would have to become more of an expert and therefore open to making errors and the consequences of doing so.

The ability to work up strategic positioning within a staff team could be advantageous, having the potential to abdicate or embrace responsibility for certain team roles. But once attempted, misusing the talk of tech in front of colleagues could also be as potentially damaging. In extract 22 staff members were discussing how to better promote the capturing of everydayness in their approaches to life story work via the technologies recruited in the research project. Taken from this staff forum context, the potential costs of misusing technological terminologies in front of colleagues emerge.

Extract 22

Nigel: But if ↑we::, if we have unit <memory sticks> (.) could
we (.) possibly (.) see whether ↑that's possible that we

use the unit [↑]memory sticks in ou:r camera if we're
prepared to just a °just a thought° cos

Sarah: D'ya mean, memory [↑]ca::rd,

Nigel: Memory stick (.)_MW1: Memory card memory [stick
whatever]

Polly: [[↑]Yeah you mean]memory ca::rd

Evaluation and withdrawal cycle: Nigel, Polly and Sarah, also present Craig, Jez, Rebecca, June, Mark, Debs, Sammy (all staff) and Simon

In this extract Nigel's tentatively suggested solution is to promote the capturing of everydayness via the use of "unit <memory sticks>" in digital cameras. The tentativeness of this proposal is underlined by his double use of this potentially being a viable proposal. As indicated via his use of "possibly" and "possible". This works up his uncertainty alongside his double use of the words "if" and "just". Again returning to what Pomerantz (1986) called extreme case formulations, Nigel's repetition and use of the words "if" and "just" presents his suggestion as an extremely weak one. In Nigel's talk he uses the word "thought", hence his talk is suggestive, not prescriptive of a solution or a resolution. His description subtly manages his identity interest (Potter, 1996).

His "thought" removes the safeguarding issue of taking pictures of vulnerable young people on personal digital devices, discussed moments earlier in this staff forum. The storage component would be removable and was able to operate in a professionalised context by his labelling them as: "unit memory sticks". However the term memory stick is given to digital data storage devices that work exclusively to transfer data from computer to computer via USB sockets, not from cameras to computers. The size and appearance of memory cards and memory sticks are very different (see figure 16), yet their technological characteristics are fairly similar in that they are both storage devices of sorts.



Figure 16: Illustrating the differences between USB memory sticks (left) and memory cards (right)

Nevertheless, Nigel's error was similar to suggesting using a gramophone to play a compact disc (CD) or a compact disc player to play a vinyl record. Although both act to do the same things, in this case produce pre-recorded sounds, both technologies are incompatible. Nigel's error is questioned by Sarah in a corrective fashion; she offers him the correct terminology if he acknowledges his error publicly. Instead Nigel appears then to attempt to reposition himself, distancing and dismissing himself from what would be seen as an error made by an expert, rather than a naïve mistake by a non-expert. Yet at the same time he does not fully accept the error made or the alternative position offered. By using the word "whatever", he implies that the two terms are easily mixed up; that they are in many ways the same thing. As such his error becomes inconsequential. Having missed his opportunity to recertify his error and work up a position of non-expertise, reconceptualising his error into a mistake, Polly corrects it for him. By illustrating that she does know the difference between the two she begins to position herself as an expert within this exchange. Within the rest of the script Nigel's proposal is absent.

Seemingly when knowledgeable others make errors their voice can be lost, as opposed to those who work up positions as unknowledgeable from which they are free to make mistakes with less consequences. Nigel's incorrect use of the: "...concepts which are made relevant within the particular discursive practice in which they are positioned...", appear to have resulted in his voice being lost (Davies & Harré, 1990:262).

Attempts to work up positions of non-expertise within a residential context at a positional level appear to rely upon a need to avoid losing face in front of young people and other staff team members. To this end the reflective positioning statements recruited by staff members tended to allow them to orientate and claim positions of non-expertise. Young people were more likely to be positioned as expert through their fluent use of the talk of tech. Positioning statements used

by staff members also tended to position young people as experts. This is paradoxical in a residential context at Doise's (1986) positional level; the context only works if hierarchies of power are maintained. How are discourses of humanistic intention to protect (Withers & Batten, 1995) and institutional need to monitor this at-risk group's access to digital media accomplished with this paradoxical power imbalance? And how in turn does this care environment mediate young people's experiences of digital media?

Across the four residential homes one staff team member in particular was more successful in managing a position for himself as expert, having his voice heard and subsequently being able to claim authority on matters technological. The staff member in question, Adam, was able to accomplish this on various occasions, in different relational contexts using a variety of positioning devices. This however was not the case in the other three homes. The following section explores how positioning himself as expert worked for Adam. Also how he was able to deploy strategic positioning devices to embrace the responsibility associated with his worked up position and his claims to it. This also allows the dialogue to identify how this expert position impacted upon the young people living in this residential home. The section will identify issues associated with the remote monitoring strategies used by some homes, but will examine these in more depth at a later point.

8.3.2. Positioning expertise in the talk of tech

Of the four homes involved in the project, three granted young people in-house access to the internet⁴⁰. Adam was a senior worker at the Carlton Road home and heavily influenced the way this residential home mediated access to the internet. This was done at a local level and was enabled through a 'unit' internet ready laptop, upon which Adam had created various administrative controls in an effort to prevent 'inappropriate use'. This was in contrast to the Gateford Road and Bridge Street homes where the young people in the main each had their own internet accessible laptop. At these two homes access to the internet was via a wireless internet connection in the homes themselves. This wireless internet connection was turned off by staff at a particular time at night. In terms of accessing content on the internet, the young people's laptops were linked to a remote internet monitoring system. This system retrospectively reported use labelled as inappropriate. Inappropriate use was often described as violations, and it was these violations which the retrospective reporting highlighted. During the installation cycle

40 The Gateford Road, Carlton Road and Bridge Street homes granted young people in house access, the Newcastle Avenue home did not.

at the Gateford Road home Simon came across a warning which seemed to block the site required. Yet once clicked the 'allow access' button unblocked the site requested. This retroactive governing process allowed the young people to access most sites, but with their viewing history recorded and monitored. Similar monitoring processes were present at the Bridge Street home. The constantly appearing warning became conceptualised as a nuisance by the young people as Phil highlights in extract 23. In this sense it seemed to operate to fulfil the requirements created by discourses of regulation, but be ineffective in educating or engaging young people in conversations about safe internet usage. As Phil states, he knew what it said but chose to ignore it.

Extract 23

Simon: What's this ↑thing, (.) that comes ↑up?

Phil: hhhhhhhhhh

Simon: What's it ↑say?

Phil: Don't (.) don't (.) put don't go o::n (.) to sex- sexua:::l, (.) or
drugs

Simon: ↑A:::h

(2.8)

Phil: I just igno::re it

Simon: You what? (.) you igno:re it?

Phil: Yeah does my head in that does

Implementation cycle: Phil 15 and Simon

Paradoxically the homes in which each young person had their own internet accessible laptop appeared to have young people with a different range of needs and less immediate regulation of their internet usage. Within the Carlton Road home young people appeared to be more limited in their internet viewing options, with immediate denial via the unit laptop's web filtering settings. Yet these filters could be bypassed if the resource was deemed appropriate by entering the administrator password Adam had created. Adam was also able to develop a model of internet

use expected to be similar to how internet access could be governed in a family context. A turn taking system organised in chronologically ordered time slots⁴¹, appeared to be well integrated into the routines and rhythms of the house. The computer would issue various warnings regarding how much longer the user had left, logging the user off their individual profile on the laptop when this time limit had elapsed. The young people knew their time slots and stuck to them. Although highly regulated in comparison to a family environment, within the context of the home and the young people within it, this strategy fulfilled its purpose.

In the Carlton Road home Adam was able to establish and maintain his position as expert in the talk of tech through his use of this discourse, working up and maintaining his position and his claims to it in a variety of ways. However as will be explored, this meant he could be protective of this expert position. He seemed less willing to disseminate the power of this position through education, rather maintaining its exclusivity through a range of discursive devices. This was demonstrated in the installation cycle at the beginning of undertaking the *bebook* project at the Carlton Road home, through to and including the evaluation and withdrawal cycle.

The integration of the *bebook* website and the associated hardware had taken longer than expected due to the locked down nature with which the young people's access to the internet was managed. Adam in his role as expert had been heavily involved in assisting the adaptation of administrative resources and hence developing the unit laptop's web filters to integrate with the *bebook* website and the hardware it required. As the implementation cycle progressed, Adam was still in close proximity. Being the resident expert and having invested his time in the adaption of the web filters, he was understandably invested in seeing if it was working. When considered in a discursive and positional sense this investment also meant had the unit laptop, a representation of his work and indeed his claim to expertise, not worked this may have acted as a challenge to his negotiated expert position and his claims to it.

41 The youngest young person taking the first timeslot for example 6:30-7:30, with the next youngest from 7:30-8:30 for example.

Extract 24

((Adam enters room))

Adam: Have you got video clips on he:re?

Anne-Marie: NO I MEAN I PUT U::M, (.) I PU:::T, (.) my picture's from
my Camera [on here]

Adam: [Yeah (.)] I'm just saying you you can (.) take
still pictures from that video camera can't you (.) >you
can put little< you can put >little videos on here<
↑can't you?

Simon: Yeah absolutely yea:h,=

Adam: =Yeah Cos you could (.3) if they're too lo::ng you can
edit them

I think o:n on here in like (.) Windows Movie Maker

Anne-Marie: ↑YEA:::H I have cos [I got]

Adam: [Its it]'s a a bit to get used to

Implementation cycle: Anne-Marie 15, Adam (staff) and Simon

In this exchange Adam enters the room and enquires specifically about the type of data Anne-Marie has been able to upload onto the *bebook* website. The question's specificity works up expertise. Anne-Marie's response is cut short by Adam who further works to demonstrate his knowledge and concurrent expertise by suggesting a different functionality of the device referred to. A point to note is how he invited a response from Simon, working up a position for him as an ally. In examining the way in which the expert opinion of the other was sought in this exchange, the repeated use of "you can" and "can't you?" appears to be that of an expert seeking to confirm expertise. Whilst also seeking this confirmation from an expert ally. Adam's question is not an open one; it is a question which seeks to establish what was asked earlier in the question itself. In a sense Adam had provided what he thought the answer might be in the question. The question worked as a performance to demonstrate to the audience present that he was fluent in

the talk of tech and worked to reinforce his position of expertise. Was this performance for the benefit of Simon possibly perceived as another expert and ally? Or was it for Anne-Marie as way of demonstrating that, despite Simon's involvement with such technology, he could still claim expertise?

In returning to the extract it would appear to be both. Adam works to demonstrate his knowledge of video editing, indicating he knows that file size is important when uploading data to websites, for the benefit of Simon, the perceived expert ally. He then moves to interrupt Anne-Marie's second response, effectively silencing her voice from the exchange. Her response begins to indicate her knowledge and ability to converse using the talk of tech. In that Anne-Marie knows that a specific video editing programme, Windows Movie Maker, is installed upon the unit laptop. As well as interrupting and silencing this voice further, Adam covertly uses what Davies and Harré (1990) refer to as interactive positioning. As such Adam's use of "[Its it]'s a a bit to get used to" begins to work up a position for Anne-Marie as non-expert. He works to create an excuse for her lack of understanding, indicating that the requirements of the task are beyond her at present. Adam's talk demonstrates his claim to expertise to another present expert and that his position is valid. It also works to shut down a threat to his claim and silence it in this exchange. In so doing Adam is able to maintain his role as resident expert subsequently mediating Anne-Marie's use of ICT as being experienced by a non-expert.

Adam's expert position within the Carlton Road house took rhetorical maintenance. However the social embodiment of this expertise and continual point of reference in his absence was the 'unit laptop'. This served as a constant reminder of the position he had created and was invested in. When using the laptop and coming across a problem that required administrator clearance, the legacy of Adam's worked up position as expert was apparent. Two examples can be seen in the talk of Chelsea, 15 and Liz (staff) and feature in extracts 25 and 26 accordingly.

Extract 25

Chelsea: Adam's got all the secret co:des >and everything< it's
something to do with Clumber

Chelsea 15, also present Anne-Marie 15, Adam (staff) and Simon

Extract 26:

Liz ↑I've got administrator rights but I don't know enough

Liz (staff), also present Anne-Marie 15 and Simon

Both of these extracts were taken from an occasion in which the unit laptop created an alert needing administrator assistance. In extract 25 Chelsea immediately works up Adam's position through using interactive positioning, he's the one with: "all the secret co:des >and everything<". Liz's position begins to highlight the consultancy role played by Adam as resident expert and how this worked to position other staff, even without his presence. Though Liz had been given the administrator rights, in this case the password to allow Anne-Marie and Simon to continue, she was aware of her real and/or perceived lack of expertise in relation to bypassing the problem. In essence Adam had given her a tool but not the knowledge to use it, working up his position of expertise even in his absence. Such a practice worked to create a role for him as an indispensable consultant. This statement is supported by extract 27 taken towards the end of the implementation cycle, which also seeks to reinforce Adam's constant presence during the various cycles of research. June (one of Anne-Marie's key workers) begins to discuss how the *bebook* could be used once Simon ceases visiting the home.

Extract 27

June: Can you sto:re those ones (0.4) I mean there [the ones
that]

Adam: ((from corridor))[June's a
little] bit of a computer numpty you know

June: ha: ha ha (0.3)

Simon: Which one (0.4) sorry June which ↑one?

June: ↑O:h is >that the one?< (0.4) Are these o:nes that
automatically go in? (0.6) is there a sto::re where you
can store some away (0.2) So she can have these ones at
the forefront

Simon: Yeah

June: SE::E (0.2) ↑↑ it wasn't such a stupid question

Implementation cycle: Adam (staff) June (Anne-Marie's key worker) and Simon also present Anne-Marie 15

According to Goffman (1981:132), Adam becomes an "...eavesdropper...". Whilst Adam's lack of presence in the room by conventional etiquette constrained his participation within the exchange, positioning him as a possible "...over hearer...", his response changes this orientation (Goffman, 1981:132). By hearing June's question and then interrupting, Adam begins to engage with the exchange as an eavesdropper, an "...engineered..." follower of talk (Goffman, 1981:132). His interruption and address to Simon, seeks to work up June's enquiries as resulting from someone with a lack of knowledge. Seemingly by eavesdropping and then interrupting in this exchange, Adam the resident expert was attempting to shut down June's foray into talking tech from another room. By labelling and subsequently positioning June as a "computer numpty", a position of someone lacking the ability to converse using the talk of tech, Adam attempts to maintain his worked up position as resident expert via its exclusivity. His performance offers a position of non-expertise, constructed in this exchange as: "computer numpty". Seemingly the more knowledgeable June becomes, the greater threat she is to his positioning as resident expert, positioning assisted in its maintenance and power by its solitude.

In this exchange Simon continues to engage June in talking tech, ignoring the position offered by Adam's talk, June's laughter response to it and the continued possible presence of the eavesdropper (so much so, that he apologises for the interruption). Adam's voice is not heard in the rest of the exchange, with his continued presence as eavesdropper unknown. However June's final comments illustrate two things. Firstly, although she may not be fluent in the talk of tech, she refutes the position of "computer numpty" offered by Adam. Secondly through the raised volume and pitch of her response, if the eavesdropper was still present he would not have trouble hearing her refuting this position: "SE::E (0.2) ↑↑ it wasn't such a stupid question".

Through positioning himself as a resident expert and offering opportunities for his consultancy to be required, Adam's expert position was continually reinforced and claimed. Adam was able to isolate his position as expert, working to maintain this isolation through the positioning of others

and closing down their attempts to use the talk of tech. Nevertheless because of Adam's expertise, the young people at the Carlton Road home were able to access the internet in a way which operated and fulfilled the requirements as dictated by the dominant discourse of regulation. This model was also able to incorporate opportunities for normative practices such as turn taking. Yet the Carlton Road home was a rarity, the other three homes did not have an expert in residence. Regardless of the discussion created here as a result of the talk recorded, Adam was able to provide an access point to the internet which was acceptable within the dominant episteme of the time. But what about those homes without an Adam? How was the paradox of young people being positioned as experts negotiated by residential settings without a resident expert? How did this lack of internal expertise influence young people's access to and experience of digital media?

8.4 Negotiating and managing risk from claimed non-expert positions

In the wider context of children's social care practice, Howe (1992) maps changes in practice emphasis from rehabilitating poorly functioning families to protecting children from dangerous parents. Howe (1992:491) orientates this practice shift in the wake of child abuse becoming a public issue, stating that once risk factors are identified: "...it was possible to develop administrative systems that would facilitate the collection and analysis of information obtained during the investigation of suspected families". Influenced by this risk culture, the ability to identify risk factors meant the same risk factors were manageable and preventable. In cases when risk was not controlled, notably the emergence of child abuse inquiries in the 1970s, professional accountability and discourses of professional 'failures' emerged (Ferguson, 1997). Such discourses continue to impact upon how professionalised social care and indeed residential care homes function. In working up and claiming positions of non-expertise in relation to ICT, staff team members had to negotiate organisational accountability, professional responsibilities and potential failures to manage risks, which many workers constructed as being beyond their control. Emphasis now turns to how individuals orientating in residential care homes negotiated this difficulty and had their talk shaped by the episteme of a risk society dominated by discourses of risk management; accountability and responsibility operate (Ashcroft, 2003; Beck, 1992; Foucault, 1972).

8.4.1 Organisational accountability and professional responsibility: “...nobody listened to me cos I only work with you kids...”

When considering reasons for the use of ICT (including *bebook* and podwalking) remaining marginalised, a common theme across the four residential homes was the recruitment of the phrase ‘inappropriate use’. In a residential context in which the risks of the internet were seen as manageable, ‘inappropriate use’ was seen as preventable. Institutionally prevention was sought to be accomplished in various ways. In the Carlton Road home Adam’s unit laptop was able to mediate internet access at a local level, operating in the localised and immediate context. But this relied heavily upon administering passwords and did not seek to engage staff or young people in communicating using ICT, it only regulated it. Staff members were only summoned to validate web pages and bypass pre-set web filters. The Gateford Road and Bridge Street homes differed in their mediation of internet access and use. Both homes relied upon a remote, retrospective form of governance which monitored and highlighted potential issues, recording a screenshot with the time, date and the laptop creating the alert. The Gateford Road and Bridge Street home’s regulatory system was not without its problems. The remote monitoring system employed appeared to have the advantage of providing an opportunity for the young people to have their internet usage scaffolded. This was because once ‘violations’ were spotted, the homes staff team could use scaffolding learning techniques to engage the young people in reflective educational dialogues around internet usage (Bruner, 1966; Vygotsky, 1978). Such engagement opportunities are conceptualised here to be akin to comments made by Gilligan (2005) regarding how positive residential care can promote opportunities for building resilience. To Gilligan (2005:105) resilience is: “...about doing better than expected when bad things happen.”. As such Gilligan (2005:107) suggests that: “...children may ... acquire immunity to toxic elements by controlled exposure to those same elements.” Therefore a remote and retrospective governance procedure would appear to provide a platform from which resilience towards toxic elements of wider digital media can be incorporated positively into practice.

Research by Jack (1997) and latterly by Spratt (2001) both highlighted the need to move beyond what they termed the limiting discourses of child protection to a more strengths based child welfare orientation. Jack (1997) calls for a fundamental challenge to child protection

discourses, one which moved beyond a reliance on its disease based model. Yet data obtained from interviews with 26 social workers by Spratt (2001) suggested that: "...while the majority of social workers express an attitudinal desire to move towards a child welfare orientation, they still prioritise the management of risk in their practice..". As the comments of residential home manager Sam begin to illustrate in extract 28, opportunities for strengths based conceptualisations of 'inappropriate use' may not be allowed to emerge within organisations which prioritise the management of risk.

Extract 28 took place whilst Billie was using a laptop provided by Simon to engage with one of the monthly *bebook* tasks⁴². Early in this implementation session, Billie had said that his social worker had taken his laptop and would not let him have it back. During the session Billie and Simon were joined in the front room by Chris. Having helped design the *bebook* website Chris had decided not to engage with *bebook's* implementation⁴³, but tended to come say hello. He would greet Simon as 'baldy' or 'Ricky's brother' and generally join in with conversations taking place when Simon was facilitating *bebook* with other young people⁴⁴. Hearing Sam the manager of his residential home, Billie beckons her into the room and enquires as to when he can have his laptop back.

Extract 28

Sam: I:: unfornunately do not have contro::l (.) there was
↑more infringements of rudeness on your laptops than
anywhere else in the known unive:rs (.) >I exaggerate
slightly< (0.4)

Simon: I appreciate it

Sam: So they were taken a↑wa::y I'm now fighting the good
fi:ght >because this is what I said to him< (.) that=

42 On the majority of the occasions I visited the data collection sites to facilitate young people's engagement with *bebook*, the young people ended up using the laptop provided by the university. This was due to a range of factors including as in Billie's case the laptop being removed by the social worker due to 'inappropriate use'. Other reasons included no computer provision with the home, young people having broken/or having the home's computer broken by others. On reflection the young people enjoyed having access to Simon's laptop as part of being involved in the *bebook* pilot.

43 Chris openly admitted having trouble controlling his temper and had 'smashed up' his DVD player. Chris distanced himself from the technological elements of the *bebook* task. However did fully engage in the podwalking element and came into the university to edit, very capably, his podwalk DVD.

44 Ricky was a member of residential staff with a similar hair style to Simon.

- Billie: =BOYS WILL BE ↑BOYS [mate]
- Sam: [I did] say that (.) I did say that
I am, fighting with him at the moment I had a meeting the other
day and I told my (.)I ↑think they're being ridiculous >cos I
think< to give you guys this tool and expect you not to do what
exactly what (.) I'd said you would do but ↑nobody listened to me
cos I only work with you kids (.)..hh I'm ↑not shocked by what
you've do:ne=
- Chris: =They're a bunch of wankers that's what they a::re, no
offence if you're from them
- Simon: Na:r I aint
- Sam: But I am I'm ((names ca[re provider]))
- Chris: [na:r I ain't] on about you:: (.)
look am on about the high:er [up ones]
- Sam: [But you] just shoot
yourselves in the foot ma:te (.) if you didn't try and
access it ↑how could they take them away from you?

Implementation cycle: Billie 15, Chris 18, Sam (manager) and Simon

Here Billie makes use of what Epstein Elwood, Hey and Maw (1998: 9) in their study of male's poor educational attainment, refer to as: "...boys will be boys discourse...". They state this posits: "...an unchanging and unchangeable 'boyness'" which involves delayed maturity yet situates this as extrinsic to boys themselves..." (Epstein et al., 1998:9). As with the psychological truths of adolescence, adolescent males are expected to access inappropriate content on the internet. In extract 28 this conversation was in relation to the 'boys' accessing pornographic material on their laptops. Sam takes up this "BOYS WILL BE ↑BOYS" discourse foregrounded by Billie, validating its truthfulness "[I did] say that (.) I did say that" and begins to touch upon a lack of autonomy she experiences as a manager. She also highlights her frustration at "them" for not foreseeing the potential problems, or boys being boys as she had predicted, both of which are summed up by Sam stating: "↑nobody listened to me cos I only work with you kids".

This lack of autonomy is positioned by Sam as resulting from her place in a hierarchical organisation. This is a position worked up as "them" in Sam's talk, mediating her role within the

removal of Billie's laptop. The combative metaphor and tropes employed throughout Sam's talk position her as a friendly mediator in the: "fight". This friendly mediator position in the organisational hierarchy between the "higher [up ones]" and the young people is evidenced towards the end of the extract. For Sam the opportunity to engage young people and encourage them not to shoot themselves in the foot is lost. Contrary to the encouragement of educational dialogues and potential for immunity to be acquired via controlled and moderated exposure, the dominance of the prioritisation of risk management strategies has been maintained. This missed opportunity appears to be a result of the accountability aspect of the dominant discourse of regulation and risk management strategies. If the young people's laptops are removed, they cannot access inappropriate content. This view ignores the possibility of young people accessing the internet outside of the institutional setting or indeed from within it via internet accessible mobile phones.

Extract 29 is also from the manager of a residential home. In her exchange with Simon, Holly begins to underline what Billig (1997) calls the ideological common-sense at the time of the talk; the prioritisation of risk management strategies. In this extract her talk also highlights the consequences of accountability for her profession.

Extract 29

Holly: Because things ↑will go wrong someti::mes,(.)

Simon: Yeah

Holly: But what about the thousands of things that go ri:ght? And the one time it goes wrong, (0.8)

Simon: Big alarm [bells?]

Holly: [So no]body wants to be the perso:n, (.) that it goes wrong for that one ti:me

Implementation cycle: Holly (manager) and Simon, also present Peter (staff)

Holly's rationale infers that mistakes will be made and when considering the use of the internet and emerging technologies, this tendency will continue. This proposal does not mesh with accountable risk management strategies or indeed institutionalised discourses of child

protection. During this exchange Holly addresses a universal audience (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1971), said to highlight the prevailing ideological common-sense (Billig, 1997). In her appeal to the imagined audience she also uses an extreme case formulation (Pomerantz, 1986). The use of the numbers in her talk creates an extreme case justification within this account. It works to justify her early claim of sometimes things will go wrong and position it, in her words in comparison to the: "thousands of things that go ri:ght". Holly works up a position which appreciates that the young people will sometimes access inappropriate internet content, or as Billie puts it in extract 28: "BOYS WILL BE ↑BOYS". She also indicates that in this prevailing ideology there is little or no appreciation for when young people use technology positively. Moreover that as a professional within an era of risk, as accountability appears so does the ability to apportion blame. An awareness of this professional responsibility is demonstrated in Holly's stating that: "[So no]body wants to be the perso:n, (.) that it goes wrong for that one ti:me" This talk also indicates the individualised ethos of this organisational accountability.

The internet can be an excellent source of valuable information on many issues pertinent to at-risk youth and those who work with them. The labelling of appropriate and inappropriate use attempts to construct simplified categories. In so doing web filters become monitoring resources and can mediate access to content. This appears to obscure the use of the internet in providing young people with information on issues such as sexual health, gender development, self-harm and drug use. Young people could be using the internet in appropriate ways, yet due to the context these are deemed inappropriate. The sensitivity of such issues may themselves be why young people chose to access information about them on the internet rather than approach workers directly. Having to explain to a worker the context surrounding visiting a website which violated web filters on for example, eating disorders or a search term such as 'cock rash', may in turn encourage the young person to become more secretive. Discourses of children's rights to privacy and digital inclusion need to be addressed in accordance with the dominance of risk management, an ideological dilemma which the combative features of Sam's talk begin to illustrate. In this sense the authoritarian nature of the web filter may obscure grey areas in which young people are accessing support. This could result in young people seeking this information from computers beyond the four walls of the residential home, and the potentially supportive relationships this home context offers. Then again, the same web filter system also allowed young people to access the internet, satisfying digital inclusion criteria, and agendas of children's rights.

Emergent from this dialogue at the positional level was the tendency for the majority of residential workers to work up positions of non-expertise, whilst the young people were concurrently negotiated into positions resonating expertise. The localised model of governance employed by Adam appeared to maintain young people's consistent use of ICT, yet lacked opportunities for meaningful engagement regarding online safety beyond the controlled context of the four walls of the residential home. In comparison, the retrospective remote governance model permitted opportunities for young people to develop immunity via controlled and mediated exposure, importantly allowing educational engagement opportunities to be created. Yet within the episteme of risk, discourses of child protection, organisational accountability and professional responsibility limit such opportunities. This dominant ideology identifies risk factors within the homes and attempts to manage them accordingly. A preference for managing risk in the short-term is suggested here to be at the cost of influencing self-risk management by young people within and beyond care settings. Such an ideological orientation obscures the ability for institutionally based relationships to influence safe internet use beyond the care context.

8.4.2 Educating non-experts

The place of technology in contemporary society has come to gain more acceptance and credibility, moving beyond ICT being the preserve of only those labelled as technology minded. This has seen the usefulness of ICT in communicating with younger populations becoming increasingly validated, valued and sought across a range of political, educational and medical contexts. To this end young people are sought to be communicated with by politicians using social media such as Facebook and Twitter, Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) by those in education and through SMS text messages as appointment reminders in various medical settings. This growing recognition at an ideological level represents a problem for the risk averse nature of residential care and those who work within it.

People working with adolescents support forays into independence, yet can struggle to prompt such forays in the episteme of accountable risk. It would appear that in conventional adolescent-parent dyads, parents are entitled to enjoy their adolescent's forays into independence (McElhaney, Allen, Stephenson, & Hare, 2009). In their commentary on normative adolescent development in relation to attachment theory, McElhaney et al. (2009:359) comment that adolescence is about the balance between: "...reducing behaviours that incorporate dependence on the caregiver and exploratory behaviours that function to increase knowledge of

and mastery...". In such a context adolescents becoming competent and powerful in ways in which their parents are not, is conceptualised as positive. For individuals working in an institutional setting, deemed accountable in the context of societal expectations about care, mastery of ICT by adolescents in relation to accountable risk management can tends to be conceptualised as a risk as opposed to a positive feature. In circumstances in which technologies may not be fully understood they can become conceptualised as a risk. From a practice point of view gaps in knowledge are seen to be addressed through training courses, conceptualised as a way to reduce identified risks.

8.4.2.1 The e-safety training course

At a time which saw inappropriate use as preventable, the e-safety training course offered care providers with a way to manage risk. The contents of the course and its format are unknown to me as the analyst, but in many ways this is unproblematic since this is not what the analysis is about. The analysis focuses upon how speakers agentially draw upon the concept of the 'e-safety courses' to perform social action. In other words, how speakers actively mobilise the term concept of the 'e-safety training course' to perform social action. From a positional level, this moved to position responsibility and accountability for use labelled as 'inappropriate use' towards teams of workers who follow procedures. Care providers could abdicate blame since they had sent non-experts on training courses to make them experts. Since inappropriate use could still occur inside as well as outside the home, the arguments of staff needed working up at an ideological level to counter the e-safety rhetoric such training courses brought with them. Ironically such talk was created in the era of risk, yet obscured the possibility of inappropriate use being both unavoidable, and as offering opportunities for resilience to be built up (Gilligan, 2005). Instead of bringing workers and young people together to manage the risk, the conceptualisations of the e-safety courses, are suggested by this argument to have increased a monitoring preoccupation. This ethos is heavily present in the Byron Report (Byron, 2008) which examined children's uses of new technologies. Though this government commissioned report does highlight that inappropriate content is unstoppable and thus offers a child centred approach to managing risk through building resilience, unfortunately this appears to be at the cost of monitoring via engagement. Instead the report calls for better industry regulation and through the creation of governmental regulatory bodies such as the UK Council on Child Internet Safety. These risks are conceptualised in the episteme of accountable risk management and guidance is offered in line with this episteme.

In this discursive climate since risks can be managed, when these risks are not managed, individuals, groups or organisations are seen to have failed and can be held accountable. In risk averse residential care homes, navigating vulnerable populations use of ICT, can mean (as Holly suggested earlier) that no one wants to be the one it goes wrong for. Because of the preoccupation and indeed power of e-safety training course rhetoric, positioning accounts worked up by staff members based upon a lack of knowledge alone is weakened. In line with this e-safety rhetoric, organisations can send workers on training courses which aim to help them better manage and control young people's access to inappropriate content on the internet. Relying upon the training course and its links to educational doctrines, once an individual has been on such a course they can be conceptualised as trained, defusing the organisational responsibility and increasing personal accountability. Seemingly the organisation has done what they can to manage risk by sending the worker on a training course. Therefore if a worker can still not control young people's access to inappropriate content, it is a problem based at an individual level. It is the workers failure to learn as opposed to an organisation not seeking to manage risk. The following section explores how positioning accounts of non-expertise were further negotiated via staff team members recruiting the interpretive repertoire of generation.

8.4.2.2 ICT competency as a function of generation: "...I'm just an old fogie Simon..."

When discussing e-safety training courses with staff members the construction of ICT as a generational related ability emerged. An important consideration to emphasise at this point is that the working up of such accounts were not mechanical. As Potter (1996) suggests, accounts: "...have to be worked up and fitted to the specifics of the situations...and there is always the potential for them being undermined". In an environment of powerful ideological arguments, positions worked up by non-expertise can be open to what Potter (1996) termed 'ironization'. Ironization is used by Potter (1996) to refer to the weakening of worked up versions of factual accounts. In this context, worked up positions of non-expertise and the distancing effect they had in relation to accountability, can be challenged by e-safety training courses. It becomes much harder for one to claim a position of non-expertise if you have been sent on a training course. A failure to control inappropriate use and the associated risks becomes constructed as a failure by the individual staff member or residential home.

Emerging as a challenge to such a construction was the use of ICT competency as a function of generational differences. In this way regardless of the relative training courses an individual was sent on, they could reconceptualise apparent failures by mobilising generational discourse. Speakers were able to recruit discursive resources from societal beliefs regarding older people and technology (Billig, 1997). At the point in time in which this project took place, discourses of older age are foregrounded and linked with a decline in abilities and little exposure to technology. More specifically in relation to ICT usage a commonly held view appears to be that: “There is a generational digital divide between parents and children...” (Byron, 2008:3)⁴⁵. How such statements are taken up in society, made available in general and used by residential workers to foregrounding ICT competency as a function of generation is now explored as particularly success. After all a decline in age cannot be reversed, as the saying goes you cannot teach an old dog new tricks.

Extract 30

Peter: ↑I even hate I text messages you see or mobile phones
you see so I'm just an ol:d, fogie Simon

Reflection and withdraw cycle: Peter (staff) also present Mary, Janet, Mark, Sally, Laura, Craig, Hannah, Emma, Robin and Joe (all staff) and Simon

The slang term old fogie is used to describe an older or elderly person, or someone who may be considered younger, but whose thinking, actions, or demeanor resemble that of an older/elderly person. By using generational related talk Peter is able to evoke generation as a repertoire of everyday engagement to position himself as a non-expert, crucially because of his age. Though Peter was around the average age of the numerous staff present, by working up category membership as associated with age, Peter is able to relinquish his engagement with ICT. Additionally Peter uses several subtle discursive devices in this short passage to work up his account and reinforce his generational category membership as an old fogie. Interestingly as the following analysis demonstrates the numerous devices presented in this short passage begin to indicate the sensitive nature of the work done in the talk performed.

Peter's choice of words in this public performance are shared in front of his colleagues, it accomplishes what Potter (1996) would call a 'reification' of his account through defensive work.

⁴⁵ Whilst I would contend that differences in ICT proficiency are misrepresented when referred to as generational as opposed to resulting from cohort differences, such an argument sits outside the point of analysis in this section.

His account's factuality and objectivity are worked up through confessions of interest which act as stake inoculation (Potter, 1996), and via presenting these interests using extreme case formations (Pomerantz, 1986). Potter (1996) introduced the term stake inoculation to label ways in which speakers can protect descriptions under construction before they are harmed. In his words, this works to: "...head off the imputation of stake or interest..." (Potter, 1996:125). The public nature of Peter's talk in extract 30 talk also invited his colleagues to provide consensus across accounts in order to work up its power.

Peter's talk in extract 30 confessed to his discomfort at using widely accepted (and hence in the episteme of risk management) less sensitised modes of ICT; in this case being the practice of sending and receiving text messages via mobile phones. In the context of a staff forum discussing innovative uses of digital media, this would appear to be an extreme case formation (Pomerantz, 1986). Peter's performance is not simply uncomfortable with ICT, he even hates the less sensitive and widely accepted social practice of text messaging. But this "hate" position is "just" a result of his category membership. Hence in this account Peter works up his dislike for less sensitized digital media, but critically as a product of generational circumstance not personal choice. His justification does not belong to any one individual, but to a category of which he is a member as a result of his age (Potter, 1996). By virtue of this justification Peter's category membership works to handle sensitively his earlier statement of dislike of ICT via this stake confession, inoculating the very stake confessed (Potter, 1996). In other words, he protects his identity and professional competency simultaneously in his talk. He does this by confessing its content as a product of stake in front of his colleagues and this stake as a result of category membership associated with his generation.

Seemingly Peter's performance was aimed at the younger and more ICT proficient outsider present in this context referred in his performance: "Simon". By virtue of this arrowed statement and its discursive features, Peter also works up an opportunity for his colleagues to align their own category membership and orientation towards ICT. Creating consensus across a range of different accounts is according to Potter (1996: 177): "...readily invoked as a warrant for their truth...". This consensus is offered by colleagues Sally and Laura in extract 30, taken from the same staff forum.

Extract 31:

Sally: It's a generation thing (1.0) that's what it comes down to isn't
it
Laura: Yeah

Reflective and withdraw cycle: Sally and Laura (staff) also present Peter, Mary, Janet, Juliet, Mark, Craig, Hannah, Emma, Robin and Joe (all staff) and Simon

Sally's talk in this instance provides a consensus to Peter's earlier performance, as well as illustrating an appeal to a universal audience (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1971). Sally's talk and indeed Laura's agreement with it, demonstrates the ideological common-sense referred to, in this case the use of ICT competency as a function of generation. As demonstrated by the exchanges from a staff forum held in a different residential home shown in extract 32, through recruiting ICT competency as a function of generation, workers simultaneously produced and worked up the mutual sustaining symmetry of the accounts offered.

Extract 32

Cameron: She [she] does use it an awful lot That's [the] only thing
that I'[d sa:y]
Terry: [↑But]=
Cameron: = >See} she's< got her own laptop now she's got her own
access to i:t (.) and whereas,(0.4) her m- m- the other (0.4)
things outsi::de going ↑ou:t and doing stuff she's (.) sh-
sh[e's] much more happy=
Terry: = but then
Cameron: =in a ↑ni:ght to spend four or five hours on ↑her laptop
Terry: ↑That's
Cameron: You know what I mean?
Terry: That's that's people of their a:ge mate=
Cameron: I know I kno:w it's a culture thing isn't it?

Reflective and withdraw cycle: Cameron, Adam and Terry (staff) also present, June, Mary, Sabrina, Veronica, David, Julian, William (all staff) and Simon

This symmetry at an ideological level works up young people's uses and experiences of ICT as different, but different as a function of their generation. Here Terry's final comment attempts to rationalise the young person in question (Anne-Marie) and her frequent use of ICT. Terry's talk cites category membership as a function of age, working up "people of their a:ge" as an inclusive group in which such behaviours are commonplace. At the same time this works up staff members as not orientating in the same category. The use of "their" also serves to work up how Anne-Marie and indeed her use of ICT, should be experienced by staff members and young people alike.

In line with this symmetry, the practice implications of such talk are now discussed via extract 33. This exchange taken from the implementation cycle, demonstrates the way in which category membership could be worked up by staff members, in turn mediating young people's experiences of using ICT. The extract features an exchange in which Ivy and her staff member Mo had recorded Ivy's first webcam diary. The extract begins when Ivy attempts to upload this to her section of *bebook*, also highlighting how the need for an external ICT expert emerged.

Extract 33

Ivy: Mo the internet's gone off, (0.4) they actually have tu:rned it
off

((Ivy leaves room))

(4.3)

Mo: Where's she go?

(2.8)

Simon: Ur::m she thinks they've turned the internet off I think°

Mo: Oh sometimes it does go o::ff um, (0.4) I think Maurice said
there's something about the wires have been pushed or something,
(.) .hh I mean I'm not a computer computer [person] so .hh (.)
u::m,

Simon: [Ri:ght]
(0.6)
Mo: But he did sort it ou:::t as far as [I know]
Simon: [Is that] the ↑u:m (0.4)
Maurice u:::m, (0.6) .hhhhh hu:h the guy fro:m,
Mo: Mau:rice, from (.)
Simon: >Head office<=
Mo: =Yeah yeah
Simon: Ri:ght
(0.6)
Ivy: Mo Yvonne don't kno:w what's (.) going on with the c- with >the
computer,< (.) the internet's still [off]
Mo: [Oh] well you know what me
and Yvonne are like(0.4) we don't, (0.6) we're not very computer
↑persons are we? (.)All this (0.6) high-tech (.) stuff (0.4)
takes me a long time to work my mobile ↑pho::ne,
(0.4) years ago people used to write lette::rs, didn't have
↑pho:nes, (0.4) didn't have com[puters]

Implementation cycle: Ivy 15, Mo (staff) and Simon

The usefulness of ICT competency as a function of generation repertoire is again underlined by the talk of Mo in this exchange. Similarly so too is the successful working up of this account which features stake inoculation via stake confession, category membership and a consensus across social performers claiming this category membership via defensive rhetoric (Potter,

1996). As commented upon in this chapter, the Gateford Road and Bridge Street residential homes did not have an internal expert such as Adam at the Carlton Road home. They relied upon a remote, retrospective form of governance. Thus as Sam and Holly's talk in extracts 28 and 29 respectively begin to demonstrate, young people's access to and use of ICT can become mediated by an external other if non-expert positions flourish. The finer grain analysis of extract 33 will be explored further in the coming section. Yet it works here to draw the chapter's analytical lens towards the emergence of the external ICT expert, suggested here to be associated with the externalising features of the aforementioned remote governance.

8.4.3 Introducing external experts to manage risk

Discourses of digital competency as a function of generation offered those workers who used it a way in which to operate within the realm of non-expert. As suggested by Potter (1996), the working up of an account and of position within it, is not a stable accomplishment. Discourse is situated talk, and as such is constantly open to counter arguments weakening worked up versions of accounts via ironization. In this context, the richness of what Billig (1997) called the ideological common sense of the time, offers workers resources through which to defend their accounts of digital competency as a function of generation.

In generalised discourse from the media there are many ways in which digital competency as a function of generation can be taken up. Extracts 30-32 show one way of constructing ICT competency as a function of generation, this narrows the way in which such discourse can be taken up. A regular contributor to YouTube via his YouTube Channel 'geriatric1927' is a man who describes himself as 'The Internet Grandad' (<http://www.youtube.com/user/geriatric1927>). The way in which 'The Internet Grandad' takes up the discourse of ICT competency as a function of generation is in stark contrast to how staff members closed it down. He and other 'silver surfers' choose to take up the discourse which opens up the benefits of the internet to people of their generation (www.silversurfers.net).

The term generational divide is one used widely in the media by advertisers and also via politicians. The power of such accounts is added to by those who propose a generational digital divide such as Byron (2008). In such accounts ICT competency is a function of generation, this talk issues default positions of relative literacy and illiteracy depending upon one's generation. The blanket term generational divide does however obscure many other issues which regardless of one's age can impact upon internet access, for example socioeconomic status.

Regardless of such influences there is a reported shrinking of this generational based divide, with user age trends continuing to show a widening variety of age groups accessing digital media (www.Raceonline2012.org). Additionally with government backed policies and organisations such as <http://silversurfers.digitalunite.com> any gap is becoming further reduced (www.guardian.co.uk/society/2011/sep/20/adopt-a-care-home-internet-older-people accessed on 26/10/11).

Interestingly the same mobile phone technology used by Peter in extract 28 to illustrate his discomfort can also be used to indicate how differently such generational based identities can be taken in discourse. For many, smartphones such as Blackberry and iPhones have come to represent legitimate business tools regardless of age, frequently used to access emails and arrange meetings. Perhaps in the episteme of a risk society dominated by discourses of accountable risk management and child protection, the usefulness of such tools was overshadowed by their possible risks (Ashcroft, 2003; Beck, 1992; Foucault, 1972; Jack, 1997; Spratt, 2003).

In the residential context, talk of staff mainly resonated towards constructing the generational digital divide as a fact. The relationship inferred between ability and age weakened the rhetoric proposed through arguments of e-safety training courses. E-safety courses were reportedly becoming part of worker's mandatory training at the point in time the research was conducted. However the courses themselves could also be used as resources. For instance the course could be constructed as not very good, not covering certain aspects or as being overly complicated, hard to follow and generally poor. The recruitment of ICT competency as a function of generation repertoire granted workers with a range of discursive resources to counter such educational doctrines, since 'you can't teach an old dog new tricks'. Hence regardless of the e-safety courses content, the meaning of the course and its construction remained aligned with dominance ideologies of ICT competency as a function of generation.

8.4.3.1 Negotiating digital inclusion and online protection: The emergence of the Scarlet Pimpernel

The power of the generational component of the ICT competency repertoire left organisations with a dilemma. In line with discourses of digital inclusion there was a need to facilitate vulnerable young people's access to ICT, whilst also promoting safe and internet use

constructed as appropriate in protectionist discourses. Yet despite this movement towards e-safety training courses, members of the residential workforce tended to be older or at least claim to be from a generation of ICT illiteracy. So for homes without an apparent ICT expert or indeed IT literate 'parent' such as Adam, how could care providers as corporate parents manage promote digital inclusion whilst managing its risks?

Extract 34

Simon: So did ↑the guy come from (0.4) the office to::: fix it then Ivy?

Ivy: ↑Yes

Simon: When did he come?

Ivy: I dunn:ow

(2.8)

Simon: Quite ↑quick that?

Ray: He's like the Scarlet Pimpernel he sort of just (.) turns up and
(.) >kind of just< does it and just disappears again

Simon: Do(h)es h(h)?

Ray: I':m I ↑haven't ↑seen him for about a year

Simon: ↑Ha ha really?

Ray: He's been loads of time though

Implementation cycle: Ivy 15, Ray (staff) and Simon

Extracts 33 and 34 underline how in a practice context, the constructed power balance of internal ICT experts being vulnerable young people as opposed to residential workers could not be maintained. In one sense those who needed protection were unable to be protected by those responsible and accountable for this task. To negotiate ideological dilemmas created through discourses of protection and accountable risk management on the one side, and digital inclusion on the other, the role of external expert emerged. In extract 33 Mo's talk, though on reflection co-constructed explicitly by Simon, refers to the externality of this expert. The talk also illustrates

how the expert's recommendations could be recruited in her talk as a directive, whilst maintaining her non-expertise in line with digital competency as a function of generation.

Extract 34 is taken from an implementation session undertaken at the same home as extract 33, but several days later. In this extract, Ray's talk moves on to personify the external ICT expert using the metaphor Scarlet Pimpernel.

The fit of this metaphor is added to by Ray's further descriptions of the external expert's behavior, which match the 'man of mystery' heroic Scarlet Pimpernel narrative⁴⁶, in that the external expert appears, resolves the problem and then disappears without him noticing. By highlighting the frequency of visits and their stealth like nature, Ray works up this personification and the external expert as a 'man of mystery'. Ray's use of this character reference is also suggested here to tie into the category membership of someone positioning themselves as of an elder generation. Ray did not use more contemporary mysterious heroic characters that: "just< does it and just disappears again". He used the character from a classic play and novel from the early twentieth century, which despite its remakes is far from the centre of popular culture. This works to distance this metaphor as a speech act from possible challenges particularly from Ivy, who may have been more vocal had Ray used a trope related to a contemporary mysterious heroic character. Though Ray's use of the Scarlet Pimpernel metaphor in extract 34 stood alone in its use of a fictional character, more frequently the external expert was personified as the "IT guy".

Extract 35

Juliet: Ah, (.) but we a::re we are ↑gonna, (.) we a:re trying at the
moment to access the internet for the young people and it is
gonna to happen

Simon: Yeah↑

Juliet: That's just ou::r (.) our IT gu:y's (.) °not (.) sort of
(.) come up with° (0.6) °the goods°

46 The fictional character of the Scarlet Pimpernel, created by Baroness Emmuska Orczy, featured in a novel and play from the early twentieth century. Since its conception the premise of the story has been adapted numerous times in a range of media, however the premise that the character appears, saves the day and then disappears again without anyone knowing his identity, still remain.

(0.4)

Simon: He's not what (.) sorry?

Juliet: Not come up with [the goods]

Simon: [Ri:::ght]

Juliet: Um, (.) but it's gonna happen (.) definitely

Evaluation and withdraw cycle: Juliet (staff) and Simon also present Mary, Peter, Janet, Mark, Sally, Laura, Craig, Hannah, Emma, Robin and Joe (all staff)

Building on Mo's use of the external expert as a way to orientate one's talk to prescribe action and abdicate blame in extract 33, similar features are present in extract 35 taken from a staff forum. Foucault (1972) argues we can only have knowledge of things if they have meaning in discourse. This knowledge does not come from the subject of the talk itself, but the talk about the subject in question. As knowledge about a subject finds meaning in talk, Foucault (1972) suggests that personification in discourse occurs. Personification occurs when people who have in some way the attributes we would expect these people to have. In Ray's metaphor for example the personification of the external IT expert was seen as efficient in response time, like any good hero and also his effectiveness. It served to answer the enquiry around response time. Additionally due to the problem being rectified by the mysterious Scarlet Pimpernel figure, its use by Ray also distanced himself from further questioning about the cause of the problem. Thus he was not open to appearing foolish in front of Ivy had she or Simon questioned or challenged him about his statement.

In extract 35 the "IT guy" personification performed differently, yet still enabled the speaker to orientate a response to a discursive challenge. Ironically both personifications constructed in the talk of Ray and Juliet, workers from different residential homes, referred to the same individual. Crucially the "IT guy" personification served to allow Juliet, the deputy manager of the only home without internet access, to orientate lack of access in her description to place blame. Also her talk worked up an account which reduced risk of it being weakened in the immediate context.

In extract 35 Juliet's statement of intent is initially challenged⁴⁷. In this context her repeated deployment of the inclusive terms of "we" and "our" coupled with the professionalised rhetoric in the start of her account "to access the internet for the young people", works up her as a representative of an organisation and indeed her staff team. By making use of terms in discourses of digital inclusion, particularly in her use of the word "access", Juliet is able to construct a description in line with discourses this digital inclusion as opposed to accountable risk management, characteristics of child protection discourses.

Juliet was the most senior worker present in the staff group forum and her talk discursively aligned staff members present as part of a staff team she belonged to and helped to manage. Her interest in the success of this discursive performance was in their interest. Her ability to manage the challenging initial response in this exchange on her own behalf and due to her institutional position on behalf of the staff team, had implications for the home and her role within it. As such in the face of this challenge, Juliet is able to recruit the IT guy as a way to manage her and the home's stake subtly. By stating that "it is gona to happen" Juliet opens herself and indeed the home up to being viewed as being speculative or as telling Simon something he may have heard before. Upon being challenged, instead of attempting to issue a reason for the continued lack of in-house internet access for the young people via technical or safe guarding rhetoric, Juliet's talk is tentative and vague: "our IT gu:y's (.) °not (.) sort of (.) come up with° (0.6) °the goods°". As Goffman (1959) proposes, in order to give a successful performance the performer needs to take into account what the audience already know. In working up an account and performance to be given to Simon, a confessed former residential worker and relative ICT expert who was not part of her staff team and as such may not have the same stake in her performance, Juliet's vagueness counteracts possible contradictions. By working up an account which attributes blame via a vague description to the "IT guy", even when faced with a less than enthused response she is able to produce an account which claims that in-house internet access for her the young people will: "happen (.) definitely" without further challenges.

The analysis of extracts 32, 34 and 35 map emergent ways in which workers and indeed organisations as corporate parents negotiated ideological dilemmas created by digital

⁴⁷ Having travelled to this site for around a year before this meeting I am aware that my response was intentionally delivered with an amount of cynicism. This emotive content may not be visible in the transcription but as a reflective analyst and indeed writer, to not mention it now would be misleading. I am as much engaged now in the extract's construction, as Simon was at the time the speech acts were uttered in extract 35.

competency as a function of generation repertoire. In a discursive psychological framework and a chapter moving towards the application of this analysis to direct practice, it is important to state that this talk mediated young people's access to ICT. In this way the consequences of workers constructing discursively a real and/or perceived lack of knowledge/interest in ICT were being constituted through systems of discourse. Hence despite a tendency for in-house expertise to be lacking, young people could access in-house the internet and have this access monitored via a range of remote protocols and safe guarding procedures, whether this be via the remote retrospective governance or indeed thanks to the Scarlet Pimpernel or the IT guy. The final section of this chapter focuses on how young people and their workers experience new social media such as the widely used Social Networking Sites (SNS), producing recommendations and conclusions regarding the mediation of associated risk through monitoring via engagement accordingly.

8.5 Mobilising powerlessness

"If ideologies did not contain contrary themes, they would not provide the resources for common-sense thinking, for thinking involves dialogic discussion, or the counter-positioning of contrary themes, which can both appear in their way to be reasonable. In discussions one can hear people jostling with the contrary themes of common-sense." (Billig, 1997:218)

Young people using SNS can choose to accept, ignore or block friend requests and search for others with whom they wish to make friends with (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Such a feature may have particular resonance for young people living in care and for those who work with them. Research has indicated that for looked-after young people contact with birth families and former carers is highly complex (Neil 2008; Young & Neil, 2009). Such complexities seemingly increase in online environments, making engagement and dialogues with young people in this area of vital importance.

However in discussions regarding SNS during this project, workers tended to make claims of powerlessness in their inability to help young people protect themselves online. Claims would resonate around the notion that care environments could not control young people's internet access outside as well as, in some cases, inside residential homes. Such rationales would be worked up via descriptions of the increasing number of young people accessing the internet

from mobile phones. Mobilising powerlessness in this way, workers often agentically drew upon menacing narratives to demonstrate this risk orientation. Critically, the authoring of such narratives was performed to demonstrate how characters had fallen foul of the internet, whilst mitigating their own responsibility via evoking inevitability via descriptions of access. Narratives shared were told from either personal experiences or via making use of ones available in the media. This dominant orientation mitigated worker responsibility, but also crucially provided a corpus of resources from which a lack of engagement with SNS by workers could be constructed.

Despite this dominance, a contrary mobilisation of powerlessness was emerging, though it was in the minority. Crucially this mobilisation framed an inability to control access in a way which provided a stance from which to engage in dialogues about web-safety, as extracts 36 and 37 illustrate. Both extracts are taken from an implementation session in which Phil requests help to protect his Facebook profile.

Extract 36

Becky: Yeah the more you ban it the more you (0.4) >you can go on it on

your pho:ne< you can't get away from [it]

Simon: [↑Mm,]

Phil: I I've got I can get Facebook on ↑this pho:ne

Simon: Can you↑

(1.8)

Becky: So you've (.) °just got to° (2.3)

Simon: Accept it

Becky: Yeah it can bring a lot of problems but then it can bring

↑good things as we:ll,

Implementation cycle: Phil 15, Becky (staff) and Simon

Becky's talk is still constructed in the worker-young person dyad and residential context, yet her talk performs differently. In extract 36, Becky works up her argument as a description which taps into the shared ideological knowledge of the saturation of mobile phone technology and its ability to access the internet. After all: ">you can go on it on your pho:ne< you can't get away from [it]". In so doing Becky pre-empts counter challenges to the legitimacy of her comments and their bias via managing dilemmas of stake through description (Potter, 1996). Phil is quick to support Becky's claims and assists in the co-construction of this account. Phil's comments of "I can get Facebook on ↑this pho:ne" shows the audience that Becky's claims were valid, not only had he got a phone, but his phone could access Facebook. Having worked up an account which accepted technology due to its inescapability via ICT prevalence and not her own views, Becky is able to mobilise an 'if you can't beat them join them' troupe. Once young people accessing SNS is constructed as inevitable, talk moves from orientating around anxiety regarding being unable to stop risk towards assisting in its reduction. This allowed Becky to move forward from access dilemmas and engage with Phil in his Facebook use, as shown in extract 37. In this way allowing the idea of engagement based monitoring to emerge.

Extract 37

Becky: Yeah so if someone Phil if someone's hassling you Ph:l you can go on this bi:t,(.) block, (0.8) type in their na:me, (.) and it will come ↑up, (.) a:nd then you can just block 'em >and they can't< (.) do anything to your profile.

Implementation cycle: Becky (staff) also present Phil 15, and Simon

Her talk conveys knowledge about the topic and features rhetoric associated with SNS such as "profile" and "block", she works up her expertise via this instructional demonstration. Becky's talk does this by mixing in general instructions which allows Phil to move his pointer towards the appropriate section of his profile. Does extract 37 provide evidence which suggests that residential homes and the corporate parents who manage them, should be providing training upon Facebook and ways to talk to young people about it?

This discussion would strongly recommend that the dominant episteme of accountable risk management avoids this temptation to refer to type. Attempts to manage risk do not eliminate them, meaning that in some cases young people may be trying to use ICT and SNS, facing the specific challenges associated with being in care and using such things alone. This discussion suggests that to operate in a way which embraces unequal power balances (which place the young people as experts) should be reconstructed as an opportunity for further engagement and communication. They should not be seen as a threat (Ahmad, Betts & Cown, 2008). The possibility of shifting the power balance and expert label away from the care professional to the young people could be an empowering experience (Ahmad, Betts & Cown, 2008). On a cautionary note, if as suggested such technology does make vulnerable populations more vulnerable, then professional engagement within this area must seek to develop an awareness and firm knowledge base. But how can this knowledge be gained through better e-safety courses?

It is argued here that this knowledge base should be created through invoking an orientation of powerlessness that allows for risk reduction through engagement based monitoring; in other words via residential relationships. This may be a difficult suggestion which goes against the grain of current ways of thinking about internet based risks. Yet if a worker is asked by a young person about pregnancy and a how to go about protecting themselves, would a worker want the young person having requested their help to go it alone or simply tell them menacing narratives about child birth? Or perhaps somehow monitoring them from afar? In practice, if the worker had little or no knowledge about such things they may seek assistance from in-house experts. Hopefully in this scenario since the young person had chosen them specifically, arrangements would be made for the worker and the young person to visit various clinics or find out information together. In this example both parties would benefit in two ways. Both would share in the experience and the knowledge gained via such a visit, but also have a co-constructive relationship if elements were forgotten. All of this would allow risk reduction dialogues to be satisfied and for the worker-young person dyadic relationship to have gained from the shared experience. In considering ICT and SNS, having an atypical knowledge imbalance where the young person knows more or equally as little as an unknowledgeable worker would function in the same way. Having a knowledgeable young person assist a worker set up a mock SNS profile and demonstrate how to protect it or both finding out the knowledge together, works to embrace powerlessness, but also manage risk through engagement based monitoring, a feature of close relationships.

8.6 Summative comments

The talk of workers and young people illustrate the emergent ways in which those who live, work and manage residential homes negotiate positional engagement, ideological dilemmas associated with power imbalances, discourses of child protection, digital inclusion and rights. Workers evoked non-expertise accounts at a positional level negotiating organisational accountability, professional responsibility and risk. This non-expertise impacted upon the way in which young people's access and use of ICT was mediated. Young people became conceptualised as powerful experts, in a context and hierarchical structure which is typically reliant upon power resonating with workers. In some cases this power imbalance saw corporate parents introduce retrospective remote internet governance models as a way to facilitate young people's internet access. In one home a self-positioned in-house ICT expert was able to provide continuous monitoring in-house via his knowledge of web filtering technology. Whilst both models operated in the accountable risk management episteme, each had drawbacks. The remote system did not allow for localised experiential learning or scaffolding dialogues to occur via the shared adolescent-worker dyadic relationship. Adam's in-house model did have the potential for such dialogues to occur. Yet by releasing administrator rights to colleagues without disseminating associated knowledge, Adams indispensable consultant role remained, indispensable. Without him young people's access to the internet ceased.

For organisations as corporate parents, Adam's knowledge and skill were an asset and rarity. To navigate discourses of risk and inclusion, e-safety courses were being implemented to readdress power imbalances of in-house expertise as residing with young people. In the episteme of accountable risk management, mandatory ICT training courses functioned as a way for the corporate parent to work up responsibility for young people's uses of ICT at a local level. Counteracting this localising talk through recruiting ICT competency as a function of generation, workers were able to use a wider variety of troupes, metaphors, anecdotes and clichés to weaken the arguments of e-safety rhetoric. From this weakening the emergence of the external ICT expert emerged. The personification of the Scarlet Pimpernel also known as the IT Guy, satisfied discourses of digital inclusion, accountable risk management and child protection. Yet the apparent success of the Scarlett Pimpernel in maintaining internet access was constituted in

the discourse of workers somewhat differently. Discursive orientations mobilising perceived inevitability regarding young people's internet usage may provide a proposition which moves to reintroduce an emphasis on residential relationships as a way to monitor, but crucially to monitor via engagement in online environments.

Chapter 9: Discussion and implications

9.1 Introduction

To explore how digital technologies can be used to engage looked-after children experiencing adolescence in self-reflective dialogues, two contrasting approaches were created and developed. Development of the *bebook* website and podwalking technique provided resources and a relationship which promoted, and crucially supported, dialogues of identity and narrative. The introduction and progression of the tools and their approaches enabled the examination of how these digital technologies were promoted, constrained and shaped by residential care homes. The chapter begins by outlining how the core research findings addressed the overarching research question. Reflections are also offered as to how the recording of relationships fashioned methodological challenges. The chapter then examines how the facilitative relationships assisted adolescents in reflecting upon a range of memories and experiences. Implications for residential staff, homes and care providers are then highlighted. The chapter draws to a reflective close by charting future research agendas and offering closing comments.

9.2 Core findings

Through the introduction of *bebook* and the predictable nature of the *bebook* relationship, adolescents were able to reflect upon recent events and understand such things in a temporal fashion. The young people were also able to reflect and fill in narrative gaps during and after podwalking. Both *bebook* and podwalking's use of digital technologies created engagement opportunities. They provided young people with assistance (when needed) to create understandable ways of talking about themselves and their experiences. Despite such findings, a general discomfort and anxiety around worker's inability to control young people's access to digital technologies emerged. Once acknowledged however, this inability to prevent access

began to illustrate the fruitfulness of monitoring via residential relationships and a need for presence in online environments.

In response to the overarching research question of: “How can digital technologies be used to engage adolescents placed residentially in reflective dialogues akin to those of conventional life story work?” the discursive evidence illustrates that adolescents can be engaged in reflective dialogues with a combination of digital technologies and a predictable, on-going reflective relationship. When given such an opportunity adolescents tell their stories in interesting and creative ways. They appear to value the opportunity and the relationship which facilitates such tasks. This confirms the need to create reflective opportunities with relevant communication tools for adolescents with disrupted life experiences.

What should not be underplayed at this point is the role of the engaged and reflective other. Whilst it is easy to get seduced by the possibilities of digital media, these vulnerable children did not use these tools in isolation. The role of the *bebook* facilitator and engaged audience members during podwalking were vital. They engaged adolescents during the initial phases, but more importantly supported young people's self-reflections and reconstruction of memories throughout. The ability of the research methodology to record and indeed represent relationships was vital throughout the project. The innovative and dynamic way in which data was generated and collected created numerous methodological challenges. On this note, the following section explores methodological insights critical in representing the relationships which became a dominant feature of the research project. The chapter will then discuss what this relationship offered to the young people, drawing comparisons between how young people used relationships as resources during *bebook* and podwalking processes.

9.3 Representing relationships: Methodological challenges

The use of digital technologies in *bebook* and podwalking, alongside the amalgamation of action research and discursive approaches generated several methodological challenges. As methodological approaches *bebook* and podwalking have potentially wider uses in a range of research and practice environments. The infrastructure of *bebook* lends itself to being used in a range of longitudinal qualitative data collection situations, for example working with brain injury

rehabilitation, memory work with Alzheimer's or working with cancer survivors. The *bebook* website site also stimulates quantitative data in terms of usage rates, time on page and so forth. Podwalking as a way to access narratives of place, relationships and power also offer potential worth further exploration. This multilayered and multi-perspective approach has the potential to generate further research applications. Its use as an innovative interview tool highlights how this technique can generate different streams of narrative data to produce potentially more reflective participant stories, especially with people who are regarded as 'hard to reach'. Seemingly both tools have the potential to be applied in any research setting which seeks to elicit participant's stories. Whilst both approaches stimulated and recorded participant narratives, this innovative research also raised the need to revisit how qualitative researchers represent research-based relationships and social interactions in text.

9.3.1 Transcription

For qualitative researchers and those who recruit qualitative methods, the point in which an extract of an account begins and ends is often negotiated by what can be transcribed. The collection, analysis and reporting of audiovisual data manifests additional complexities when producing an extract and an associated clip. As Antaki, Billig, Edwards and Potter (2003) highlight publication is a way to stop analysing; this does not discount the possibility of repeated or multiple interpretations of a given text or indeed chunk of talk. This was a theme continued in Frost et al. (2010), whose research on Pluralism in Qualitative Research (PQR) encouraged researchers from different analytical positions to examine the same interview in an effort to integrate diverse qualitative approaches. This work illustrates the possibilities of repeated, shared and contested readings.

The advent and use of multimodal data collection methods open up data to analysis from multiple perspectives. Discussions concerning how to represent different streams of data continue in relation to the use of multimodal transcription methods (Bezemer & Kress, 2008; Bezemer & Mavers, 2011; Jewitt, 2011). In discourse analysis non-verbal communications are absent. In applying a discursive lens to audiovisual data awareness is shown towards how this can open ones representation of an extract to multiple analyses, as well as the making of analytical claims regarding non-vocal elements of interaction without visual records (Potter & Hepburn 2007).

The presentation of detailed transcription seemingly makes available subtle nuances of social interaction. Where only talk is recorded, Jeffersonian transcription methods tend to be favoured by discursive analysts (Jefferson, 1984; 1985). Hepburn (2004) extends this work in relation to the transcription and representation of crying and laughter. Yet in interactions which feature communicative streams including and beyond the verbal, for example face-to-face or web-based video calling platforms⁴⁸, communicative nuances consist of more than the verbal. Whilst it is argued that such non-verbal nuances are still constructed and interpreted discursively in their contribution to social interactions, perhaps the need to extend the Jeffersonian orientation is worthy of exploration.

On this note Bezemer and Mavers (2011) encourage researchers who use video-based social research methodologies to be transparent in terms of how different emphases make gains and losses in their analysis, and the theoretical implications of their chosen transcription method. Stating that: "...evidence for an argument ought to reside in the transcript, and other, ethnographic, sources of evidence may be considered as 'supplementary'." (Bezemer & Mavers, 2011:204). Though such recommendations were employed with the focus remaining on talk via evidence gleaned from transcripts, this opens up new challenges. Take for example my analysis of extract 11 in which I draw attention to the passing of the camcorder from myself (Simon) to Billie. Though this description sought to be as neutral as possible, neutrality in itself is impossible since talk is social action. In this way one can argue I set up my interpretation of the passing, taking, grabbing, sharing of the camcorder in such a way to fit with the analytical interpretation being worked up. My analysis does not report that I force or pressure Billie into accepting the camcorder. As the situated analyst I do not believe the words forced or pressured fit with the exchange. They certainly do not fit with the participatory ethos of the research project. However to make a claim that he did not experience this interaction in this way is something I cannot do. What it is possible to state is that the discourse following this camcorder transference is incongruent with one person forcing another to carry out a social action. A final note on extract 11, is made in relation to the placement of the additional comments represented via (()) in accordance with Jefferson (2004). If the integration of audiovisual data collection methods are to continue to offer those who work discursively new ways of stimulating social exchanges, the representation of action orientations need addressing. In the age of online journals and eBooks additional consideration is also needed in the representation of interactions

⁴⁸ For example Skype and FaceTime.

beyond the textual via available communication media and how we seek to gain permissions to use audiovisual data in publications.

9.3.2 Participant recognition

Recognition was a particular challenge which emerged through the action research process as noted in *Chapter 5: Methodology*. The recording of webcam entries for *bebook* and the undertaking of podwalks meant that on occasions interesting dialogues were recorded along with the visuals available through the various camera lenses. This was expected and indeed sought due to the duality of data collection processes as life story work tools. This did however result in closer reflection upon the notion of recognition, particularly as the majority of participants who became actively engaged were deemed vulnerable.

In psychology, researchers are guided by *the British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct* (BPS, 2009). Whilst the limitations of this document are noted, there are several aspects which, in relation to the recognition of participants, demand attention. The document requests that research be considered from the "...standpoint of the research participants..." (BPS 2009:12), whilst encouraging researchers to: "Avoid practices that are unfair or prejudiced." (BPS, 2009:10). This research followed these guidelines and was guided by the research governance agreement with the partnership care provider and my University. Upon closer inspection, by not being able to grant recognition when requested by participants, I may have failed to understand what this recognition meant to the young people involved. In the publication of this thesis for example internal and cross-disciplinary in my own University meant I was unable to present clips along with extracts of text, denying participants the chance gain recognition. Whilst this may not have always been deemed appropriate, this decision was taken away from them.

In the pursuit of anonymity in research which collects visual and audio data, additional complexities arise in terms of recognition and also future feelings towards recognition. According to the comments of McCrystal (2008:89-90) the: "...research ethics involving the participation of children and young people have centred on two key issues. Firstly informed consent (including competence to consent), and secondly, the protection of participants." Having addressed the first of these two key issues through the use of participant information clips (Hammond & Cooper, 2011a), which in itself needs further development, the second issue will now be discussed in terms of what this means for recognition.

When seeking to protect participant's identities, critical reflection is needed to address from what, or whom are we protecting participants from. Similarly critical reflection is needed in unpacking the differing layers of anonymity that we offer to participants, as it may be necessary to alter names, blur faces, change voices and geographical elements of stories. As discourses within the era of risk society have move from moral discourses, to ones focused on regulation (Ashcroft, 2003; Beck, 1992), research practices have replicated such a movement. Thus instead of internal, self-regulation, external regulation via monitoring and reviewing processes now dominate (Miller & Boulton, 2007). As such in terms of protecting participants, emphasis moves away from individual decisions to predominantly external committees. Yet this was not the case within this research whereby the partnership care provider dictated participant anonymity. In granting permission to use research in a way which meant anonymity was conveyed, the partnership care provider did allow some recognition for the participants it allowed me to work with. The responsibility then lies with the researcher to present this recognition in ways which are representative of the research relationships experienced.

9.4 Relationships

The power and centrality of the relationship created through the use of digital innovations *bebook* and podwalking went beyond my expectations, focusing critical attention and reflections upon how such relationships were represented. The following section begins to unpack how young people used reflective relationships to accomplish narrative tasks. The action research methodology employed cultivated relationships which became more meaningful than those typical of longitudinal qualitative research, meaningful in the sense that the relationship between myself and the young people facilitated data collection and supported their reflections. In beginning to unpack what these relationships enabled young people to do and what this tells us about adolescent narrative identities, it is important to compare how they were used during *bebook* and podwalking. Additionally this discussion will also reflect upon whether dialogues created were akin to those of conventional life story work, or whether they represent the beginnings of a different way of working and engaging with adolescents.

9.4.1 *bebook*: Scaffolding narrative structures

“...memory is not an individual act but a collective one...” (Gergen, 1999:134)

The *bebook* website, associated activities and relationships were used by the young people to reflect upon everyday activities. These included going to school and reflections upon their day-to-day lives, both as adolescents and adolescents in care. The activities and this relationship were primarily experienced with me. The role I came to play throughout the project as *bebook* facilitator and the relationship this provided demonstrates the importance of this relationship process alongside digital innovations. This combination provided opportunities to assist in the construction of young people's shared narratives. My regular weekly visits also provided young people with a frame of reference from which to begin to construct and reflect upon recent events in a temporal fashion. Many young people started the sharing of their reflections the day after my previous visit, with some describing activities in their coming week. So for example if I visited a young person on Fridays, they would start a webcam entry by reflecting upon events from the previous Saturday. They reflected upon the week's events including the Friday itself, before projecting how they envisaged their up and coming week would unfold. During such accounts additional narrative complexities were often navigated in relation to their overarching autobiographical narratives. Young people would tend to explain the significance of spending time with family members at weekends in relation to care proceedings.

Unlike other placement provisions such as fostering and adoption arrangements, residential care homes feature staff rotas. These add another layer of complexity for young people attempting to share accounts and introduce temporal elements. For young people not in education, the unavailability of weekly school routines also hindered narrative construction. The *bebook* facilitator role and the predictable nature of my visits began to assist young people in producing accounts which acquired a culturally acceptable: “...narrative character...” (Gergen, 2000:161). Narrative character in this context referring to socially acceptable and recognised ways of structuring accounts, making these accounts logical and understandable. This construction was aided through the aforementioned weekly frame of reference but also through asking questions that require descriptive responses.

The range of support young people needed to supplement narratives structurally varied. From the analysis presented in *Chapter 6: bebook: promoting reflective dialogue and adolescents in*

residential care, differences in how my presence was used become particularly apparent through comparing the way Phil and Lynk recruited it. Accordingly in attempting to support such narrative constructions my point of interest was akin to that of Edwards and Potter (1992) since, I did not view memory as created from an undisputed representation of events. My interest was instead, helping participants create culturally credible accounts. In this way I sought to provide a relationship which assisted young people in creating understandable ways of talking about themselves. Although with a different age group, this theme is reminiscent of Ryan and Walker's (2007) commentary on the goals of conventional approaches to life story work. Memories, like identity were viewed as culturally produced. In this way the relationship context was able to provide assistance when requested in a way which sought to assist them work up their own reflective truths. Unlike many approaches to conventional life story work, the truths of the young people are valued equally, perhaps a luxury those who work with younger children do not have.

"Consider a five-year-old, asked by her parents about a day in kindergarten. She describes her pencil, pen, friend's hair, then the school flag, and finally the clouds. Chances are this account would seem unsatisfactory to her parents. Why? Because the events are not related to each other; there is no direction or "point" to the account, no drama, no proper sense of beginning and ending. Yet none of these characteristics - relationship among events, direction, drama, and temporal containment - exist within the events of life. They are, rather, features of 'good' stories in our culture, and without them one's tale is either boring or unintelligible." (Gergen, 2000:161)

Potter (1996) suggests that fact construction can build upon the rhetoric of description. In this way young people were encouraged to 'think' about what they had been doing during the week. They were encouraged to reflect upon their truths. They were implicitly encouraged to narrate from the point of view of their individual character, what Genette (1980) referred to as internal focalisation. During the performing of their accounts their subjectivity was embraced, making whatever was shared acceptable. These were the young people's stories after all. I would only interject or ask questions during webcam performances when invited to do so.

My goal was similar to the 'goodness' of stories in the extract above from Gergen (2000). Once the pieces of the narrative had been shared, usually when the young person had finished recording their webcam entry, I would ask questions about the characters of the stories which attempted to elicit a more detailed account. Detailed descriptions performed as rhetoric, they are commonly used to add authenticity to accounts (Potter, 1996). In some cases this would

lead onto other narratives being shared about the character featured in the webcam entry. In other cases this would provide causal links between the characters in their shared account. Having encouraged young people to share additional information regarding the narrative constructed on the webcam, I would then begin to attempt to construct some of the causal links of their narrative aloud. The working up of this account would be corrected, edited or reproduced by the young people accordingly. During this process I would occasionally miss out a piece of narrative or intentionally misrepresent its temporal order. This was to enable the young people to feel confident in challenging this construction, whilst helping me gauge if the relationship was maintaining its co-constructor role without becoming colonial.

9.4.1.1 “It must have been Tuesday cos Simon was here...”

“In order to define and interpret ‘what’ exactly has happened on any particular occasion, the sequence of events is of extreme importance.” (Crossley, 2000:10)

Available narratives make certain identities, normative sequences and value positions available to social performers (Wetherell, 1998). In viewing narrative structures as discursive resources used to construct accounts, it is important to mention the centrality of time in Western cultures as coherence enhancing. Increments such as the number of hours in a day, days in a week, months in a year and so forth are made available through shared understandings of the Gregorian calendar. The meaning of days of the week can be built up through associated activities. Weekly temporal strands can inform and locate narratives of daily life events, Tuesday night is Football, Friday night is fish and chip night and so on. For young people with disrupted lives the predictability of relationships, particularly within a residential context, can become dissolved. Relationships and their associations remain fluid. They are unable to rely upon deductive reasoning between staff and days of the week. Causal linkages which provide associations with temporal aspects become unavailable. For example the statement ‘it must have been Friday because Vicki was here’ only makes sense if Vicki is regularly on shift on Fridays.

When seeking to create causal linkages the availability of narrative structures determined success. Young people’s accounts of their recent activities should not be viewed as incoherent per se, since incoherence and indeed coherence is a culturally determined phenomena. Despite this what remains is the need to assist vulnerable young people in meaningful ways to interpret

their experiences. When attempting to engage vulnerable adolescents in a way which makes temporal narrative structures available, *bebook* and the relationship it creates, appear to provide a resource for introducing temporal elements from which causal linkages can be constructed.

9.4.2 Podwalking: Audience as engaged

Whilst *bebook* related activities were able to add more immediate structure to narratives from young people's day-to-day experiences podwalking offered a different proposition yet the importance of relationships continued. The explicit purpose of the podwalking approach requested that young people provide accounts of places that were of importance to them. During visits to such places particularly those from the young person's past, more distant accounts were reconstructed and reinterpreted. Young people would often introduce and contextualise characters present in the places visited when they were there.

Through its use of a camcorder, podwalking granted young people a more dynamic narrative sharing experience. Young people could run, walk, jump, zoom in, zoom out, and choose to appear in front of the camera or behind it. This mobility enabled young people to explore the places visited and the narratives such places evoked. For such reasons the narratives shared on podwalks were generally situated in the context of lived experiences. So for example upon visiting previous schools narratives were told in relation to young people's experiences of such places, and as such the time period in their lives such experiences took place. They would locate the shared narrative under construction within their own overarching biographical narrative. The locating of such a narrative would be made utilising available time-related information. Here the role of engaged audience became a valuable resource.

When information was not available, engaged audience members would attempt to co-construct accounts to address narrative gaps via the use of reflective questions. Not knowing young people's case files or pre-care experiences, this was something I regularly did. I would ask young people how old they were when they were at the school, how long they were here for, teacher's names, friends names, how they would get to and from school. From these additional narrative chunks, myself and the young people would try to introduce temporal strands to the account, via their date of birth and information gleaned from the shared narrative. The role of an engaged staff member during this process was on many occasions helpful in this regard. Those familiar with the young person's care records or personal history were able to provide temporal information. Using this information the young people could begin to reinterpret or

challenge the shared narrative in the context of the overall temporal structure of their own larger biographical narrative. Staff members did not always have immediate access to such information, causing some to reflect that they needed to revisit young people's care histories.

9.4.3 Dialogues akin to traditional life story work?

The different implementation and modality of the approaches *bebook* and podwalking allowed young people to construct accounts in various ways. The frequent and on-going process of being involved in *bebook* lends itself to reflections of a more immediate nature. Narratives constructed and reconstructed during *bebook* and podwalking appear to offer young people comparable ways to engage in self-reflective dialogues. Narratives produced and shared in the main via *bebook* related to young people's more immediate preoccupations. Once recorded such entries tended to be reflected upon in the context of the relationship I shared with the young people. This constant reworking and continual construction of unfinished identities allowed young people to explore and edit different narratives. Some young people did choose to use *bebook* as an opportunity to talk about their reasons for entering care. However, these accounts commonly performed as situated explanations as to how and why they had ended up in their current living situation. In this way these deeper reflections were shared to provide context to current narratives and experiences being shared.

Podwalking through its revisiting of previous neighbourhoods immediately lends itself to the sharing of more distant memories and reflections upon these recollections. Although podwalking is not focused in a way which encourages young people to address abuse and/or traumas, it is perhaps the most like conventional approaches to life story work. Yet unlike conventional approaches, podwalking was young person driven. Young people chose where to go and what stories to tell, the idea of the engaged audience was merely to support this process. The reworking and editing of podwalks furnished young people with opportunities to continually rework and reinterpret their performances, as well as the places and people shown.

Digital technologies and social media impact upon the negotiation and the continual construction of boundaries. *bebook* and podwalking's use of differing technologies enabled relationship context to assist young people in boundary creation and interpretation. In the context of podwalking, discriminatory conversations and dialogues orientating around using technology responsibly were undertaken pre-podwalk. Such conversations also took place during *bebook* activities.

Digital technologies used to record *bebook* entries were in the main webcams. This modality of communication was often linked to laptops. Though internet access via young people's laptops was not a given, when they were available young people tended to have a Social Networking Sites (SNS) instant messaging platform running in the background whilst engaging in *bebook*. Conversational comparisons between the public nature of SNS and *bebook* as a more private space emerged. In an evaluative conversation with Anne-Marie (15) regarding her use of the *bebook* website, she commented that: "...the old pictures I'd like put on here...cos there urm a bit too personal for Facebook..." Like other young people, Anne-Marie uploaded some photos from Facebook to *bebook*. This trend was not commonly reversed, however this is not to say it did not occur. Yet as Anne-Marie's sentiments illustrate, having access to a private webspace such as *bebook* offered young people the ability to discriminate between public and private audiences without having to navigate sometimes complex SNS privacy settings.

9.5 Positioning residential relationships and digital media

"If we create our worlds largely through discourse, then we should be ever attentive to our ways of speaking and writing." (Gergen, 1999:115)

Central to conventional approaches to life story work is the promotion of the child-carer relationship. This is enmeshed within the process of creating life story books. The created digital life story work tools *bebook* and podwalking promote opportunities for the worker-adolescent relationship to become engaged in reflective and coherence promoting dialogues. The characteristics of the digital technologies recruited add additional value to life story work as an on-going reflective process. Digital recordings can provide a relationship snapshot and often include time and date stamps from when the recording was taken. Such elements can enhance the retelling of narratives in a more accessible manner for young people.

Social care settings are understandably cautious regarding the promotion of digital technologies with vulnerable young people, especially when such young people are seen to have expertise exceeding that of the workers employed to protect them. In residential settings, individual staff team members are part of a larger team of carers. Each individual member brings a variety of skills to their role and potential benefits to the residential experiences of those young people they work with. Some can cook, undertake DIY, others may prefer to share other activities and

pastimes such as sport or art. Each of these skills has the potential to enrich the lives of vulnerable young people, offering engagement hooks which can lead to the creation of facilitating relationships.

If a worker who is a poor cook is asked to facilitate a cooking activity with an expert young person, there may be little cause for anxiety. When the same request emerges which involves digital media, such an activity is likely to produce a level of anxiety that may see the activity not undertaken. A variety of discourses may be used regarding the facilitation of such activity, with the common denominator often being perceived risk. When comparisons are made to other activities which carry inherent risks, clarification regarding the need to engage in this area emerges. Can a young person not self-harm with a knife from the kitchen? Yet with risk assessment procedures, such things are still undertaken.

Three of the four homes engaged in this study had responded to this need and were implementing a variety of remote and local internet monitoring systems. Whilst responding to the need to manage in-house risk, such procedures shutdown many opportunities for educational dialogues. Safeguarding strategies attempt to control in-house risks in the short-term; they offer little in the way of allowing workers to engage in discriminatory conversations with young people. The ability of workers to engage adolescents in reflective dialogues remains the most promising way to mediate and facilitate the positive use of digital technologies within and beyond the four walls of residential care homes. As the continued diffusion of smartphone and mobile internet technologies make such technologies more accessible, care settings need to be proactive as opposed to reactive moving forward.

9.6 Policy and digital truths

Although the research project takes a positive stance towards the uses of digital media by looked-after children, such a stance does not alter reasons for anxiety. Off-line vulnerabilities do transcend into online domains. The internet, like a car is not dangerous per se. How this tool is used by young people and those whom wish to take advantage of vulnerable populations is where dangers should be located. Policy needs to help these young people learn to drive safely on their own. This reconceptualisation enables the debate regarding vulnerable young people accessing the internet to be productively moved forward.

Young people engaged with *bebook* due to its similarities to popular SNS. However their uses of it differed in a way which encourages further examination. Through supportive dialogues, young people began to discriminate between the use of different technologies and relationships, key skills for life. Such dialogues can begin to build resistance and resilience strategies to toxic elements of online and indeed off-line danger. The ability to discriminate between what to share and who to share things with moves beyond the technological realm of web filters and associated administrator roles.

Looked-after children may always be vulnerable in online environments, to some extent we all are. The need to support young people in building their 'no claims bonus' is where attention needs focusing. Young people need to build up discriminatory resilience. This is the key task moving forward. Such a task cannot be outsourced by an over emphasis on web filtering technology and distant safeguarding procedures. Such an emphasis is short sighted and in many ways a short-term mechanism since mobile internet technology is set to continue to rise over the coming decade. By engaging with digital life story work, care professionals have a variety of ways in which to engage with young people in a communicative sensitive fashion. Not only do such approaches highlight the positive and facilitative nature of digital technologies as life story work tools, they also allow dialogues regarding the wider uses of such technologies to occur responsibly.

9.7 Implications for practice from research

In drawing together key research themes regarding the need for greater communicative sensitivity, the importance of supportive relationships and usefulness of the digital life story work tools created by this research there is a need to unpack how such research themes impact upon practice. This section outlines my reflections of how such themes may operate within a practice context.

9.7.1 Communicative sensitivity

The concept of communicative sensitivity has been introduced throughout the research. This concept relates to the practice need to see digital technologies from the young person's point of view. Informed by social constructionist ideas, there is a practice need to recognise what social actions the use of digital technologies accomplishes for contemporary adolescents. Digital technologies are popular, desirable and in many ways, due to their retail price and marketing,

aspirational. They are used as tools to communicate, share, store and manipulate material. An appreciation of digital devices wider social functions allows practitioners to gain an insight into how their own use of the same digital technologies performs the doing of communication sensitively. In the same way traditional life story work with younger children embraces communicative mediums such as painting pictures, cutting out shapes, and colouring in pictures, adolescent focused approaches need to embrace how adolescents chose to communicate with each other and those around them.

Using such tools conveys respect and performs the social act of communicating sensitivity. In some instances the use of such tools also conveys on behalf the practitioner, a willingness to make oneself vulnerable and move beyond one's communicative comfort zone. For practitioners without knowledge of such technologies having an expert young person teach them about the technologies they seek to use also makes this relationship more authentic. The practitioner has to trust the adolescent and in turn a level of rapport between the two can develop, but importantly there is the potential for this trust to become mirrored.

9.7.2 Building supportive relationships via digital life story work

Building supportive relationships with young people through being communicatively sensitive was enabled via digital life story work tools. The tools piggybacked upon existing communication devices used. The digital life story work approaches facilitated relationships between me and the young people, they provided activities to do using the communication tools young people found appealing and also created technical problems which needed to be resolved. Such technological teething problems provided me with the opportunity to convey my trust and respect for the knowledge the young people had about the technologies which many frequently used.

9.7.2.1 How did I build supportive relationships via digital life story work?

Despite my earlier thoughts regarding residential workers facilitating these tools usage with adolescents, this did not occur for reasons outlined in previous chapters. Reflecting upon how relationships between myself and the young people were built, managed and negotiated. I am aware that I was not bound by the institutional practices as the residential workers were. I was

not 'on shift' as residential workers were, yet in many ways I was 'on shift' as a researcher. Unlike the workers who had to estimate the time activities would take and produce strategic shift plans to ensure that other young people could have their own activities facilitated, I was not bound by the implications of time management. Though my time was not limitless I was able to give the young people the attention and time they needed. This meant that although I had my own agenda for what I wanted each session with the young person to achieve I was able to be flexible, allowing the young people to progress at their own speed.

In being 'on shift' as a researcher I also perhaps had the advantage of being somebody from the outside; entering the homes with the explicit purpose of spending time with young people and carrying out activities which used the technologies they enjoyed using. I was not somebody who had institutional power or influence on their day-to-day lives. I was not somebody who would have to sanction them or have to inform them of bad news. I had no obvious institutional hierarchical power in terms of the typical worker-young person dyad. As a researcher 'on shift' who wanted young people to interact and use the digital tools, what I had to offer them was a relationship and the potential of gaining a £10 voucher if they completed the monthly missions. This relationship gave them an opportunity to have an adult in their lives that came and spent time devoted to them, he was there to explicitly see them and was interested in facilitating their use of digital technologies and listen to them tell their stories.

Moving away from the researcher label and towards trying to unpack how I was Simon⁴⁹, the fundamental quality I sought to provide within these relationships was authenticity. Although I shared similarities with many of the young people in terms of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, I was aware of my differing life experiences and that I had experienced adolescence at a different time. I did not seek to use colloquial terms like a contemporary adolescent. If the young person for example said to me: "you'll alright blood?" which is an informal greeting to a friend typically used by urban or inner-city youths, I would often use colloquialisms from my own geographical background to answer them: "Eh?" if I was unfamiliar with the term used or in this case "Yeah not bad pal, you alrate?". In this way I mirrored their informality and yet remain authentic. I was not an inner-city youth or contemporary adolescent and in viewing language as social action, such a performance would have been fake, easy to spot and indicate a level of dishonesty. This authenticity was also helped by my genuine

⁴⁹ Albeit Simon in this context does not mean Simon 'from the UEA' as I am trying to examine what relational qualities Simon brought to his time with the young people at an intrapersonal and situational level. Essentially how I was with the young people.

enthusiasm to get involved, play with and learn about the technologies I was facilitating. Having worked with young people for numerous years I was able to be patient and use humour to negotiate relationships and personal boundaries.

9.7.2.2 Who should build supportive relationships via digital life story work?

Residential workers, foster carers, therapists as well as counsellors and other professionals and people who work with or care for vulnerable adolescents, may benefit from using digital life story work approaches with young people. The approaches will also be of interest to people who work with young people and adults with learning and/or communication and/or memory difficulties. Although in this project the engagement of residential workers with young people using digital life story work tools was mainly orientated around their involvement in the pragmatic facilitation of bebook and podwalking, it is important to outline the opportunities and constraints that residential workers and other practitioners may experience in seeking to generate supportive relationships via these tools. Such knowledge gaps also provide the beginnings of an emergent practice and research agenda. In many ways the project created and fashioned the tools, what now needs exploring how these tools are employed in practice by practitioners.

Across a range of care settings there is the potential for specialised external therapists or life story workers to use such tools as well as residential workers and social workers; however each group of professionals brings their own professional challenges. In this project for example some residential workers did attempt to engage with these tools as discussed previously, yet institutional anxieties, professional boundaries and in some cases a real or feared lack of therapeutic training hampered worker participation. Beyond such barriers is the realisation that residential workers and particularly key workers may have closer relationships with young people than social workers, due in part to time constraints placed upon social workers. Ironically residential workers may feel they lack the training of social workers, whereas social workers may feel they lack the ability to spend time with young people and build relationships needed during such work.

There is also the possibility that external life story work specialists could undertake digital life story work with young people. However this may mean that the young person centred agenda of

such approaches may be overlooked with the specialist having their own time constraints on working with a young person. Such discussions appear to open the door for digital life story work tools to be embedded within foster care. Foster carers may have the flexibility to create time and in some cases the therapeutic training to fulfil such a role.

At the time of writing I am keen not to pigeonhole the use of these digital approaches as I believe they may provide a range of uses in promoting the generation of supportive relationships. The project designed tools and began to show how they can work in practice, what now needs to be explored is how these tools work without my presence. In moving forward it is perhaps not who uses the tools but how the tools are used which is imperative.

9.7.3 Targeting digital life story work

bebook and podwalking differ from traditional life story work approaches in that the approaches are explicitly young person centred and driven. As highlighted the ability to allow young people to undertake such work in the direction they wish and at a pace they desire was also a fundamental aspect of this research project. Such liberties may not be as available to practitioners who may only have a limited amount of time to achieve a desired endpoint. In working with young people there needs to be a balanced approach to pursuing a professionalised goal. The therapeutic potential of the tools may be more effective when carried out in a more guided way, but the agenda of such work needs to be undertaken sensitively and with the ethos of empowering young people. In this fashion the young person's *bebook* page should be theirs to use as they see fit. The sensitive carer can balance the need for the young person to be empowered whilst enabling the young person to be guided within the therapeutic process to move towards a meaningful endpoint.

Life story work is not just about the past, it can also be about the present and the future. I am not sure that I would want to upload a number of vlogs about my most painful memories; such an overemphasis on such an agenda may see such tools left unused. This is not to say the reflections in the present do not help young people develop a sense of narrative or self. As Gergen (2000) suggests identity is an on-going patchwork, young people need places to store patches as such information may not always be able to be gleaned from consistently available others.

9.8 Research agenda

There is a need to pass the role of *bebook* facilitation onto the adolescent-residential/social worker dyadic relationships. To get to this point the *bebook* website and its implementation strategies need development. If such work is undertaken maintaining its participatory ethos, *bebook* has the potential to become an embedded part of residential care practice. Though trialled exclusively in English residential care, applications of *bebook* permeate into a range of other placement types and care contexts. As an online digital repository, *bebook* can provide care leavers with an array of digital memories and reflective resources. Whilst the conceptualisation of using *bebook* longitudinally in practice was trialled during this project, this could also be orientated as a shorter-term piece of work. In many ways such work would be reminiscent of traditional life story work but make the benefits of such work available to adolescent care populations.

The off-line nature of podwalking attracted the most interest from residential workers, evidenced by this stage featuring their more direct involvement. For young people in care who may not get to the chance to revisit previous neighbourhoods or indeed their old bedrooms once they move placements, podwalking may offer a way to start new relationships through the sharing of such memories with new carers. Conscious that young people may be moved into different geographical regions, the potential for virtual podwalking which could make use of innovative technologies such as Google Earth offer, a variety of ways in which podwalking can move forward. Such potentials are discussed at length in Hammond and Cooper (2013).

In an outcome orientated profession there is a need to build an evidence base for each approach. The next steps are to build the evidence based on evaluative research. Do these approaches improve young people's abilities to share reflective accounts of their immediate experiences? How do the young people and practitioners negotiate this relationship? There is a need to talk to key workers about how they use these approaches and how they see their relationships with the young people after using one or both of these approaches. In using a bespoke website such as *bebook* numerous possibilities occur in relation to the production of quantitative metrics regarding number of views, time spent on pages and uploads. Emerging from the discursive data is a tension when adolescents use technology. Key worker focus groups could be used to explore how using digital technologies positively influences mobilisations of youth at-risk discourses?

Parallel to the building of this evidence base will be the continued recruitment of multimodal techniques of data collection. Critical social psychology needs to be reflected upon in terms of its methods. How does it accommodate digital media and video? How do these technologies promote collaboration and multiple readings from various perspectives? What do these possibilities mean for critical social psychology and its methods?

Theoretically there are a growing number of qualitative papers which the current research can be positioned and a growth in literature involving the psychosocial. In relation to future research exploring the products of a more guided undertaking of digital life story work and in focusing upon language, the ways in which expressions of distress can become constrained by gendered and adolescent narratives can be explored via vlogs and podwalks. In so doing there is need to attend to how such narratives may not be immediately obvious, as highlighted by McQueen and Henwood (2002). In so doing there is a need to attend to how multimodality methodologies contribute to the merging of theory and technologies, and how the presentation of such data is attended to (Henwood, Shirani & Finn, 2011).

9.9 Closing comments

Life story work appears to be rarely undertaken with adolescents living in residential care, yet engaging this population may help them discover for themselves answers to some important identity questions. Findings from this research project illustrated that adolescents' recognised *bebook* as providing a safe online space to store memories, particularly memories viewed as private or unsuitable for sharing on public forums such as SNS. Adolescents tended not to upload data to *bebook* without the presence of a *bebook* facilitator. However this relationship and the dialogues created when uploading pictures and webcam diary entries, enabled adolescents to be supported in the resolution of narrative gaps and in the understanding of such things in a temporal fashion. Podwalking provided a more fluid way in which young people could share different streams of narrative and reflective biographical accounts. The presence of an engaged and reflective audience assisted adolescents with disjointed narratives to fill in narrative gaps, reinterpreting the shared account in the context of their overall narrative identities. There remains an understandable degree of nervousness around the promotion and usage of digital media in social work practice. Yet by accepting and promoting the use of digital

media, new opportunities to engage with a technologically proficient generation of young people can be created.

Findings have been well received by practitioners within and beyond the project who recognise and support the potential of *bebook* and podwalking (Hammond, 2010a; 2010b; 2010c). Further development of both the tools and their integration is on-going, recognising the current project as the beginning of a new way of working with vulnerable adolescents.

Though this work had a sound practice orientation, the pioneering use of digital technologies stimulated an array of theoretical and methodological challenges. From a critical social psychological perspective, the use of ICT in a way which captured both audio and visual data presented challenges for conventional ways in which discursive approaches handle the representation of social exchanges via text. Seemingly as online journals and eBooks become more common and research with digital technologies increases, question marks remains as to how academia will address issues of representation and the publication of audiovisual data.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Risk analysis

On the basis of the projects methods and target population the following risks have been identified, with strategies for dealing with each outlined:

Key Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Management Strategies
Relationship between Young Person and Simon.	High	High: The collaborative nature of the project and vulnerable nature of the target population ensures that this is a crucial factor for the researcher.	This will need to be carefully managed from the outset of the project. The researcher will need to define his role within the research process from the outset, allowing the young people to ascertain the nature of this relationship and the time limit placed upon it. Being from a practitioner background the researcher is confident in his ability to manage such a relationship so that the best interests of all stakeholders are maintained.
Security of each individual's section of site	Low	High: Serious impact to young person's confidence and use of tool.	Each individual participant will have their own unique user name and password to gain access to their own private page on the site. These will be known only to the researcher and whoever the participant wishes to share such information with. To further support this data protection element the site will 'time-out' meaning that if left unattended for a period of time the site will log itself out. Furthermore 'cookies' will be disabled, meaning each time the user logs in they will have to enter both user name and password.
Security of host server	Low	Medium: Could impact to young person's confidence and use of tool.	The site itself will be 'hosted' on a sever run by The University of East Anglia. Accordingly the university is committed to the security of its users' personal information and has security procedures in place to protect against loss and/or misuse. For more please visit: http://www.uea.ac.uk/about/legalstatements

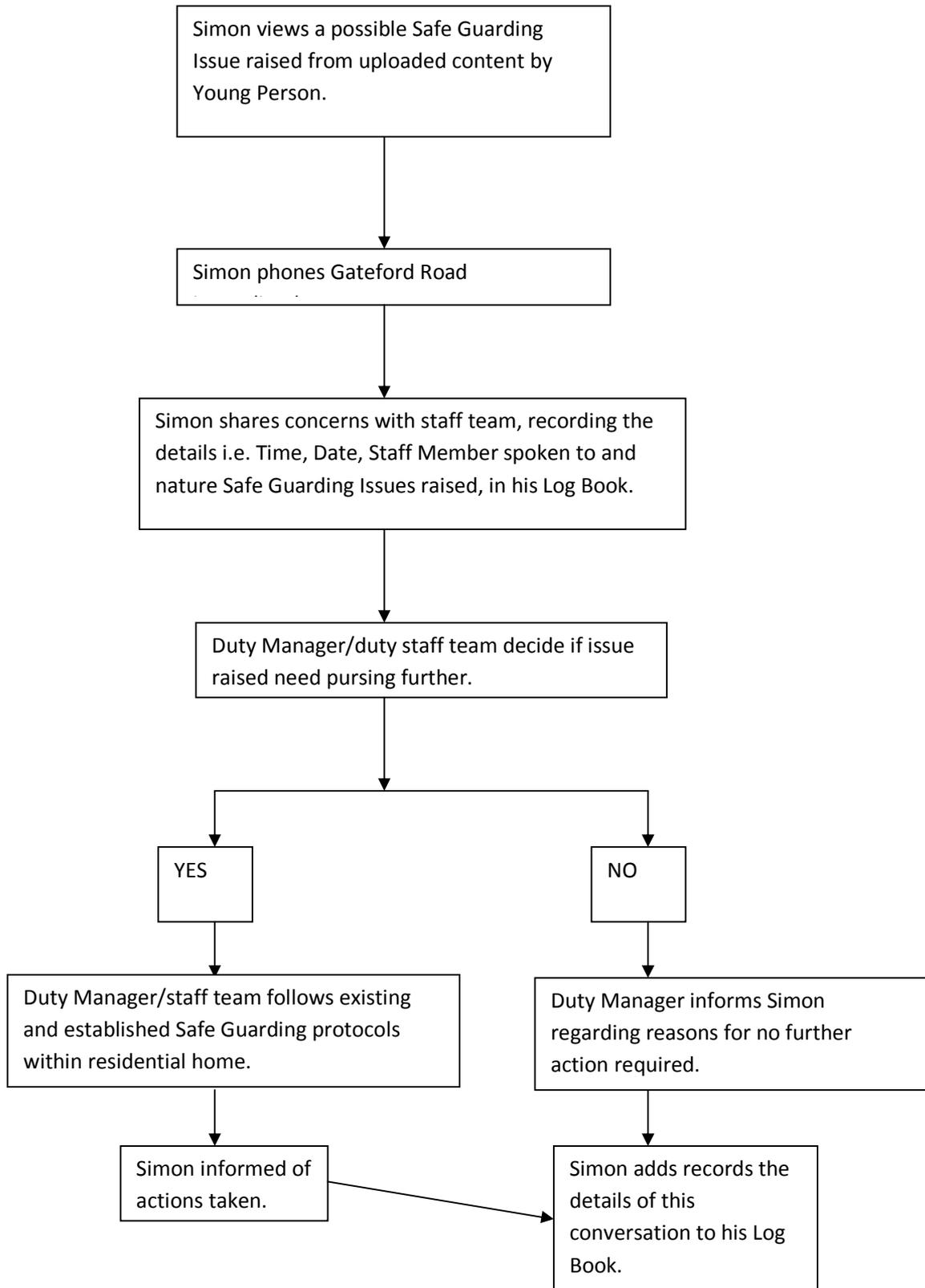
Key Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Management Strategies	Appendices
Loss of data due to target population moving placements of dropping out.	Medium	High: The small sample size and nature of the target population means that any participants withdrawing themselves and their data could have serious implications for the project.	The collaborative and participatory nature of the project provides an opportunity for a sense ownership and investment to develop within the sample. Such feelings may help to reduce dropout rates, the 'rewards points' system for enduring participation and contributions should also serve to maintain a useable sample size. The possible fluid nature of the target population presents as a risk to the sample size. On the one hand this is deemed as an opportunity, since both newly placed residents and existing residents moving onto different placements may provide the project with an insight into the viability of 'rolling out' the approach to a wider proportion of residentially placed adolescents. On the other hand, if drop-out rates are higher than expected a second residential home would be recruited. Both scenarios would seem to provide opportunities to gage the ability of the online approach to transcend across placements, which could be further followed up.	
Care providers withdrawing before significant data has been collected.	Low	Medium: The withdrawal of the Care provider granting permission and accesses to the participants would impact upon the time scale of the overall project.	As with any partnership there is no gauntness. However numerous contingency procedures are in place to ensure that such events do not impact heavily upon the time scale of the overall project. For example 'cut off' dates for achieving various stages of the project have been established. Ensuring that if goals are not met by specified deadlines, appropriate procedures will be activated. Such as utilising different populations with care provider or pre-existing contacts within different local authorities. Additionally the flexibility and evolutionary nature of the overall approach to the project will enable unforeseen obstacles to be overcome.	

Key Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Management Strategies
Psychological risk to participants	Medium	Medium: Returning to distressing memories could affect participant in a variety of positive and negative ways.	Clearly work of this nature such things are possible. However, to this end pre-screening of participants will be discussed with those who work closely with the young people and guidance gained regarding their participation. The procedural protocol will guide action regarding such an occurrence.

Appendix 2: Safeguarding procedures

- Simon will receive e-mail notification when a young person has updated their website. Simon will then view the content of this within a week.
- Simon will e-mail weekly update/summary of young people's additions to their websites to named staff members. He will also attend sections of the fortnightly staff meetings to update staff team members on progress.
- In viewing the website, if there is any inappropriate content identified or any potential Child Protection issue Simon will initiate the course of action as deemed by the Protocol Agreement Process
- The duty manager or on call manager will instigate Child Protection procedures where appropriate **Contact details: Gateford Road XXXXX XXXXXX**. Such issues will be treated by all parties as if the content was witnessed first-hand by a staff team member.
- The Young People will have clear guidelines regarding the project and their rights to withdraw at any time.
- Simon may publish some of the content of the website, however any content shared in this way will be edited in so that the identity of the Young People is protected.
- The sites users have unique usernames and passwords, which due 'cookies being disabled' will both have to be entered each time the young people wish to log on.
- The site also features a 'Time-out facility' meaning that after a determined period of inactivity the site will log itself out.
- Simon is a former residential worker who will be bound by UEA ethics/code of practice and Care provider's Research Governance Approval.
- Simon has a current CRB initiated by Gateford Road and kept at Gateford Road.

Appendix 3: Protocol agreement



Appendix 4: **bebook** agreement form

I have watched the Simon's information clip and have had a chance to ask questions.

I understand that I can stop working with Simon and using the website anytime and for any reason I wish.

I understand that if I post things on the site that are against the law (such as videoing me or my friends breaking the law) or unsuitable (such as me showing various parts of my body to the camera) I will have to stop using the website and will not be able to work with Simon anymore.

I understand that Simon may use the things I upload to help with his work but that my name and video clips or pictures used will be changed so no one can tell it is me.

I agree to help make and use the website Simon spoke about in the clip and understand what I will be doing.

Your Name.....**Date**.....

You will be sent a copy of this form to keep.



Appendix 5: Podwalk agreement form

I have watched Simon's information clip on Podwalking and have had a chance to him ask questions.

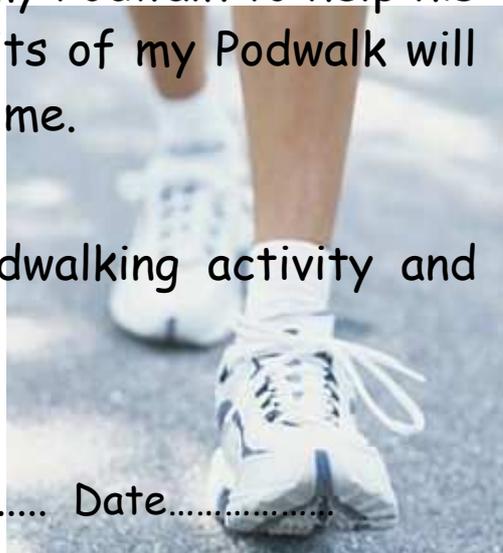
I understand that I decide what places I want to visit. I do not have to go anywhere or talk about anything that might upset me and know who to talk to if I do become upset.

I understand that I can stop the Podwalk trip at anytime and ask Simon to delete all the recordings we made.

I agree to let Simon use bits of my Podwalk to help his work. But I know my name and bits of my Podwalk will be changed so no one can tell it is me.

I agree to take part in the Podwalking activity and understand what I will be doing.

Your Name Date.....



You will be sent a copy of this form to keep

Appendix 6 Parent, guardian or social worker consent form



Title of the project: Exploring a role for new technologies in life story work with adolescents in residential care.

Researcher's name:

Simon Hammond

Faculty of Social Sciences
Elizabeth Fry Building
University of East Anglia
Norwich, NR4 7TJ England
Tel: 01603 591817

CONSENT FORM

I agree that _____ can take part in the research and that I have read the information sheet and understand what he/she will be asked to do in this research project.

I know that _____ can stop being part of the project at anytime and for any reason he or she wishes.

I know that any data produced by _____ will not be traceable back to him/her. I know that that my name will be replaced by an alias and that any video clips or pictures used will be edited so his/her confidently is maintained.

I have been told that if illegal or elicited content is uploaded on to the website part of the project that _____ participation in the research may stop and that the researcher will have to pass this information onto the appropriate individuals responsible for the above named welfare.

Any questions I had have been answered and I am aware how to contact the researcher if I have anymore questions.

I am aware and give my permission for _____ help Simon with his research.

Name of parent/ guardian / social worker

.....

(Print)

Signed

Date

UEA Project Information Sheet

My name is Simon Hammond I am PhD researcher from the University of East Anglia and I am writing to you to ask for permission for _____ (please insert young person's name) to take part in a life story work project. The study itself has two parts:

Part 1: Using the bebook website



_____ is a private website that has been created and designed with the help of a group of young people. Each young person has been given private section on a website which can only be accessed by the young people themselves and the researcher (Simon). Once logged in films clips and pictures from their phones or cameras, and even write blogs and record webcam based dairy entries can be uploaded.

The security of the site is handled by UEA IT Services. This means that the university has countless 'firewalls' and other such security systems which means that the information uploaded will be kept safe. The project will last around 4 months, however if _____ (Young Peron's name) wishes to stop using it at any point they can do. At the end of their time in the study uploaded content burnt onto a data DVD and given to you to keep.

For more details on this part of the project please see <http://www.blip.tv/file/2253231>

Part 2: Podwalking

"Podwalking" is the young person's chance to be a tour guide sharing with a video camera and invited guests' places that are important to them, sharing with the video camera memories and stories from the places they visit. Once completed the young person will then be invited to edit come and help edit their Podwalk, which will then be burnt onto a DVD for them to keep.

For more details on this part of the project please see <http://www.blip.tv/file/2270267>

Appendix 7: Your guide to using *bebook*

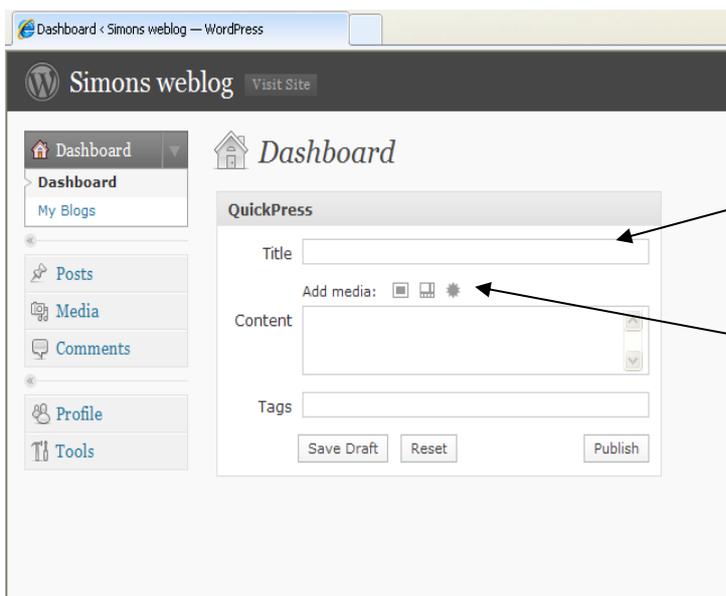
Logging in: www.bebook.me.uk

Fill in your username and password and click on the login button

This will take you through to your bebook page

Adding a post

1. Click on 'Add a new post' to go to your dashboard page

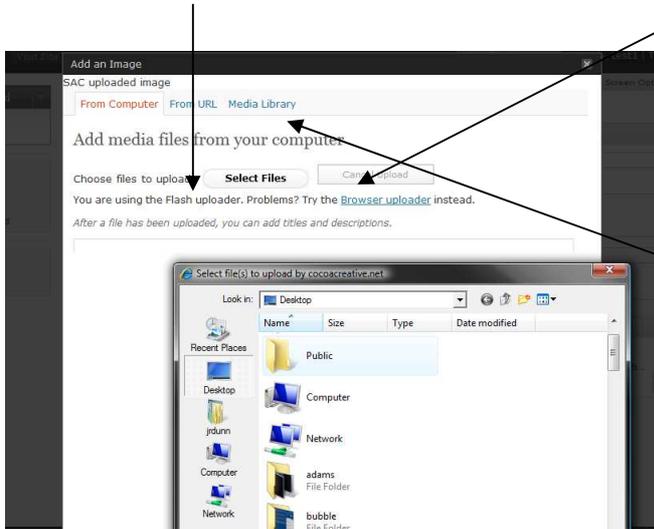


2. Add a title to your post

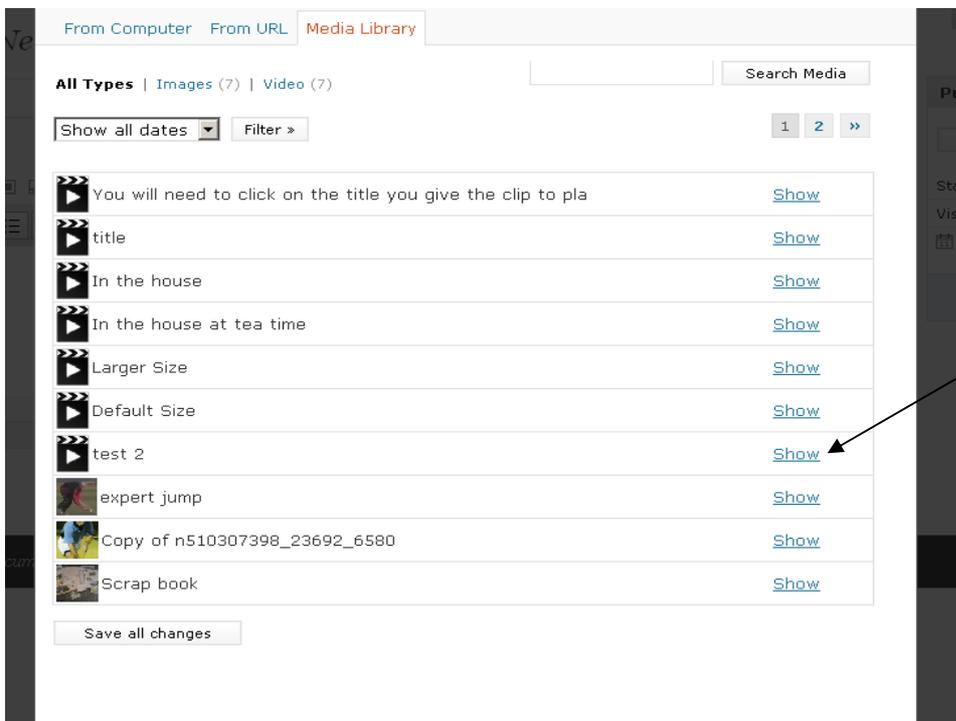
3. Click the icons to attach images and video.

4. Click on 'select files' and then browse to the file on your computer

5. Once you have found the file, click upload.

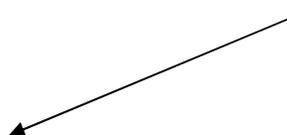


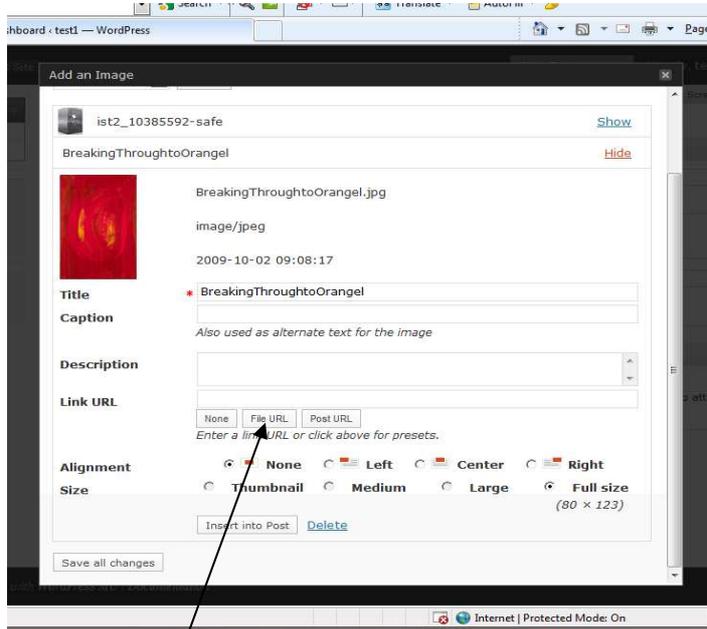
6. Click on save changes. Now click on media Library tab. You should now see your image or clip in the list



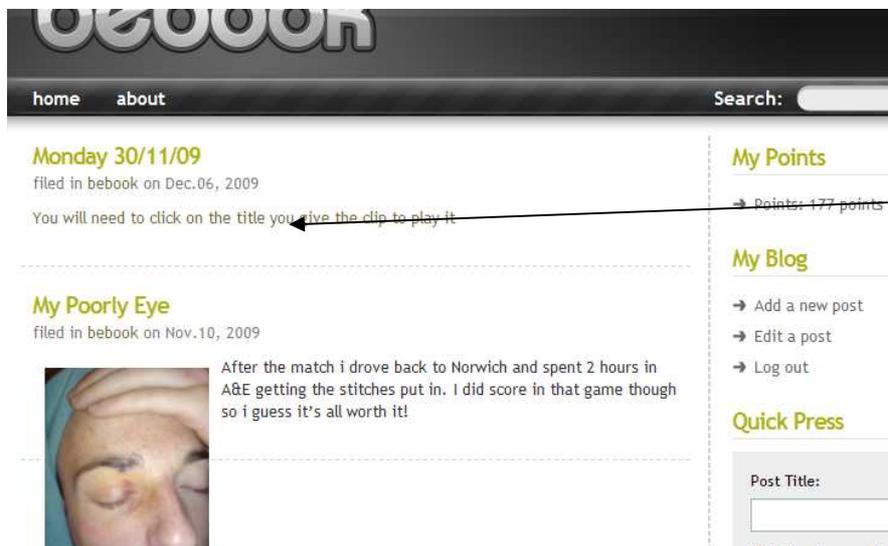
7. Click on the 'show button' next to the image or clip you want to add.

The box will expand and look like this.





* When adding a video clip you need to press “FILE URL” to get the link to appear on the webpage.



* The title you give the clip will be the hyperlink you need to click on to watch the clip back.

How does bebook’s point system work?

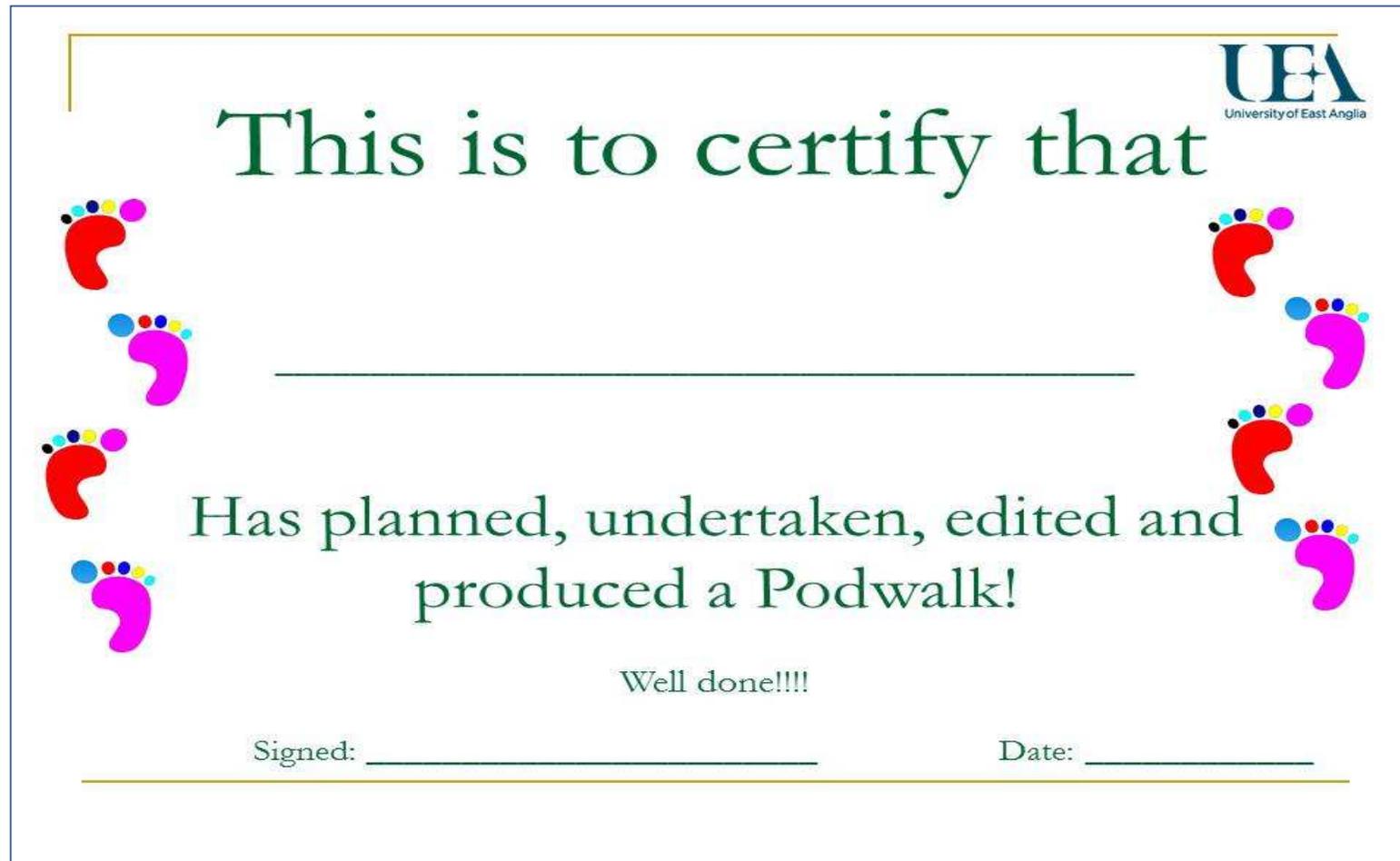
You will be awarded points every time you add something to your bebook page at the end of each month you will be rewarded for the points earned that month.

Login	1 point
Image upload	2 points
Blog entry	3 points
Video upload	5 points

Don't forget that if you wish to stop working with Simon and using the website anytime you are free to do so and for any reason. If so please ask a member of staff to phone Simon if you choose to do this.

Thanks!

Appendix 8: Podwalk certificate



The certificate is enclosed in a thin blue border. At the top right is the UEA logo. The main text is in a green serif font. A horizontal line is positioned below the first sentence. The text is surrounded by colorful footprint graphics. At the bottom, there are two horizontal lines for a signature and a date.

UEA
University of East Anglia

This is to certify that

Has planned, undertaken, edited and
produced a Podwalk!

Well done!!!!

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 9: *bebook* certificate

This is to certify that

Has taken part in the design, use and
evaluation of the **bebook** pilot project.

Thank you!

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 10: Jefferson Transcription System

[]	Square brackets mark the start and end of overlapping speech. They are aligned to mark the precise position of overlap.
↑ ↓	Vertical arrows precede marked pitch movement, over and above normal rhythms of speech. They are used for notable changes in pitch beyond those represented by stops, commas and question marks.
<u>Underlining</u>	indicates emphasis; the extent of underlining within individual words locates emphasis and also indicates how heavy it is.
CAPITALS	mark speech that is hearably louder than surrounding speech. This is beyond the increase in volume that comes as a by product of emphasis.
°↑↓ know it, °	'degree' signs enclose quieter speech.
that's r*ight.	Asterisks precede a 'squeaky' vocal delivery.
(.)	A micropause, hearable but too short to measure.
(0.4)	Numbers in round brackets measure pauses in seconds (in this case, 4 tenths of a second). If they are not part of a particular speaker's talk they should be on a new line. If in doubt use a new line.
she wa::nted	Colons show lengthening of a word the more colons, the more elongation.
Yeh,	'Continuation' marker, speaker has not finished; marked by fall-rise or weak rising intonation,
y'know?	Question marks signal stronger, 'questioning' intonation, irrespective of grammar.
Yeh.	Full stops mark falling, stopping intonation ('final contour'), irrespective of grammar, and not necessarily followed by a pause.
bu-u-	hyphens mark a cut-off of the preceding sound.
>he said<	'greater than' and 'lesser than' signs enclose speech with is faster than usual and are used the other way round for slower talk.
solid.=We had	'Equals' signs mark continuous talk between speakers, with no interval.
heh heh	Voiced laughter. Can have other symbols added, such as underlining, pitch movement, extra aspiration, etc.
sto(h)p i(h)t	Laughter within speech is signalled by h's in round brackets.
((shrill))	Double brackets mark comments from the transcriber, e.g. about features of context or delivery.

For detail on this scheme see: Jefferson (1984).