

Under the Flamboyant Tree: an exploration of learning

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September 2010

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## Abstract

The thesis '*Under the Flamboyant Tree: an exploration of learning*' is based on research into the experiences of 10 teachers, teaching assistants and a Local Authority officer participating in a one-week Teachers' International Professional Development visit to South Africa. I use a case study approach to consider the learning arising from this shared significant continuing professional development (CPD) opportunity.

Three related themes are explored. In the first I use concepts of '*deep*' and '*surface*' learning (Marton and Säljö (1976)) and '*profound*' learning (West-Burnham and Coates (2005)) to look at the nature of the learning experienced by the research participants. The research broadly endorses the typology proposed by Burnham and Coates but challenges suggestions that retention and longevity are necessary outcomes of profound learning (Houghton (2004)) or that the levels of learning form a hierarchy with one level subsuming those beneath it (Smith 1999)).

The second theme looks at how a sensation becomes learning and offers a four-stage model outlining the movement from experience to deep or profound learning. This is my contribution to the field. I consider the model to be particularly significant for schools and children's services at this time of enormous change because individuals who can engage in deep and profound learning are better able to respond to the challenges of service transformation.

The third theme arises from an analysis of government policy documents (pre-May 2010) and good practice guides on continuing professional development (CPD). The data suggests a tension between the declared aspiration for autonomous, self directed professionals and the emphasis on measurement and audit.

The thesis also considers the possible tensions arising when analysing and presenting data in ways that enable congruence with the research subject itself.

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### Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the research participants whom I now count as friends, my supervisor Barbara Zamorski, Dr Barbara Ridley, Dr Malcolm Brown and my friends, family and long suffering husband Jon. All of them shared my excitement, passion and self doubt, and without them this thesis would never have been written.

## Under the Flamboyant Tree

*I gaze out of the coach window as we pull up alongside the line of shops.*

*“Not more craft shops.” I hear the all-too common refrain from the seat behind me. The complainant, a man in his 50s, slumps into his seat, arms folded, look resigned.*

*We all troop out. Not really craft shops. There is a single line of concrete buildings with a supermarket on one end, an off licence in the middle, a restaurant over the top and a gift shop. It all seems quite dreary but the weather is warm and I am glad to stretch my legs.*

*On the opposite side of the road is the most magnificent tree with the brightest orangey-red blossom. It looks quite out of place on this grubby, dust-infested roadway.*



*I'm just aware of the family (or is it families?) nestling against its trunk. Children, women, men. Sitting quietly. I spy a wheelchair. Initially I don't see them. I see their plastic bags and clutter beneath the magnificent Flamboyant Tree and I feel slightly irritated at the neon blue flotsam and the way it detracts from the splendour of my tree.*

*Jon stares at the family. He starts questioning our guide. A muttering. Rumour ripples. I become aware of some uneasiness. These Swaziland families are starving. The woman beside the wheel chair has had her leg amputated. They are victims of Aids. They are homeless.*

*A group of us charge into the supermarket. Bread. Milk. Cake. Cheese. Crisps. Chocolate. I remember the film I saw about the concentration camps, the soldiers giving chocolate to the Jews and killing them with kindness. One by one we troop across, accompanied by our experienced and compassion-fatigued guide. We put down our gifts, smile and back off. We get back on the bus. No one speaks. Embarrassed by the ridiculous gesture. Overwhelmed by its inadequacy.*

*Deserving or non deserving poor? Genuine or con artists? Does it even matter?*

*My Flamboyant Tree is still quite magnificent. I gaze at its fiery red blossom. I would still like to see it uncluttered. I would still like to gaze at it, absorb its colours and shape, drink in the splendour, wallow in the world it transports me to, lose myself in its sparkling ruby blossom and emerald leaves. I don't want anything to intrude, to mar the sensation, to force me to act and re-act. I am emotionally*



*drained. I have had a hell of a year. I don't want to think. Only to marvel. I don't want to feel.*

*We drive on. "To another craft shop," groans the disembodied and disgruntled voice behind me.*

## 1.0 Chapter One: Context

In 2007 I was asked to lead a Teachers International Professional Development (TIPD) expedition to South Africa. Our focus was to be the deployment of adults other than teachers in support of pupil learning. I was asked to lead the group because, at the time, I was the strategic workforce development lead for school support staff now more commonly known as the Children's Workforce in Schools (TDA 2008a).

Each year all Local Authorities (LAs) can apply for up to 3 TIPD visits. These are funded visits, led by a local authority officer and lasting a week. A maximum of 10 people (usually teachers) participate. The LA agrees the focus of each visit and the contracted TIPD organiser, on behalf of the British Council, identifies a country whose practice offers opportunities for challenge and comparison. The organiser will then negotiate a provisional programme with the host in that country.

Timescales are always tight and LAs rely heavily on the knowledge and expertise of the contracted visit organiser in identifying a country where there is interesting, excellent or contrasting practice. For this particular TIPD visit we were told in June 2007 that we would be visiting South Africa and asked to get names, application forms, permissions and passport details by the end of June/beginning of July. With some TIPD visits applications are sought from a specific group of teachers or school leaders. In this case we opened the opportunity out to all 370+ schools and were overwhelmed by the number of applications. 150 forms had to be whittled down to the final 9. I scored each of the application forms and specifically looked at how applicants had responded to questions about the nature of the relationship between adults in the school in support of pupil learning.

Meeting the deadlines imposed by the visit organiser was a considerable challenge. I knew very little about South Africa and spent some time browsing the internet to find out more. Given the theme of the visit and the statistics I was reading I was surprised South Africa had been chosen and assumed that there the TIPD organiser must have identified some pockets of good practice. After the names and details had been finalised I was put in personal contact with our host in South Africa and we spoke for the first time in late July. He indicated that as part of the ongoing development of schools and education in South Africa they were piloting a form of 'apprentice' teachers and I pushed any lingering doubts to the back of my mind. It

was only on arrival in South Africa that we discovered how limited the use of teaching assistants, or teacher aides, was in all of the schools. With the benefit of hindsight I can see that a combination of tight deadlines, the difficulty of making any changes, the proposed timetable of activities and the excitement of going somewhere so different meant I pushed any concerns as to the extent to which we were going to meet our aim to the back of my mind, confident that this would be an incredible learning experience whatever happened.

#### 1.1 Profile of participants and TIPD visit

By July 2007 the group of 9 teachers and teaching assistants from 6 rural shire schools was finalised. We were to spend a week in Durban in the region of KwaZulu Natal in October 2007. Originally we anticipated there would be a combination of teachers and teaching assistants from each school taking part but last minute withdrawals and substitutes changed the final composition of the group. A brief profile of the 10 participants is given in the table below.

Table 1: Profile of research participants

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Solo or joint visit</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Age at time of visit</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Nationality</b>
LA	Solo	County Adviser	42	Female	British
Primary School	Solo	Foundation Stage Teacher	27	Female	British
Primary School	Solo	Teacher (Year 4)	51	Female	British
9 – 13 Middle School	Solo	Higher Level Teaching Assistant	46	Female	British
Primary School	Joint	Higher Level Teaching Assistant	51	Female	British
Primary School	Joint	Deputy Head/CPD Leader	51	Female	British
11-18 Secondary School	Joint	Mathematics Teacher	29	Female	Nigerian
11-18 Secondary School	Joint	Learning Support Unit Manager	39	Female	British
13 -18 Secondary School	Joint	Higher Level Teaching Assistant	46	Female	British
13-18 Secondary School	Joint	English Teacher	38	Female	British

Our first meeting was in July 2007. The TIPD organiser asked us to undertake a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) of the proposed visit so that we might consider how to make the best use of our time there. This discussion formed the basis of our first meeting. From our theme *“the relationship between teachers and other adults in support of learning and the effective use of that capacity to maximise learning opportunities for others”* (SWOT Analysis TIPD Group July 2007), we identified some of the key dimensions we felt affected both the relationship between teachers and other adults and the impact on pupil learning. These included the culture and ethos of the institution, the personal relationships between the individuals involved, the amount of time allowed for joint planning and the quality and inclusiveness of CPD opportunities in the school. We hoped to explore these factors in the schools we were going to visit in order to make comparisons and investigate different practices. At that meeting we also agreed the gifts we wanted to take our hosts, made some choices about social activities and cultural visits during the visit and agreed what we needed to organise prior to going. Between July and October we maintained contact by email and occasional phone calls. By the time we travelled to London on a bone shaking minibus we were all on good terms.

During our week in South Africa we visited 10 schools (a mix of urban, rural, formerly white, formerly black, formerly Indian), attended familiarisation talks on South Africa and its education system and visited museums and exhibitions depicting life during the apartheid years. We also visited a Zulu village, took part in a drumming evening and went on safari. We stayed in a spacious hotel on the outskirts of the largest shopping mall in the southern hemisphere. It was an experience of extremes. We continually oscillated between scenes of dire poverty and luxury. During the week we kept reflective journals, met every evening to talk through the events of the day and our observations (taking it in turns to record the group’s thoughts). At the end of the week we completed evaluation sheets for our South African host and each of us talked directly to a video camera for a few minutes to capture our feelings before returning home.

Although our visit had been built around an intention to investigate the effective deployment of adults in the classroom, it soon became apparent that, with limited funding and class sizes of 50 or 70:1 the vast majority of schools in South Africa did not have teaching assistants or teacher aides. The opportunity to investigate the

factors impacting on effective use of additional adults was therefore very limited and each participant had to accept that what we set out to discover and what we might in fact learn from this visit would be very different. We were being offered open access to a range of schools, the chance to talk to teaching staff and students and observe lessons in a context completely new to us. No one felt that the experience might be less positive because it did not follow the pre-planned path. Chapters 5 and 6 provide illustrations of the range of interests we were able to pursue and the subjects which caught our attention.

By the end of the week, having witnessed the inadequate resourcing in the schools and sheer poverty of the students and pupils, each of us was filled with an almost evangelical zeal to help in some way and we discussed the kinds of activities that we wanted to undertake back in England. In general these involved sharing information, fundraising or continuing links with some of the schools we had met.

On return to England the group produced a newsletter, shared powerpoint presentations and photographs. We were required by the funder to produce an end of visit report which I, as the LA leader, put together based on the comments and reflections of the group. Our contact, which was predominantly by group email, was very regular initially becoming less frequent over time.

Nine of us met again formally in February 2008 (3 months later) and shared the reflections, activities, successes and frustrations arising from our experiences since the South African visit. I kept notes of this meeting.

Since February 2008 we have met as a group some 2 or 3 times for social occasions, most recently in July 2009. We were asked by the TIPD organiser in June 2008 to complete a medium term evaluation reflecting on impact which 9 of the 10 participants completed. Two and a half years later the contact as a group still exists but is much more occasional. From time to time our professional lives cross over in other ways - meetings, briefings or courses. When it does there is the familiarity and warmth of old friends who still remember a positive common experience.

## 1.2 Policy context

The value of school support staff has always been appreciated at an individual school level but it is only in the last 10 years that a real understanding of the range of skills and possibilities for deployment of additional adults in the classroom has been developed and utilised. Workforce Remodelling, as it was known in schools, was heralded by *The National Agreement* (2003), a document signed by Unison, GMB and all the teacher professional associations (except the National Union of Teachers (NUT)). It was concerned with raising standards and tackling workload: refocusing teachers' time and energies on their core purpose of learning and teaching. Freeing up time and transferring responsibilities meant making more effective use of support staff. The Sector Qualification Strategy for School Support Staff (TDA 2008b) reported a doubling of numbers between 1997 and 2008. It identified almost 60 different support staff roles with the biggest increase (60,600 to 176,900) in teaching assistant roles.

Such increases brought a wide range of skills into schools with new professional (bursar) and paraprofessional (Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA)) posts emerging.

There were, and continue to be, challenges not only in configuration and deployment but also in terms of cultures: integrating new roles into existing structures; teachers learning to work collaboratively in the classroom with other adults and to develop an understanding of partnership where each respects and draws on the contribution the other has to make. Hence, for example, although the teacher remains the leader of learning, the teaching assistant, by virtue of a closer working relationship with individuals or groups of more vulnerable learners and the opportunity to see the impact of the teacher's approach, can suggest what might enhance the learning experience of those children.

Running parallel to the workforce remodelling agenda in schools has been a similar drive for collaborative working across all sectors involved with children, young people and families.

The catalyst for the current configuration of children's services across the England was the tragic death of Victoria Climbié in 2000. The review of this case by Lord Laming (2003) identified a lack of effective communication between different staff

and agencies as a key reason behind the failure of public services to respond. A more holistic approach to working with children, young people and families was recommended. The five outcomes of Every Child Matters (ECM): stay safe; be healthy; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution and economic well-being underpinned by more effective communication and better collaboration between and across agencies were the intended outcomes of the *ECM: Change for Children* (Nov 2004) and the *Children Act* (2004). *Building Brighter Futures: Next Steps for the Children's Workforce* (2008a) and the *2020 Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy* (2008b) focused on the development of a more integrated workforce with a common core of skills and knowledge. The rationale for integrated working is that we can achieve better outcomes for children and young people by utilising the respective skills and talents of all workforce participants, identifying common ground and interests and respecting the unique contribution each can make.

*"Everyone who works with a child or young person or with their family has a role to play in supporting their development across all five Every Child Matters outcomes – whether they work in education, health, 14-19 learning, safety and crime prevention, out-of-school activities, child care, play, community involvement or economic wellbeing." (DCSF (2008b) Ministerial Foreword p3)*

The dangers of not working in this more joined up way, particularly in relation to safeguarding, were tragically reinforced by the case of Baby P (Laming 2009).

At the time of the TIPD visit to South Africa I was part of a multi-professional workforce team and was increasingly taking responsibility for promoting collaborative working not just in schools but more generally across the children and young people's workforce with colleagues in social care, youth and Connexions, health, early years, criminal justice and the voluntary sector. The theme of partnership working and how it might produce good outcomes for children and young people was something I was keen to explore. The focus of the TIPD visit was to look at partnerships between roles within the same organisation but there was potentially much to be learnt that would inform my thinking on positive collaborations between sectors working towards a common goal.



### 1.3 The Research

It is within this context: a professional interest in workforce development and an opportunity to explore the theme of collaborative working alongside a range of highly experienced colleagues that my initial research proposal: *“to investigate the conditions under which the learning resulting from a significant continuing professional development experience can be sustained”* was submitted in October 2007. (See Appendix One).

I believed that the visit to South Africa offered a unique opportunity to explore the impact of a shared experience. However the responses to that shared experience might be very different and I wanted to look at the factors influencing this.

My co-travellers were female, of mixed age and prior educational experience and from all phases of schooling (Early Years Foundation Stage, Primary, Middle and Secondary). Professionally they were experienced teaching assistants, classroom teachers, CPD leaders and deputy heads. Three of the schools were represented by a teaching assistant/support staff member and teacher. The other 3 schools had single representatives.

I felt this was potentially a rich seam within which to reflect on and make comparisons across different dimensions. Whilst we had in common our employment as supporters of pupil learning in maintained schools there were also a number of variables in the form of experience, position, status within the school which might or might not impact on the way in which learning was manifested and embedded. From a researcher’s viewpoint this sample might be regarded as biased in that there were no males and the balance of arts to maths/science interest was 9:1 in favour of the arts. Furthermore all the participants were from a particular professional area and not drawn from a range of professional cultures. However my primary purpose was to reflect individual experiences and make some cross case comparisons, not to make statistically valid generalisations. The opportunity to collect data had arisen and I wanted to make use of it but the visit was not designed as a research project.

I had a number of roles in relation to the TIPD visit. I was the LA Lead and therefore responsible for the group’s welfare and for liaison with our host. If there had been a crisis I would make the final decision on how we should respond. I was

there to facilitate and maximise the learning experience for each participant and to collate and provide feedback and evaluation for the national providers for TIPD. I was also a participant of the TIPD visit in my own right and had hoped to reflect on and learn from the practice I saw in order to inform policy, strategy and guidance in relation to the effective deployment of Teaching Assistants in the classroom. Finally I was using this experience in order to conduct a piece of research around learning and learning processes and I hoped to use data collected for one purpose (eg evaluation) to inform that research.

The participants were aware from the beginning of my doctorate studies and my intention to use our experiences as the basis of an exploration of learning. They were supportive and interested, permitting me to use the data we generated in my research. I prepared briefing notes and consent forms for them and, throughout the research process, continually drew attention to their right to withdraw.

Between November 2008 and March 2009 I visited the schools for follow up interviews with each of the participants. Where possible and appropriate I interviewed a colleague nominated by the research participants who could comment on the impact, if any, of the South African experience both on the individual and within the school or wider community. In 3 schools (2 primaries and one middle) I interviewed the headteacher. In one primary school, the deputy head was unable to attend and emailed me a brief report. There was no contact with a 3<sup>rd</sup> party in any of the secondary schools.

#### 1.4 A shift in research focus and identification of research questions

I was in the privileged position, as a researcher, of having ongoing contact with the research participants from June 2007 to the current time. The timing of the follow up interviews and ongoing access to participants allowed me to revise and finetune my original research focus, ensuring everyone was kept informed and comfortable with the progress and format of my research.

In my original research proposal I had intended to explore the conditions under which the learning from a significant learning experience could be sustained (see Appendix One). At the time of writing I had expected that the TIPD visit would be an investigation of the effective deployment of adults in the classroom. There would be a clear input – discussion and observation of the role of teaching assistants -

and my research focus would, therefore, be on outputs - the way in which a quite specific, learning event impacted on both individual practice and the wider professional school community. When we arrived in South Africa it soon became clear that the 'input' had changed. Instead of direct observation of a particular phenomenon it became what we saw, heard and felt as we visited unfamiliar environments. It was open ended and very individual to each participant. I recognised I would need to re-visit my research focus. I wanted to consider the nature and form of learning as well as impact and how that might be sustained. Although unexpected I was able to accommodate these changes within my research. This was firstly because the research participants still engaged in a significant learning experience (albeit those experiences were now different) and, secondly, the approach to data analysis I intended to use was based on Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967) where the findings would emerge from the data regardless of the nature of that data.

Nevertheless it took many months to think through and identify my new research aims and involved re-visiting the data, discussions with colleagues and considerable and on-going reflection in my learning journal. As one of the research participants I used my own feelings to help inform the conversations with others. The value and potential pitfalls of the insider-researcher's role constitutes an issue I return to throughout this thesis, especially in Chapter 3.3 (p64). I felt I was a principal data source and, as such, I found it useful, periodically, to be able to take some sort of stock of my own feelings in relation to the South African experience.

A review of my learning journal over those early months captures some of the thinking that resulted in a change to the research aims and an articulation of the questions I wanted to explore in follow up interviews with the research participants (Nov 2008 – March 2009).

In August 2008 I wrote:

*"It's not how do you take people out of their context" ... it's "what happens when you take people out of their context." ... It's not "... take them back into their world where they can make sense of it" ... it's "In what ways do they make sense of it? What happens to them, their sense of identity? How do they change? Do they change? How does this manifest itself? And if part of what happens to them is a desire to do different – what is it they want to do and what factors help or hinder?"*

The research was no longer about how we translated new professional learning into practice and what enables or hinders this. Instead it became an exploration of the kind of learning arising from this experience. This exploration overlapped with my original focus but it had an earlier starting point because I was interested in the kinds of input that caught our attention, what turned that stimulus into learning and what we then did with that new learning.

I was interested in linking ideas but I also wanted to explore individual difference. I wanted to find out what happened in the aftermath of the emotional maelstrom that each of us encountered during our week in South Africa and testified to in our written reflections during and immediately after the visit (Learning Logs 2007/Talking Heads DVD 2007). What aspects of the experience had been particularly meaningful and why? How had each individual assimilated the experience? Were we motivated to do different as a consequence and if so how freely did we feel we could act or express ourselves? What helped or stopped us from playing out the roles we assigned ourselves at the end of the visit?

#### 1.5 Thesis aims, research questions and contribution to knowledge

In its revised form the aims of this thesis are to increase our understanding of the learning that may arise from a significant experience and how that learning occurs.

To help explore these issues I identified three research questions that were to shape my reading and my research. These were:

1. What kinds of learning are there?
2. What kind of learning comes out of a significant experience? and
3. In what ways can the learning resulting from a significant experience change you?

Originally I had two research questions. It was only as I began to read more widely and think more deeply that I started to make a distinction between learning and change and came to realise that they were not the same.

As the research and analysis continued I added two further questions:

4. How does experience translate into learning?
5. Is learning always valued?

The fourth question arose because in thinking about the first 3 questions I found myself trying to understand the process that might have led to those outcomes. I went back to the data and developed a model which I subsequently revised in response to feedback from the research participants. This traced the movement from a trigger or incident to learning, emphasising the importance of both affective and cognitive dimensions in the learning process and the translation from one to the other. The model (Fig 4 on p162 in Chapter 6.4) is my contribution to knowledge in this area.

The final question emerged from the experiences of the participants. Its origin was the apparent tension in a world that seems to insist on a causal relationship between output and input but simultaneously claims to value creativity, autonomy and self belief on the part of the individual practitioner. The question is worded to allow for the possibility that learning is not valued but my particular interest is on the value given in principle and practice to different types of learning.

#### 1.6 The organisation of the thesis

This chapter has provided an overview of the specific opportunity, research participants and the context within which the TIPD visit took place. It shows how the original research focus was refined over time, how the research aims and questions emerged as the research progressed and identifies my contribution to knowledge in the form of the process model on learning I developed.

Chapter Two looks at definitions of learning and learning processes and considers these in the light of the learning resulting from the TIPD visit. It is by engaging in this wider reading alongside the data collection and analysis that my ideas on deep and profound learning begin to take shape. The chapter concludes by re-visiting the research questions and articulating my thesis.

Chapter Three deals with method, approach and ethical considerations. I explore why case study was my chosen strategy of enquiry. I consider the criteria by which the research process and its presentation might be judged and how these criteria reflect my personal beliefs as to the purpose of research. I explain the nature and range of data I used, the reasons behind my decision to use a semi-structured

interview as my primary data collection method and the approach I took to interviewing.

Chapter Four looks at the process of analysis and presentation and the links between the two. It introduces the idea of storytelling and explores the advantages and disadvantages of this form of presentation.

Chapter Five considers some of the data arising from the research. I have presented the research as a montage of analytical studies or stories. The stories illustrate the diversity and range of learning arising from this shared experience.

Chapter Six is an analysis of the data. I provide examples of surface, deep and profound learning and show how my 4-stage model depicting how sensation translates into learning was created. I also consider whether the data supports the assertion that our current emphasis on 'audit' influences the way we receive and process experience.

Chapter Seven concludes the thesis, drawing together some of the key learning points from the preceding chapters. It offers some tentative conclusions about learning and the learning process from the research presented but as with most, if not all, pieces of time limited research identifies more questions that are left unanswered.

I considered at length whether to include a separate section on research ethics and have addressed some of the issues arising from the research in Chapter 3.3 (p61). However the subject recurs throughout the thesis whether discussing paradigmatic orientations, theories of learning, data collection processes, involvement of others, the role of the researcher, analysis or presentation. It is woven into the fabric of the thesis and addressed throughout wherever appropriate.

## 2.0 Chapter Two: Learning, Behaviour and Change

This chapter looks at some of the literature on learning, behaviour and change. I found concepts of deep, profound and surface learning useful in providing a framework for thinking about the ways in which the research participants responded to the sights and sounds of South Africa and how an experience becomes deep learning. I developed a 4-stage model (see Chapter 6.4 Fig 4) illustrating this process which draws and builds on that of West-Burnham and Coates (2005) and has become my contribution to knowledge in this area. I also look at what appears to be an inherent tension between the desirability of deep or profound learning experiences and their place in a world where prediction is highly valued and a direct and quantifiable correlation between input and output is expected.

### 2.1 Some definitions

My first three research questions:

1. What kinds of learning are there?
2. What kind of learning comes out of a significant experience? and
3. In what ways can the learning resulting from a significant experience change you?

presuppose a common understanding of the key words 'learning' and 'change'

In the next section I look at some definitions of learning and its relationship with change. I consider some of the many forms learning can take and how it can be supported so that it is sustained and embedded in practice. Arguably using literature to develop an understanding of learning against which to compare our own experiences blinds us to other interpretations of the data. Alternatively it offers a range of filters and lens through which to examine the subject.

### 2.2 What is learning?

According to Hergenhahn and Olson (1993) most learning theorists agree learning processes cannot be studied directly but have to be inferred from changes in behaviour.

This is not to say that behavioural change only ever follows learning. It is not a one-way street. If I test out my ideas or 'learning' then the response my behaviour generates will feed and reshape my understanding which will in turn affect my future thinking and behaviour.

Is it possible to engage in learning which does not result in cognitive, emotional or kinaesthetic changes? Change implies some kind of movement and when I talk of learning I usually mean I have had an experience that makes me think, feel or act differently. Can knowing that Lima is the capital of Peru be called learning? In everyday life this kind of 'trivial pursuit' knowledge is esteemed and forms the basis of most quiz shows designed to discover a 'Master Mind' or 'University Challenge' champion. Knowledge becomes a proxy for learning. Does learning include an increase in the quantity of facts we can recall? Is learning a product, a process or is it both? If knowledge acquisition is learning then it might be argued that learning does not always have to result in change.

Hergenhahn and Olson (1993) suggest that modern theories of learning have four paradigmatic orientations: cognitive, associationistic, functionalistic and neurophysiological. Two of these (cognitive and associationistic) are traced to Plato (c427-347 BC) and Aristotle (c384-322 BC) respectively. In the dialogue *Theaetetus* (360 BC) Plato argues that knowledge is inherited (innatism) and one gains knowledge by reflecting on the contents of one's mind. In *De Anima* (c350 BC) Aristotle argues for the importance of the senses. Both believed in the power of reasoning but Aristotle emphasised that what we interpret are the ideas arising from sensory experience. Indeed ideas are the only thing we can experience directly. All else is filtered. Aristotle's ideas were re-visited and developed by other thinkers over the centuries (eg Locke in '*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*' (1690) where the mind is regarded as a blank slate (or *tabula rasa*)), and the enlightenment philosophers Berkeley '*A treatise concerning the principles of human knowledge*' (1710) and Hume '*A treatise of human nature*' (1739))

These theories on the nature of learning have diverged, converged, blended and parted again across the centuries. At the same time other related 'learning' debates have ebbed and flowed. John Stuart Mill in the notes to the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of his father's *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind* (1869) argued against the idea that the whole is simply the sum of its parts and that complex ideas are nothing more than a combination of simple ideas. He suggested that some simple ideas may combine and generate something completely different to their constituent elements.



Through his work on natural selection and evolution (*On the Origin of Species – 1859*) Darwin has also played a key role in influencing the kinds of questions we ask about learning. We no longer limit our questions to concerns about ‘how humans think’ but ask ‘how they learn to adjust to their environment’. Hergenhahn and Olson (1993) label this paradigm ‘functionalistic’, the relationship between learning and adaptation to the environment. The fourth category of learning theory: neurophysiological is to do with the physiological processes associated with learning, perception, thinking and intelligence. Evolutionary psychology (eg Barkow, Cosmides and Tooby (1992)) suggests that we are biologically predisposed to thinking in ways designed to ensure our survival. These can include a tendency to selfishness, male dominance and xenophobia. Under this view the purpose of education may be one of social control. Teaching that doesn’t impose boundaries may lead to unimagined and ultimately destructive outcomes rather than tolerance, respect and support for the vulnerable.

Research by Säljö (1979) into what adult students understood by learning identified broadly two categories of thinking. In the first the student was a more passive recipient of bits of knowledge which were memorised, reproduced or directly applied. In the second the learner was more active, took knowledge, made personal sense of it and applied, adapted or transformed it so that it worked in new contexts. The result of this active engagement with material might well include personal change. This research has been very influential in developing our thinking about learning and been quoted by a number of writers (Ramsden (1992), Smith (1999), Entwistle (1991)). Smith (1999) lists learning activities – knowing, recalling, using formulae, identifying concepts and changing viewpoint - and claims these are hierarchical. Each level assumes the others beneath it. Bloom’s (1956) taxonomy of learning objectives for the cognitive domain, which is often used to structure levels of questioning, offers a similar hierarchy. Knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation are regarded as requiring increasing skill and ability. Evaluation – at one end of the spectrum - requires personal commitment, an awareness of value systems, informed opinion, the capacity to resolve controversies. The idea of a hierarchy also implies that the highest levels of learning are those to be strived for and are qualitatively the best. I would question whether the terms good or bad are appropriate. It seems to me that in learning there is a place and a need to remember facts and formulae as much as there is a

need to make connections, think creatively and truly understand concepts in order to transform and apply them elsewhere.

Another useful perspective on learning is offered by Rogers (2003) who distinguishes between '*acquisition*' and '*formalised*' learning. The former is learning that happens when we undertake a task (eg parenting/running a home). We may be aware of the task but we are not necessarily aware of the learning that accompanies the completion of the task unless/until we take time to reflect on what we have been doing. Formalised learning by contrast is planned learning. Acquisition and formalised learning are on a continuum that ranges from completely accidental learning arising from an unexpected event to highly formalised learning which uses materials common to all learners and not adapted to individual preferences. Sometimes the two types of learning appear in the same context. Thinking about our South African experiences from this perspective, the majority of our learning could be said to have been '*acquisition*'. It was very individual to us and arose because we immersed ourselves in an open ended experience. Often, as evidenced in subsequent discussions (eg Chapter 6.9 (Hannah p180)), the learning was latent and even unconscious only rising to the surface when we probed and explored the meaning of what we had seen.

Earlier in this section I referred to Hergenhahn and Olson's (1993) suggestion that most learning theorists agree learning processes cannot be studied direct but have to be inferred through changes in behaviour. Some, eg Pavlov (theories of classical conditioning (1927)) and Skinner (operant' conditioning (1938, 1953, 1971)) would claim that behavioural change is learning. Other theorists (eg Watson (1925), Thorndike (1911)) say that behavioural change results from learning but saw learning as an "*automatic function of satisfying [a] state of affairs [response satisfying stimulus] and not the result of any conscious mechanism such as thinking or reasoning*" (Hergenhahn and Olson (2009) p69) . Early cognitive theorists such as Kurt Lewin (1951), George Kelly (1955) and Gestalt psychologists (a school of thought 'founded' by Max Wertheimer (1880-1943) and articulated in the work of fellow researchers Kurt Koffka (eg *Principles of Gestalt Psychology* (1935)) and Wolfgang Kohler (eg *The Task of Gestalt Psychology* (1972)) suggested there was some intermediary between stimulus and response. This reflection or analysis of experience results in learning that then leads to behavioural change.

Jarvis (2006) points out that learning is not synonymous with change in behaviour since “*learning is a process whereas the change in behaviour is the product of a previous process*” (p150). I believe that behavioural change can result from learning but there are other outcomes. I agree with Jarvis’ contention (2006 p149) that a stimulus can have a cognitive, emotional and attitudinal response which cannot always be seen or measured. A distinction is made between learning – which offers the potential to act differently - and performance – the translation of this potentiality into behaviours. I now believe that ‘learning’ is what results from an individual’s processing of input data. It is developing knowledge, ideas, attitudes, emotions and understanding.

My third research question (In what ways can the learning resulting from a significant experience change you?) invites me to look at, firstly, how learning results in different ways of being and, secondly, the conditions that turn ‘*latent learning*’ (Hill 1985) into performance.

If change has a broad definition and includes thinking and feeling as well as acting differently then change may be said to result from learning. However if change is defined only in terms of clearly observable behaviours then learning does not always result in change. Indeed an observable behaviour is often only a response to a stimulus and not the result of learning. It is only after I have reflected that hot ovens burn and consciously decide not to touch a hot oven again that I can be said to have engaged in a learning process. So for me, a definition of learning would include some form of conscious cognitive processing.

Sometimes we make changes in response to outside pressures but at other times we choose to make changes. What motivates us to change? Is it the goals we set and the plans we create to achieve those goals that motivates us and influences our behaviour? Where do these goals come from? And what form can they take? Clinical psychologist Carl Rogers (1961) has been particularly influential in re-introducing the idea of self concept. There is always a difference between our ‘real’ selves and our idealised selves (the way we would like to be) and this wish to move towards an idealised self is what motivates us. Boyatzis’ (2002) Theory of Self Directed Learning is based on this assumption (see Fig 1 below). Underpinning his model is the notion that adults learn when they want to and sustainable behavioural change is intentional. He further notes that the process of learning often begins

when “the person experiences a discontinuity, the associated epiphany or a moment of awareness and a sense of urgency.” (Boyatzis p20 2002)

Fig 1: Boyatzis' Theory of Self-Directed Learning

Discovery 1: *My Ideal Self* - Who do I want to be?

Discovery 2: *My Real Self* - Who am I?

Discovery 2: *My Strengths* - where my Ideal and Real Self are Similar

Discovery 2: *My Gaps* - where my Ideal and Real Self are Different

Discovery 3: *My Learning Agenda* - Building on my Strengths while reducing Gaps

Discovery 4: New behaviour, thoughts, and feelings through *Experimentation*

Discovery 4: Creating and building new neural pathways through *Practising* to mastery

Discovery 5: *Trusting Relationships* that help, support, and encourage each step in the process

*Self-directed change is an intentional change in an aspect of who you are (ie the Real) or who you want to be (ie the Ideal), or both. Self-directed learning is self directed change in which you are aware of the change and understand the process of change.” (Boyatzis p20 (2002))*

For Rogers there is a danger that the ‘*idealised self*’ is based on conditions of worth that are imposed on us by society as opposed to a desire to be the best we can be. (Rogers 1961). Boyatzis also recognises the need to distinguish between our version of our ideal selves and the version given us by family, friends or teachers. He refers to this as the ‘*Ought Self*’ (Boyatzis p22 (2002)). However just as difficult is when we are seduced by a vision of what we might be through media, books or those we admire and we lose the ability to distinguish between what we intrinsically would want to be and what others would like us to be.

Many of these ideas resonate with my own experience and that articulated by the colleagues who visited South Africa with me. In Chapter 6.15 (p198) I consider the

data in the light of some of these theories. A number of the research participants were very goal oriented on return to England and motivated very much by a sense of an '*ideal self*'. For example I came to realise I had set myself impossible tasks and that my ideal self was a combination of who I wanted to be and what I felt society would expect of me. Disentangling the two and finding compromise was a painful process. My learning journey did start as a result of a '*moment of awareness*' as Boyatzis suggests in the above quote.

### 2.3 How do we learn?

The difference between many of the theorists quoted above can be found in their responses to some key questions: understanding the relationship between the stimulus and reaction; whether learning is incremental or can be completed in one trial; whether our actions are an automatic response to stimuli or processed and filtered through something independent of the stimulus like the human mind.

Thorndike (1911), Hull (1970) and Skinner (1971) saw learning largely as an incremental and gradual process requiring continual reinforcement to embed the learning. Rote learning (eg times tables) techniques are based on such assumptions. On this understanding the learning gained through the South African experience could have limited impact and would be ephemeral because it was unlikely to be repeated.

Guthrie (1959) an associationist, believed that frequency or repetition was not the key to embedding learning. Reinforcement through frequency was not an absolute requirement and that one learning event could be sufficient. We associate the outcome of a learning event with its stimulus so that if the same stimulus recurred we would tend to act in the same way. (Hergenhahn and Olson 2005)

Again given the stimulus of South Africa was unlikely to be repeated, the opportunity to demonstrate learning would appear small. However this seems to over simplify the links between cause and effect. The empirical evidence from the participants themselves is that the ideas generated as a consequence of the experience emerged in different ways over time and continued to do so often in response to a wide range of triggers. (See Chapter 6.8 p171)

These theories presuppose that learning is all about tangible and observable behaviour patterns arising in response to a specific stimulus. There is also a presupposition that behaviours and, consequently, learning are capable of being broken down into distinct, observable, self contained units or episodes.

Learning becomes the demonstration of an acquired skill, recall of a piece of knowledge; or an intentional approach for the purpose of eliciting a desired response in others. For me these definitions feel too narrow and don't accord with my perception of learning as it applies to the South African experience. If there has to be a direct causal link between input and output to be called learning and the output can be predicted and labelled in advance then it seems to me that much of what we call 'learning' would have to find another name. When I came to re-interview all the participants the things they remembered, the stories they had to share reflected their different concerns – with environment, with politics, with poverty, with learning resources and teaching styles (see Chapter 5.2 – 5.11). The visit itself and our subsequent discussions gave them the time, space and stimulus to reflect, compare and synthesise ideas.

I would argue that whatever learning there was, it was different to each individual because the things we noticed, took on board and mulled over were directly related to our interests, current preoccupations and life experiences. There was a much more sophisticated filtering system at work. It wasn't just input and output or cause and effect.

William Kaye Estes (1994) in common with Guthrie also rejected the idea of reinforcement as strengthening the bond between a stimulus and a response. Reinforcement was a way of providing information about the consequence of an action which in turn influenced the learner's decision to act. Estes was also an associationist but later modified his theory of association to include memory. The memory of previous experiences interacts with the current stimulus and it is this interaction which results in a particular behaviour.

I find the idea of memory particularly interesting because my own stories and those of my fellow travellers show how our learning or the meaning we drew from our shared experiences was multi-faceted and did not appear immediately. Often forgotten ideas, conversation and images emerged and matured over time in

response to different stimuli (eg Chapter 6.8 p173). Such prompts are triggers that draw on sleeping and waking memories. They can change the way I think about something and influence my actions.

I accept that my understanding or learning results from a sensory experience but it is not a replication of that experience. Instead it changes its texture and colour as it is filtered through me. Gestalt theory (see p26) proposes that organisms add something to the experience of sensory data that is not within the data. The mind adds organisation. We see in meaningful wholes – flowers, trees – not lines, and patches of colour. Moreover it is not just the brain's organisational powers (genetically determined) that influence the meaning we give to something and hence our behaviour. Gestaltists also assert that beliefs, values, needs and attitudes give meaning to what we experience physically.

This would imply that no two people experiencing the same sensory data would ever interpret it in exactly the same way and, as thought leads to deed, would be unlikely to act in identical ways. Who we are and how we feel changes over time so that even at the level of the individual it is difficult to predict that a particular stimulus will have a specific response. Attitudes, beliefs, cognitive processing - what Hill (1985) referred to as intervening variables between data input and outputs – add to the complexity. Of course the better we understand an individual '*life space*' (Lewin (1948)) the more accurately we will be able to predict behaviour or at least to understand it.

Sarup (1996) offers a post-structuralist perspective: that there is no human depth – simply a continually changing response to stimuli. My own personal experience leads me to believe that however transformed and filtered the message and regardless of the fact that we can never experience the physical world directly – our responses have some internal consistency. However as complex organisms our possible range of responses depend on so many factors – emotional, environmental, cultural, what happened yesterday, what we anticipate today – that trying to pin down the precise output of a particular input or stimuli is a thankless task.

Gestalt theory (see above and p26) further claims that the mind is actively involved in the learning process and that learning is not the result of a systematic and

incremental acquisition of knowledge through reinforced trial. They speak of 'insight' which comes suddenly as the learner wrestles with a problem and begins to understand its underlying nature. Such an understanding then enables the learner to apply the same principles to other situations. It develops independence and autonomy in the learner. It might be argued that the resolution of a problem – the 'aha' moment - releases tension and is transformative. That combination of cognitive, physiological and emotional experience reinforces the learning and ensures it is long remembered. This has implications for teaching. Since it implies that if we can re-create experiences that combine those emotional, cognitive and physiological elements they will have much more impact and be further reaching than learning episodes that may stimulate the intellect alone – such as new knowledge or the acquisition of facts.

As I write I feel something of an 'aha' moment. Is this why the South African experience was so memorable to all participants – because it combined the cognitive, physiological and emotional? In that one week all our senses were stimulated. I, for example, came to experience another very different world with different priorities and to see at first hand how material comfort was not an essential prerequisite for spiritual or emotional happiness. Learning becomes a problem to be solved, a puzzle or a conundrum. Whilst I did not originally see the visit in these terms I can see now that questions such as: What is South Africa? What am I seeing? What does it mean? How does it relate to my own world? What is different and what is the same? What does all of this teach me about myself and the way I lead my life? are problems that I have and continue to return to. And the 'aha' moments multiply and change over time as I consider new experiences and ideas in the light of those memories.

#### 2.4 Learning – the emotional and social dimensions

Whatever learning is – it can be scary. Abercrombie (Nias 1993) suggested that learning is '*intrinsically unsettling and full of challenge*' (p21) and best undertaken in a supportive environment that offers a sense of stability, a secure base from which to take risks.

Sunderland (2008) explains how brain science research reinforces the importance of secure, consistent relationships between infant and carer. "*The brain is, in part, a social organ. Without sufficient positive, relational experiences, children and young*



*people won't develop these amazing brain and mind functions (eg reasoning, empathy, stable under stress)" (Sunderland 2009 (presentation)). Such relationships continue to be important throughout life.*

A number of the participants in this research mentioned the value of the group as a solid and supportive base which made it easier to reflect on and discuss the happenings of the day (see Chapter 6.9 p179). We laughed and cried easily together and offered friendship and tolerance. A number of the friendships have continued since our return.

*"A social environment that provides a rich and varied experience, encourages curiosity, permits puzzlement, gives a sense of security without demanding rigid conformism, fosters independence and self reliance and sets an example of purposeful enjoyable work, will help to encourage creativity in people whether or not they have inherited a terrific intellectual endowment." p45 (Nias on Abercrombie 1993)*

I spent sometime thinking about these extracts from Abercrombie's writings. In my research journal 8 (p22) I wrote:

*"South Africa was a place that took us away from a potentially restrictive mesh of assumptions about what we should learn. The loss of a focus actually helped in that liberating process. It left us free to take from the experience what we would – but what we took depended on our antecedents. So R took on board stereotypes, diversity, global issues. H took on an understanding of apartheid and the excitement (palpable) of learning everywhere she went ... The group dynamics – open, non judgemental, reflective – offered space for each of us to build and embed that learning."*

## 2.5 Do adults learn differently from children?

In "*Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning*" (1986) Stephen Brookfield explains how the term 'andragogy' has been variously interpreted as a theory of adult learning, techniques used in facilitating adult learning and a set of assumptions concerning adult learning processes from which we can draw conclusions about appropriate teaching methods. However it is defined, the core

assumption is that adult learning and therefore teaching or facilitation is different from children's learning.

Brookfield reviews the work of a number of adult learning theorists (eg Gibb (1960), Miller (1964), Kidd (1973), Knox (1977), Brundage and Mackeracher (1980), Smith (1982), Darkenwald and Merriam (1982)). He outlines the, often overlapping, principles for adult learning they have identified and the implications of these for good facilitation or teaching practice. Like Abercrombie (Nias 1993) Brookfield suggests that learning is a highly individual, often uncomfortable activity and that adult learners and the process of learning is too complex for us ever to take a pre-packaged theory off the shelf and apply it directly in supporting all adult learning.

*“The facilitation of learning – assisting adults to make sense of and act upon the personal, social, occupational and political environment in which they live – is an important, exhilarating and profound activity, both for facilitators and learners”* (pvii Brookfield 1986)

....

*“As Gagné (1971) observed, every adult's stock of prior learning and experience coheres into a unique idiosyncratic mediatory mechanism through which new experiences and knowledge are filtered. Hence ... we can never predict with total certainty how one adult (let alone a group) will respond to being presented with new ideas, interpretations, skill sets, experiences or materials.”* (p2 Brookfield 1986)

Thinking about my own experiences of the South African 'learning event' and thinking about the many principles, concepts and implications listed by Brookfield in his review of current learning theories, I found the following to be pertinent to my own situation:

- I learn best when I feel the need to learn and can choose what it is that I want to focus on.
- I have a lifetime of experiences to draw on and I learn best when I can tap into that experience in order to make sense of new knowledge
- My learning is better sustained when I can make use of it in the context of my life. This does not necessarily mean that my performance or skills are

enhanced. It might mean that I have a better understanding of myself, my value system, the assumptions I make, why I feel the way I do and why I respond as I do.

- I learn best in a non threatening and supportive atmosphere in which experimentation and creativity are encouraged and celebrated and thinking is constructively challenged

This is my take on the world and what helps me to learn best. Others may feel the same or differently. Brookfield (1986) points out, for example, that much of the research on which learning theories are developed is based on culturally specific and often homogeneous samples – American, white, middle class, upwardly mobile males. The idea that adults learn best when they can apply their learning directly (Miller (1964), Brundage and Mackeracher (1980), Smith (1982)) does not take into account the many times adults pursue a line of enquiry for its own sake to explore, for example, family heritage, find out about a particular period in history or investigate the origin and movement of ideas across art, architecture, literature and music and the way in which they form and shape each other.

Brookfield also challenges the idea that self directed behaviour is a pre-requisite for the attainment of adulthood. According to Knowles (1975) and Boyatzis (2002) self directed learning is about taking the initiative in designing, carrying out and evaluating learning. Self directedness is claimed to be a characteristic that helps to distinguish adult from child learning (Simpson 1980) and the purpose of education is to create conditions in which this attribute can be nurtured. Brookfield suggests that it is often taken as a proxy for reaching adulthood. This is a value judgement about what is desirable in adult behaviour. It is empirically evident that many adults do not behave in self directed (autonomous/independent) ways. Many cultures and regimes do not encourage a cult of individualism and many individuals even in Western democracies, do not necessarily value a separatist philosophy, preferring to conform to the customs and practices of the groups to which they belong.

Brookfield (1986) writes (p94)

*“Self-directedness [.. that is autonomous control over aspects of work-life, personal relationships, societal structures and educational pursuits] is a desirable condition of human existence that is seldom found in any abundance. Its rarity, however, in no*

*sense weakens the view that the enhancement of self directedness is the proper purpose of education; instead it provides a compelling reason why education should pursue this end with unflagging zeal.”*

I may not disagree but arguably this is a cultural perspective on the purpose of education not a timeless and universal fact. It also values certain forms of facilitation that encourage independence and autonomy in learning. To esteem one way of working, by definition, means other methodologies that deliver different outcomes are less valued. Such dichotomies/binary divides may result in over simplification. So, for example, rote learning or a didactic approach may not be well regarded because learners are not provided with opportunities to take control. Instead such techniques are better suited to delivering content, formula and developing memory and recall rather than self sufficiency. I would argue that there is a place for both. I would also argue that in order to act in a self directed manner we need a confidence that often arises from feeling on top of our subject. I spend my entire professional life making decisions and introducing new initiatives but I do so with a thorough understanding of my professional area. I make use of an information base that I have acquired over time and in lots of different ways including rote learning, attending briefings, reading and discussion with others. As we saw in earlier in this chapter (see p25) Bloom's taxonomy of learning objectives for the cognitive domain (1956) offers us a number of different levels of learning from description through to synthesis and evaluation. From my experience I would suggest that we need all of these levels in order to function effectively. It is not a case of either/or, good/bad. Each type of learning has its own value and may or may not need to be absorbed in the skill set that leads to the next level.

Brookfield (1986) citing his own research also challenges the commonly held assumption (eg Knowles (1980)) that effective adult learning experiences have to be immediately applicable to our lives

*“.It is often the case that the most significant learning we undergo as adults results from some external event or stimulus that causes us to engage in an anxiety-producing and uncomfortable re-assessment of our personal, occupation, and recreational lives. This external stimulus may be a calamitous event, such as being fired, experiencing the death of a parent, sibling or spouse, going to war, or coping with a divorce. The learning in which we are forced to engage as a result of these*

*events may be unsought and may have many painful aspects. Nonetheless we may regard such learning as highly significant, precisely because it caused us to question our ways of thinking and behaving in our personal relationships, occupational lives or social activities. Such questioning is initially uncomfortable and may be resisted but it will often be the cause of us deciding to change some aspect of our lives.” p22*

I have quoted Brookfield in full here because it builds on Boyatzis' (2002) “*moment of awareness*” (see p28) and articulates exactly my own experience of feeling out of kilter with the world following the South African visit. This is an experience I discovered a number of the other participants shared. (See Chapter 6.12 p191)

## 2.6 Inputs and outputs

It took almost 2 years from my initial proposal to revise my research aims and some research questions that felt ‘right’. It was another three months before a thesis started to emerge. This illustrates the gradual and progressive nature of learning that defies simple mechanistic explanations based on cause and effect.

It was only after I had almost completed my field research and undertaken nearly all of the follow up interviews that I realised the standards by which I was judging the worth of this TIPD visit to South Africa (namely: what is the demonstrable impact of the activities I have undertaken) were not universal and timeless standards but part of the paradigm of my professional world - a world of accountability, measurable impact, inputs and outputs.

I did some preliminary discourse analysis of key government policy documents that impact on my own professional life and that of colleagues across children and young people’s services and noticed some tensions between aspiration and implementation.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) publications (eg DCSF 2008b) reinforce the expectation that professionals should be able to innovate, to embrace change and respond to new situations in innovative ways.

*“the workforce in 2020 will need to be ...Excellent in their practice ....they will be confident in their specialist skills and knowledge ....*

*Respected and valued as professionals .... will have the skills, knowledge and professional empowerment to make a difference. They will work in a supportive environment – have access to good quality and relevant training. (DCSF 2008b)*

However our reality is one of Ofsted inspections, audit, targets and bureaucracy. All of this has the potential to dampen and even suffocate innovation. It does not espouse a humanist paradigm where everyone strives for excellence and where creating the right conditions is sufficient of itself for people to self actualise. It assumes a need for intervention and micro management. The demand for clear inputs and outputs does not gamble on the possibility of greater riches where individuals are allowed to engage with learning in their own way and given the freedom and encouragement to experiment and take risk.

I instinctively and personally understood the significance of the experience I had been through but, because I found it hard to articulate those benefits or to show measurable outcomes, I found myself questioning its value.

The word ‘*guilt*’ comes up a lot in both my own story and that of others (see Chapter 6.15 p198). We all experienced some discomfort at the thought of our own wealth when compared to those we were visiting. However the interviews revealed that a number of us may also have felt guilty because, whilst we experienced personal growth, we felt unable to justify the investment in more concrete ways.

Earlier in this chapter I spoke of the ‘*ideal*’ and ‘*real*’ self and the danger that my definition of ‘*ideal*’ is simply that imposed on me by others (Boyatzis (2002), Rogers (1961)). Perhaps we have internalised the culture and expectations of our professional lives – one where audit trails, credit and debit balances are pervasive? In an audit culture what is measurable becomes what is measured and, in turn, valued. “*Audit measures become targets*” (p3 Strathern (2000)) and generally audit frowns on “*loose ends, unpredictability and disconnections.*” (p4 Strathern (2000)). An audit culture is not simply about value for money. It can also be seen to send a message of doubt and mistrust.

*“... the growth of auditing is the explosion of an idea, an idea that has become central to a certain style of controlling individuals and which has permeated organisational life.” (p4 Power 1997)*

Team Durban (the name the group gave itself) had undertaken an expensive visit to another part of the world for a very clearly articulated purpose. What we gained, as the data in Chapters Five and Six shows, was very personal and transformational in nature. We returned to a world where we felt we had to account for that experience in ways that showed how our professional practice had developed. On top of this was our own desire to act to alleviate the poverty and suffering we had seen and the frustration that we had not done even the little that we hoped to do.

And so our guilt seems to have been personal and, at the same time, a metaphor for living in a world of competing and often apparently contradictory discourses.

## 2.7 Deep learning versus surface learning

Throughout this chapter I have been considering definitions of learning and the link between learning and change. In section 2.2 I asked whether learning had to equate with observable and measurable behavioural change or if it might also include the potential for change where people understand and experience the world around them differently. On the other hand if recognition, recall and direct application of fact and formulae are aspects of learning but not ‘change’ in the sense of transformation or new thinking then it re-poses the question whether ‘change’ is always an outcome of learning?

I could argue that the acquisition of random facts is not learning but an accumulation of knowledge. ‘*Learning*’ becomes what you do with that knowledge. Under this definition learning is an active and personal process. Perhaps both the acquisition of knowledge and the individual’s interaction with it are different aspects of an umbrella term called learning. Learning as product – the understanding and knowledge you are left with following an input – and learning as process – what you do with a stimulus and the new meanings and understanding you develop.

Both Bloom (1956) and Smith (1999) offered a hierarchy of learning activity. Recognition and recall were at the bottom of a ladder while identifying

patterns/making new connections and changing viewpoint were at the top. These activities can also be said to correlate with notions of 'deep' and 'surface' learning. Research on 'deep' and 'surface' learning was initially carried out by Marton and Säljö (1976). Students were asked to read an academic article and prepare to answer questions on it. Two approaches were adopted by research participants. Some focused on and memorised facts from the article (surface) while others tried to understand the meaning of the text (deep).

These concepts have been of particular interest to those involved in teaching in higher education (HE) (eg Biggs (1999), Entwistle (1988) and Ramsden (1992)). The starting point of these writers is that, in an HE context, students need to cope with complexity. If they rely on formula and procedure they will reach a point beyond which they cannot go in understanding a topic or creating new knowledge.

*“Simply stated, deep learning involves the critical analysis of new ideas, linking them to already known concepts and principles, and leads to understanding and long term retention of concepts so that they can be used for problem solving in unfamiliar contexts. Deep learning promotes understanding and application for life. In contrast, surface learning is the tacit acceptance of information and memorisation of isolated and unlinked facts. It leads to superficial retention of material for examinations and does not promote understanding or long term retention of knowledge and information. .... It is the design of a learning opportunity that encourages students to adopt a particular approach ... Very crudely: deep is good, surface is bad.” (p2 Houghton 2004)*

Under this definition, 'deep learning' would require a divergent as opposed to convergent thinking style. However the premise of Kolb's Learning Style Inventory (2007) is that a deep learner would have the capacity to operate using a variety of styles and would need to be able to switch modes depending on the situation. So at any time their style might be diverging (seeing situations from different viewpoints), converging (the application of theory and problem solving), accommodating (using intuition and relationships with others) and assimilating (drawing together and representing information using a range of resources). Kolb saw deep learning or learning for comprehension as a cycle. It was necessary to go through a process of experience, reflection, abstraction and active testing in order to understand, embed



and apply new concepts. This required the use of all the learning styles listed above.

Deep learning is regarded as a personal and transformational experience. It is something which an individual takes on board, links with prior knowledge and results in a shift in mindset. In the definition given above longevity and sustainability are important components. Deep learning is retained because the concepts being applied are understood rather than known. Surface learning allows someone to bolt on a piece of extra knowledge but doesn't fundamentally or even subtly shift how they view the world. So learning which involves adding facts to one's pool of general knowledge is considered surface learning whereas learning which alters one's perspective on the world and allows one to see through different lenses is deep learning. Deep learning has an emotional dimension to it because in learning to think about others differently we see ourselves in a different way.

West-Burnham and Coates (2005) explore and extend ideas of surface or '*shallow*' and deep learning. They add another category: '*profound*' learning. According to this typology shallow learning involves using memory, deep learning becomes the ability to reflect and profound learning means using intuition. Profound learning extends deep learning. It involves developing personal theories, undergoing personal transformation and instilling the kind of confidence in a subject that enables '*instant knowing*' (where cognitive processing is condensed and the stages are not articulated). Deep to profound learning becomes the movement of understanding to meaning and knowledge to wisdom.

*"Profound learning is what makes us a person, it gives us a sense of uniqueness and determines our ability to think and act for ourselves. Profound learning is the way we develop personal wisdom and meaning, which allows us to be creative, to make moral judgements, to be an authentic human being who is able to accept responsibility for our own destinies" (p38)*

Elsewhere West-Burnham (2006) uses metaphors of literature and music to help distinguish between the three types of learning and why, in his view, profound learning has the greatest value.

*“Shallow learning is playing the notes; deep learning creates the melody; profound learning enables the great performance .... Shallow learning gives access to vocabulary and rules of grammar; deep learning allows conversations; profound learning enables engagement with poetry, ideas and thinking.” (web article 2006)*

This view of profound learning reminds me of similar conversations I have with those I have trained to be HLTAs. We talk about the movement from conscious to unconscious competence when we know and understand something so well that it becomes second nature to us. It feels natural and obvious. The downside is that we can move from unconscious competence to unconscious incompetence without realising it. Wisdom is context and time specific. We need to constantly reflect on it to ensure its validity in changing times. All of which raises interesting questions about value of longevity in learning. I may truly understand something now but if I don't continually test out that understanding and revise it then it becomes like the geography text book whose maps are fixed at a point in time while the world has moved on. The logic of this position is that the learning outcomes are less important than the learning process. It is more valuable to us to be able to approach any kind of content in ways that allow us to own and shape it.

There are other ways in which I believe the centrality of long term retention as an aspect of deep learning can be questioned. My own personal experience is that I may have a moment of insight and for the next few hours or days I will be able to articulate in great detail and enthusiasm the basis and outcomes of my new learning and will demonstrate my use of that learning in the perspectives I offer and the way I apply my thinking to new situations. However this new understanding can, and does, quickly dissipate as other ideas and stimuli take over. I may forget the detail. I may remember the conclusions and forget the reasoning. It will, perhaps, be easier to re-visit my thinking but I will still need to go over old ground to get back to that point of understanding. Does the failure of my memory mean that I did not engage in a deep learning process or that the product of this engagement was not something that could be labelled deep learning?

The ability to critically evaluate, to identify links and connections and create new ways of working are requirements of many professions including my own. I spend my working days having to find my own way without a map, pulling together diverse fragments of information and opinion to help make informed decisions.

I indicated in Section 2.5 (p36) that I feel any tendency to create a binary divide that favours one kind of learning over another is too simplistic. If surface learning uses the skills of repetition, recall and direct application while deep or profound learning is about making connections, identifying concepts, finding new ways of seeing and changing viewpoints (or transformation) does it necessarily follow, as Smith (1999) suggests, the first is a prerequisite of the second? We should also question whether it is always necessary to operate at the level of deep learning.

The idea of a learning level hierarchy is itself a theory and open to challenge. If we accept the different types of learning, does each have to pre-suppose the one below it or can different types of learning have value and exist independently from each other?

West-Burnham (2006) and West-Burnham and Coates (2005) do not accept that there is necessarily a causal relationship that requires an individual go through the valley of shallow to reach the evergreens of profound learning. Nor, for them, does it follow that because an individual has had a profound learning experience in relation to one aspect of their lives that this has to be the case in all areas. In some contexts shallow learning is appropriate. I know that if I touch a light switch I will usually get light. I know that if the light does not come on: I check the bulb has not blown, I check the trip switch and then I call out someone with greater knowledge and understanding than me who can work out what has gone wrong. By contrast when designing a programme to develop facilitation skills I will go back to basics to think fundamentally about the values and principles underpinning this methodology, what my higher purpose is in developing this work and whether such a programme will in fact help me to achieve it.

Berne's work (1964) on transactional analysis makes the point that much of the time we need to work in automatic mode. It would not be physically possible to combat, challenge and debate every aspect of our lives. We choose what we want truly to engage in and rely on our knowledge of routines for everything else. This suggests that all types and levels of learning are legitimate. It seems to me that the most important point is that we are able to exercise conscious choice as to the level of engagement that we have with every topic and that we have the skills to work successfully at every level.

The value I place on deep and surface learning is a consequence of my view of the purpose of education and how a deep or surface approach enables me to achieve that purpose. To say that '*profound*' is the holy grail and that '*shallow*' or '*deep*' are inferior alternatives is a value judgement. It seems to me the conviction that profound is good and shallow is bad has contributed to the esteem of academic over vocational qualifications and that this labelling is both unhelpful and an oversimplification. All types of knowledge, skills-based or cerebral, require a mixture of deep and surface learning and this mix is different according to the nature of the subject being learned and the purpose for which the knowledge is required.

In Section 2.2 I outlined the 4 key influences on learning identified by Hergenhahn and Olson (1993). Houghton (2004) identifies 4 alternative, although in some respects overlapping, orientations to learning. These are behaviourist, cognitive, humanist and social/situational. Each has a different view of the learning process, the educator's role and the purpose of education. The behaviourist orientation seeks observable change. It focuses on the acquisition of skills and promotes a competency based education. The National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) structure is based on this philosophy and assumes that knowledge can largely be demonstrated through competent practice.

A behaviourist perspective would place greater value on surface learning techniques as manifested in skill development programmes and rote learning. It is through these incremental steps that the learner progresses towards a deep understanding of their subject. By contrast a humanist pedagogical approach would emphasise self actualisation, meeting cognitive and emotional needs and developing autonomy of thought and action. Here a greater value will be placed on deep learning techniques (eg reflection, discussion) as a facilitator of self directed learning and independent thinking. Both orientations might aim for deep learning outcomes albeit for different reasons and in different ways.

It is not only through philosophy or by engaging in higher level thinking and reasoning that deep learning occurs. However deep learning is not always the only outcome sought. In the working world some roles require practical or technical skills to be applied in familiar contexts whilst others require workers to enter new conceptual territory or to develop new products. It is not essential to operate a lathe

in order to design furniture or vice versa. The two sets of skills may usefully complement each other but they can also exist independently. They both have a place but they each require a different type of skill set or learning.

West-Burnham and Coates (2005) claim that shallow learning is no longer appropriate in a complex world.

*“Shallow learning has been adequate for a world, which operated on high levels of compliance and dependence in the work place and society. If it is true that the world is becoming a far more complex place then it may be that the dominant mode of learning will have to change. Shallow learning may have been an acceptable foundation for life in a relatively simple world with fewer choices and greater hegemony but it is clearly inadequate in a world of complex choices and limited consensus” (p35/p36)*

I disagree. I believe that there is a place for different types of learning dependent on the outcomes we are seeking. Furthermore if we accept a definition of deep learning the key elements of which are the ability to make connections and to develop new insights then we must accept that everyone is capable of deep learning and that the learning does not have to be very clever or original nor does it have to be the province of the ‘professions’. A skilled cabinet maker needs to understand the nuances and properties of the wood he is using and how it will respond to different tools and treatments. If making a piece of furniture requires a blend of skills and the exercise of judgement - a sense when something will or won’t work – then this is also deep learning.

The experiences of Team Durban and the insights we developed in relation to the environment and politics were not necessarily earth shattering or new discoveries. However they were new to us and our conversations revealed that we were developing a better understanding of our own responses to what we saw and heard (eg Chapter 5.9 ‘*Seeing Terry*’). So growth was at both cognitive and emotional levels. And our memory of our experiences was more powerful because of the way knowledge and understanding blended with emotion arising from empathy, admiration, pity and helplessness.

I believe that the capacity to engage in deep learning is not simply desirable but essential if we are to adapt, cope and even thrive amidst the challenges and deadlines we are expected to accommodate in our professional world. In a time of change when leaders are looking not simply to tinker with the edges of a system but to transform the way we do things, deep (and profound) learning is important because it opens up possibilities, encourages creativity and new ways of working. It can also generate dissatisfaction with the status quo and lead people to change their lives and jobs. It is highly individual and cannot be controlled. It is not about cause and effect or direct input and output. If organisations want deep learning they need to create possibilities, frameworks, experiential opportunities and trust to the process. If they want to control behaviour, thinking, skill development and operational effectiveness then they will lay on training and development experiences that address these dimensions. My experience as a workforce development professional is that many organisations offer both types of CPD but do not differentiate in terms of the outcomes. Specific, immediate and quantifiable impact is expected from deep learning experiences and attitudinal change from CPD that delivers surface learning.

Deep learning requires a trust in the process without being overly concerned about the detail. The differences between deep and surface learning are mirrored in the distinctions between facilitation and training. In the former, the facilitator provides the framework. In the latter the trainer is more in control, imparting knowledge or helping the group to develop specific skill sets. There is a similar difference between coach and mentor. Non directive coaching assumes that the expertise and answers reside within the coachee. As a mentor the more experienced practitioner offers the wisdom of Solomon to the junior colleague.

Whether it is deep/profound learning, facilitation or coaching – the underpinning philosophy is humanist – namely that the individual both has the willingness and the capacity to learn, to solve problems and to respond appropriately to new situations. It is a person centred model and has a particular view of human nature which is at odds with an evolutionary psychological perspective which might suggest that human natural predispositions are towards selfishness, xenophobia and aggression (Hergenhahn and Olson (1993))

Our TIPD visit offered the opportunity for deep learning but was framed in language, expectations and accountabilities that anticipated certainty and structure. The British Council application form we used, for example, required clear learning outcomes. I believe that any experience provides opportunities for both deep and surface learning. According to how we are feeling - our previous experiences, our openness to new ways of being - so we tap in at one or both levels. What happened in South Africa was that the expected input – observation and discussion around the deployment of teaching assistants– didn't materialise. So we had an opportunity to follow our own interests and a set of conditions to nurture, encourage and embed that learning and to turn it from surface – the observation of differences – to profound – understanding the implications of those differences.

## 2.8 Autonomy and accountability

In Sections 2.6 and 2.7 I noted how the professional world I inhabit oscillates between an expressed desire for practitioners capable of independent and creative thought and the need to show clear outcomes and accountability. The Children and Young People's workforce is one where the attitudes and behaviours of practitioners need to be transformed in order to ensure that integrated working is effective.

*“People in the workforce should be clear about when and how they need to work together – and have the skills and capacity to do so” (Paragraph 3.19 DCSF (2008b))*

And yet we are constantly expected to show the direct, quantifiable and measurable impact of our activity (eg Local Area Agreement (LAA) Targets for Children and Young People 2008).

Schatz (1993) made a similar point in relation to schools which despite the influence of the 5 Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes by and large still holds true some 17 years later.

*“In recent years educational institutions as a whole have become more and more the focus of public accountability. Evaluating the performance of a complex learning institution such as a school has often been understood as a matter of merely measuring its academic output.” (p2)*

Considerable interest is currently being shown in the principles underpinning ‘*social pedagogy*’ defined by Wikipedia (date of access: Dec 2009) as “*a branch of upbringing, education and interventions of a welfare state that is meant to increase personal responsibility and self-dependent handling of common circumstances of life. Further goals are the reduction of discriminations and the promotion of social skills required for the participation in societal life and the public sphere*”

The Early Years Professional Status and work on the Youth Professional Status were informed by an emphasis on a social pedagogical approach which brings together care and education, makes use of the community as a resource in supporting children and young people and reinforces a way of working that combines heart, head and hands where social pedagogues undertake activities alongside their charges and share their life space instead of arranging the activity and standing back. A social pedagogical approach has implications for practice – both in terms of risk management and autonomy of action by the individual professional.

Between 2006 and 2008 the Thomas Coram Research Unit (TCRU) undertook two studies for the DCSF - one on work with children at the so-called 'edges' of care, and on one mainstream parenting support. Both were pan-European studies: the parenting support study is a review of Denmark, Germany, France, Italy and the Netherlands; the edges of care study is a comparison (with interviews) of work in Denmark, Germany, France and England. Both highlight the role of Social Pedagogues in parenting and family support.

The edges of care TCRU research (Boddy et al 2008) asked residential care workers in England, Denmark and Germany how they would respond in a particular instance. The responses showed that English staff were more likely to take action and follow procedures and then offer emotional support, whilst Danish staff, trained as social pedagogues listed a range of responses that depended on the specific circumstances. There are many possible reasons for this marked difference in approach but one that particularly resonates with myself and fellow practitioners is the culture of blame we feel immersed in which seems to discourage confidence in action based on professional judgement. In my authority, for example, one of the consequences of the Baby P (Haringey Council 2008) tragedy has been a substantial increase in the number of child protection referrals to social services. As



elsewhere this has resulted in a silting up of the referral process and the resultant risk to those really in need who may get lost in the system.

Such tensions also find echoes in recent debates around how we apply and sustain learning. In my profession these issues are translated into questions about what constitutes good CPD. The Training and Development Agency (TDA) for schools has funded and collated a broad range of research in response to this question and identified 11 key principles. These principles have been used in a number of ways including as assessment criteria for bids to promote and support the national CPD priorities (TDA 2007)

Two examples are given below:

#### Principle 2

*“It [CPD] is planned with a clear vision of the effective or improved practice being sought. This vision is shared by those undertaking the development and by the people leading or supporting it.”*

Guidance underpinning this principle states:

*“Sharply defined outcomes are also the starting point for evaluating the impact of CPD”*

#### Principle 11

*“Its impact on teaching and learning is evaluated and this evaluation guides subsequent professional development activities.”*

Guidance underpinning this principle states:

*“The ultimate purpose of all CPD in a school is to maintain the highest possible standards of education and care for children and young people. CPD needs to be vigorously evaluated to ensure it is making the maximum contribution to its objective. The most effective evaluations are planned from the outset as an integral part of the CPD.”*

This philosophy is underpinned by the 2006 Ofsted report on CPD – ‘*The Logical Chain*’ which reinforces the direct and causal link between input and output when planning, delivering and evaluating CPD.

There seems much to recommend principles that reinforce reflection and context specific learning that makes use of real experiences and values the sharing and dissemination of good practice. However the insistence on pre-determined, measurable outcomes or observed behaviours might lead to a neglect of aspects of learning or attitudinal change that cannot be pinned down so securely. This resonates with Strathern’s warning (2000) (see Section 2.6) that what can be measured becomes valued and that we neglect things of real value.

*“The form in which the outcome is to be described is known in advance. You bypass having to construct the form from the investigations themselves. The investigation – the research if you will – is in that sense retrospective; this is, it works backwards from the bottom line up, from the categories by which accountability can be ascertained to the evidence for it.”* (Strathern 2000 p3)

The South African visit, on the surface, was one where the ‘*form in which the outcome is to be described is known in advance*’. We set out having clearly defined our purpose. Luckily for us it was one we could not hope to meet because there were no additional adults supporting learning in the schools we visited. This gave us a freedom which we might otherwise not have had to take what we could from the visit.

My own experience of South Africa, which seems to have been common with my fellow travellers, was that I could not predict what the learning might be. It emerged over time and was unexpected, intangible and/or unmeasurable (See Chapter 5.2 – 5.11 for examples). However it was richer and ultimately had a greater, even life changing, impact than anything that could have been planned. We all took different things from the visit because the fit with our previous knowledge was so different. It exposed us to a range of experiences each of which had its own cognitive, affective and kinaesthetic dimensions. We arrived with an expectation and an excitement that we would learn something that helped make us receptive to anything and everything. The way the experience was structured offered us the space to absorb and reflect.

## 2.9 Moving from possible to actual

The TIPD visit provided an opportunity to engage in deep and even profound learning. But what takes something from an experience to learning and from potential to active engagement?

The importance of the emotional climate in facilitating learning cannot be underestimated. West-Burnham (2006), in listing some of the strategies that might support the development of deep and profound learning, emphasised the social dimensions of learning and the impact of interpersonal relationships, recognising the role of family and community in encouraging access to learning.

Our own South African experience highlighted how important the support and friendship of the group was in absorbing and reflecting on new learning. It was mentioned by a number of the research participants in the follow up interviews some 15 months later (see Chapter 6.9 p179).

The open and trusting group dynamics meant that we could experience newness and emotion, the juxtaposition of beauty and ugliness, wealth and poverty, joy and misery in ways that were both safe but also challenging. It catapulted me and many of my fellow travellers into deep learning experiences.

My original research proposal was based on an assumption about the kind of learning that would result from the TIPD visit: application of new thinking to existing situations. This outcome went beyond acquiring information (surface learning). However using the definitions given by West Burnham and Coates (2005) it was more akin to deep than profound learning. Over time I came to realise that I had undergone a profound learning experience which had transformed me in some way that was difficult to articulate and kept changing form. For me this profound learning related to an understanding of who I was, what my value systems were and what my real strengths were. And for me the difference between deep and profound was the difference between doing different and transformation. Transforming involves taking something apart and re-constituting it. It has a powerful emotional dimension. Perhaps because it is scary to go into unknown territory; perhaps because when I re-build something it becomes my own creation, a part of me; perhaps because identifying and realising a vision is itself an emotional experience.

Whatever the reason I could understand why West-Burnham and Coates had extended Marton and Säljö's (1976) original definition.

As I re-interviewed the participants I found that everyone had had surface, deep and profound learning experiences (see Chapter 6.2 Table 3 p148). This raised interesting questions about what turns an experience into an opportunity for profound learning and then sustains and nurtures that learning in ways that result in change at a personal, cognitive or behavioural level. The research data (eg provides some insight into the way we interacted with the experience both at the time and subsequently. It suggests an almost inexhaustible list of factors that contributed to both what we learned and how we learned including: predisposition, timing, opportunities to reflect, the perspectives of those we interacted with both during and subsequent to the visit; our own needs and emotions at the time of the visit (see Chapter 6.9-6.13).

Whilst it may be a unique configuration of factors that determine the reaction an individual has to a particular experience, I did discover from the interviews and descriptions a shared process (see Appendix Four). The intensely individual nature of profound learning outcomes makes them, I believe, very difficult to predict but it is possible to make some tentative suggestions about the conditions under which profound learning is more likely to occur (see West-Burnham and Coates 2005) or the stages in the journey towards a profound learning experience.

As a consequence of this thinking I decided to put together a process model that captured these key stages. I later refined the model in response to feedback from the research participants, colleagues and following discussions with my supervisor. The various stages of the model are explained in detail in Chapter 6.4 (pp 157-164) as part of my data analysis.

#### 2.10 My thesis

In December 2008 I wrote, in my Learning Journal (8), a response to reading a thesis which had used a Grounded Theory approach to analysing data (Moore 2006):

*"I seem to be trying to capture the nature or essence of the learning which is different for different individuals. I think that my hypothesis might be that however*

*carefully planned you can't account for the 'real learning' of an open ended incident because it will be something that interacts with an individual's life experiences".*

Is it possible to isolate the specific elements of a learning experience and replicate them in order to produce a desired outcome? I contend that it would be, if not impossible, then very difficult to do so because people have such unique personal histories and interact so differently with the same experience. There may be limited value in trying to control learning outcomes. Instead we should be concentrating on creating structures and opportunities that enable people to both have and then make use of their learning experiences. Such opportunities would not attempt to articulate outcomes but trust in the process.

My research moved from a consideration of the conditions that sustain learning after the event to encompass the kinds of learning arising from an experience and how the initial stimulus translates into learning. These changes emerged over time as I re-visited the data and considered the articulated experiences and thoughts of the participants. The research data (see Chapters 5 and 6) supports and extends the typology of surface, deep and profound learning offered by West-Burnham and Coates (2005). The model I created (see Chapter 6.4 Fig 4) tracing the movement from stimulus to learning came from the experiences of the research participants. It indicates how deep learning can be nurtured and sustained and is my contribution to knowledge in the field.

In this research my exploration of learning also included a consideration of the context within which learning takes place. The data 'invited' me to look at how the responses of the research participants to the South African visit reflected the values of the dominant culture in which we live (see Chapter 6.15 p198). All of the South African TIPD participants had, by their own definition, significant learning experiences (see Chapter 6.1 p143) and yet many of us initially felt the need to show the impact of our experience in observable behaviours (eg applied knowledge, raising funds or changes in our professional practice). It was as if we were denying the value of unquantifiable learning' or seeing it as a luxury that, by itself, was insufficient. I suggest that this behaviour is influenced to a great extent by the political and educational agendas of the dominant culture where there is currently a heavy emphasis on evidencing improvement and correlating input and outcome.

Deep learning is a risky and uncertain business precisely because we cannot entirely predict its outcomes. However I believe that if we try and restrict learning or focus purely on knowledge and skill acquisition then we risk losing something infinitely richer. It may be that one of the reasons the South African visit produced such a broad and varied range of outcomes was precisely because we lost our focus and were each 'allowed' to follow our own interests. Whilst acknowledging there may be a place for surface learning, I would suggest that the current climate and the enormous changes facing services for children and young people generally (and schools in particular) reinforces the need for resilient individuals who can embrace change and have the capacity to deal with ambiguity – qualities that can be fostered through the provision of CPD opportunities that facilitate deep learning experiences

### 3.0 Chapter Three: Methodology

This chapter looks at the way in which I undertook the research. I explain why I chose case study as a strategy of enquiry, the data collection methods I used, the criteria by which I wanted the research to be judged and the implications of these criteria both ideologically and ethically. I also describe the range of data I had access to and generated in the course of my research.

#### 3.1 Using a case study approach

I had originally intended to use case study as both an approach to the research and as a way of presenting the thesis. I explored 'case study' as a methodological approach in my second doctoral assignment and concluded that it was a helpful strategy of enquiry where the subject of the research was both particular and contextualised. It also offered flexibility. The way in which data was collected could be determined by the nature of the topic and the researcher's interests and could encompass what might be thought of as qualitative or quantitative methods.

I find useful Yin's (2003) definition of case study as:

*"An empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context especially where the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evidenced"* (p13).

However he also suggests hypothesis in advance of the research (Yin 2003) and I did not want my research to support or disprove a pre-determined theory. I wanted any hypothesis to emerge from the data and to have the flexibility to change research direction if appropriate. In the event the on-going analysis resulted in changes to both the aims and the research questions. This aligns with Stake's (2005) concept of 'progressive focusing' where case study research is an iterative process allowing judgements and interpretations to be made continuously, in the field, as well as afterwards.

Yin (2003) asserts that one of the main purposes of case study is 'theory building': an idea supported by a number of contributors (eg Eckstein and Mitchell) to "Case Study Method" (Gomm, Hamersley and Foster (eds) (2000)). Whilst I accept that a case study approach can generate, contribute to or illustrate a general theory I felt, like Stake (1980), that the primary purpose of case study was not one of theory

building. My research did result in both hypothesis and a proposed conceptual model but this came out of the analysis and was not something I had anticipated.

At the point of designing the research, thinking about its presentation and choosing a strategy of enquiry I was interested in creating a vehicle through which individual experience could be explored. Stake (1980, 1995, 2005) offers 3 dimensions of qualitative case study research. These were that case study provides understanding over explanation; allows for a personal rather than neutral role for the observer; and through the use of thick description enables knowledge to be 'discovered' by the reader rather than constructed by the author. Stake (1995) emphasises the particularity and complexity of single cases and the intrinsic value of studying them for what can be learned about the case itself.

*"The function of research is not necessarily to map and conquer the world but to sophisticate the beholding of it. 'Thick description', 'experimental understanding' and 'multiple realities' are expected in qualitative case studies" (Stake 1995 p43)*

Given my aspirations I felt a case study approach was appropriate.

I was keen not to set myself up as the expert. As one of the participants I wanted the opportunity to explore my own learning. I wanted to develop a relationship with my fellow participants that was more akin to partnership than researcher/researched and would enable us to learn and reflect together.

The term "*Thick description*" as used by Stake (1995 p43) is about providing sufficient detail to enable the reader to enter the world of the study's participants and to understand the way they experience it. From this understanding the reader is able to make '*naturalistic generalisations*' which Stake refers to as the unique and private responses of the reader to those aspects of the case that resonate with and provide insight into their own situations. Through this enhanced understanding the reader can decide, for themselves how they wish to act.

My starting point, therefore, was that a case study approach would offer the flexibility to accommodate:

- progressive focusing as particular lines of enquiry emerged;
- personal involvement of the researcher; and



- the possibility of multiple perspectives and interpretations.

Originally I anticipated that that this would be a multi-case study based on the participating schools and would delineate the experiences of the individual or individuals representing those schools. At that time my aim was to consider the factors and conditions that sustained learning by looking at the specific experiences of the individuals involved. It was on this basis that I organised the follow up interviews with the participants. The school itself (in some cases represented by the headteacher) became almost an additional character. I anticipated making cross-case comparisons. Experience indicated that opportunities to embed, experiment with and share learning would be influenced, at least partially, by the personality of the organisations we worked in. The TIPD visit had been very clearly labelled professional development, was open to representatives from specific organisations (ie schools) and was about enhancing work-based practice. The research revealed how learning does not recognise personal/professional boundaries and that a sense of empowerment could differ between participants within an organisation as well as between organisations (see Chapter 6.11 p185). Nevertheless, as way of organising the research activity and contextualising the stories of the participants, it had its merits.

As the research progressed I realised that I needed to revisit my assumptions on the nature of the “case” and its boundaries? Where did my case study start and stop? Was this thesis a single case study dealing with the concept of deep learning and how it manifests itself or a multi-case study looking more broadly at the experiences of either 10 individuals or the employees of 7 organisations?

When I became more interested in definitions of learning and the nature of the learning that each individual had taken from the experience I began to realise rather than a comparison of cases this was an exploration of a specific issue (what Stake (2006) called a ‘*quintain*’) with each participant’s story a contribution to that central theme. In my research proposal (Appendix 1) I quoted Stake’s distinction between a multi-case study and a quintain.

*“The quintain is something that functions, that operates, that has life. The multicase study is the observation of that life in multiple situations”* (p83 Stake 2006)

At the time I found it difficult to appreciate the difference. It became much clearer to me when I started structuring the data chapters (Chapters 5 and 6). I had intended to reflect on each school and participant in turn. I soon realised that I was being enjoyably diverted from my declared research focus. I didn't have the luxury of indeterminate length and I found in order to create clear links with some of the thesis' main ideas I needed to organise the chapter differently.

When my research direction changed and began to focus on types and processes of learning I re-visited my decision to use case study. I still felt it was an appropriate strategy of enquiry. Deep learning is, by its nature, a highly individual process. I believe it is in telling different stories that we best illustrate the power and the value of such learning. A case study approach allowed me to capture the similarities and differences and to engage with the research participants as a colleague rather than remain detached. I found ways to ensure that the voices of the participants were heard (See Chapter Five) without commentary from me.

Towards the end of the research process I developed a 4-stage model (Fig 4 in Chapter 6.4) that traced the movement from sensation to 'conscious learning'. I also started to consider the impact of our professional culture on the way in which we define learning and our society's expectations that learning should have clear outcomes and measurable impact. This involved both 'theory building' and the construction of knowledge by the author rather than its discovery by the reader. At the beginning of the research I hadn't anticipated that I would be analysing and presenting the data in such different ways. However using a case study offered me the flexibility and freedom to do so.

### 3.2 Criteria for judging the thesis

My experience from my earlier doctoral assignments had led me to a number of conclusions about what I believed was the purpose of research. The positivist/post-positivist tradition reflects a society that celebrates and fiercely protects individualism. It is based on an ontological and epistemological paradigm that believes objects have an independent existence, knowledge is hard, objective and tangible, and that there can be universal laws and certainty (See Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007)). Research here is about prediction and increasing certainty.

Yin (2003) offers 4 dimensions for judging a case study which draw on this tradition:

- External validity (generalisability);
- Reliability (replicability of the study)
- Construct validity (coherence of the study linking aims, methods and data collected)
- Internal validity (establishing clear causal links between events)

Other writers use criteria drawn from an interpretive paradigm holding that objects cannot be experienced directly. Stake (1995) substitutes the term 'validity' for credibility: whether a described situation is recognisable to the research participant or reader:

*"the authority of the case study work derives from the purchase it gives us on the real world of action and experience" (Kemmis 1980)*

Christians (2005) talks of multiple voices, moral discernment and the promotion of social transformation as ways of judging 'interpretive discourse'. Dadds (2008) draws attention to *"the role of the emotional life in practitioner research"* (p279). She uses the term empathetic validity to describe how research might enhance interpersonal understanding and compassion between those engaged in the research process.

*"Research that is high in empathetic validity, contributes to positive human relationships and well-being ... I distinguish between internal empathetic validity (that which changes the practitioner researcher and research participants) and external empathetic validity (that which influences audiences with whom practitioner research is shared)" (p280)*

It seems to me that a positive outcome of any research process is the enhancement of relationships between individuals. However, whilst it is an outcome I would aspire to and celebrate if achieved, I do not regard it as one of the core criterion by which I would wish my research to be judged.

MacDonald and Walker (1975) endorse an approach that recognises a range of interests (sponsor, researcher, participant, reader) in the research project, doesn't

make recommendations and seeks to increase accessibility by aspiring to 'best seller' status. Richardson and Adams St Pierre (2005) ask that the text invites '*interpretive responses*' (p964), affects us emotionally or intellectually and reveals the author's presence and perspective (reflexivity) in ways that enable the reader to judge their point of view. Fundamentally the text should encourage reaction in the reader. Lather (1991) uses the term '*catalytic validity*' to describe the researcher's purpose: the researcher seeks not to take away people's voices but to enable them to gain self understanding, self determination and to act. For her the representation of reality is tested by its usefulness in helping people to act/do differently.

Michael Apple writes that Lather urges us to "*shift the role of critical intellectuals from being universalizing spokespersons to acting as cultural workers whose task is to take away the barriers that prevent people speaking for themselves*" (Lather 1991: foreword p ix)

I found it difficult to accept the idea of universal laws or a single version of reality. This is not to say that research participants are not genuine or that their accounts are not authentic. Instead there are multiple versions of 'truth' each one dependent on time, context, memory and type of stimulus including the questions asked and the relationship with the questioner. Each version is constructed in the process of speaking it. This is not to say that all have equal merit or that there is not something out there, some common experience that people share. Some descriptions are palpably grounded more in the actual experience than others. But all are perceptions. They are mirrors of, not windows on to, the world. Experiences are made from infinite sensory messages and people filter, perceive and interpret these differently. The best I can hope for is to layer these experiences so that the overall effect provides resonance and meaning. If I can also deepen and enrich understanding by offering a range of sightlines so much the better.

I am drawn to theories of constructivism by which I mean "*knowledge is a human construction and not the neutral discovery of an object*" (p263 Castello and Botella (2007). Whilst I recognise that the meaning of a stimulus depends on a multiplicity of factors including stage of cognitive development, assimilation with previous experiences or a psychological need to make sense of a disparate world, I am strongly drawn to the theory that suggests one of the most influential meaning

makers is that which arises when people interact and collectively negotiate. Castello and Botella (2007) label this social constructivism.

I welcome validity diversity because I feel it offers me choice. I might choose different criteria for each piece of research that I undertake. For this particular research activity I have selected the following criteria. These are the extent to which:

1. the research has been conducted in a way that is ethical and collaborative;
2. the data and interpretations offered reflect the experiences and understanding of the participants but also enrich and deepen them. They have coherence and validity.
3. the presentation of the data is accessible to both fellow researchers and to interested lay readers;
4. the process and the conclusions of the research offer opportunities for positive and beneficial action and transformation for both the participants and readers. They have pragmatic value.

In much qualitative research the criteria of reliability is used as part of the judging toolkit. I have deliberately avoided this. Reliability or replicability (see Yin 2003 – above) implies that a different researcher using the same process would produce the same results. Because I believe that part of the mix is the relationship between interviewer and participant and that each relationship is unique I do not think it is possible to replicate the research process or the outcomes.

### 3.3 Ethical Considerations

My first criterion (see above) for judging this research is that it should be conducted in a way that is '*ethical and collaborative*'. This section seeks to define what I mean by ethical.

The British Educational Research Association (BERA) (2004) ethical code expects informed consent, no deception, the right to privacy and confidentiality, protection from harm and accuracy of data.

Whilst I subscribe to this code I recognise that it reflects a value system that esteems individual freedoms and a natural science approach to research where the hypothesis and planning fixes the purpose of the investigation.

The concept of anonymity, for example, may prove problematic. If the purpose of the research is to develop theory or provide statistical data then anonymity is not an issue. If, however, the research is focusing on a very small number of individuals and seeks to represent unique experiences, analyse specific discourses and organisational cultures or support the research participants in taking action then anonymity is potentially difficult to achieve and may be counter productive.

I wanted my research to be both collaborative and transformative and was initially concerned whether it was possible to achieve these aims and maintain anonymity. Having been through the research process I am more confident that it is. The research process itself provides the opportunity for transformation in thought or deed for the research participant and knowledge of the research participants' identity is not a necessary condition for action on the part of the reader.

In my research both the meaning and the purpose of the research, emerged from the data rather than in advance of it. This makes informed consent difficult. I produced information sheets for all the participants before the research began (see Appendix Two). These explained the purpose and process of the research, the likely timescales, the length of time data would be kept and how it would be kept. These information sheets included a consent form which each research participant signed with copies kept by both researcher and participant. Anonymity was promised and the opportunity to withdraw at any stage in the process. The information sheets were referred to throughout the data collection period but, as the research aims changed it was necessary to revisit that permission. I made sure that the research participants were kept informed through face to face discussion prior to the interviews, at the group meetings and via email. At each contact I made it clear that they had the right to withdraw.

Similarly when I started to revisit my ideas on presentation I realised that it would be useful to include photos of South Africa in order to increase understanding of the research context and enhance accessibility for the reader. We obtained permission from our TIPD host and from the principals of the schools we visited but did not have signed permission from the individual children and their parents and once we had returned to England, it was not possible to gain this. Following advice from UEA's Ethics Committee I have, therefore, only included one photograph '*Under the Flamboyant Tree*'.

The emphasis on '*informed consent*' and '*no deception*' assumes there are never any situations where covert research is justified. The need for 'informed consent' reinforces the importance of role clarity between researcher and research participants. This may create problems for researchers who are try to observe human behaviour where the presence of an outsider is likely to affect that behaviour.

How researchers represent and conduct themselves can be problematic at any stage of the research process from the planning to data collection, analysis and into discussions about how to present that research. The movement between researcher, insider, outsider, participant and friend can have tensions. Learning to deal with what Peshkin terms '*multiple Is*' (Peshkin (1988)) can be ethically and personally difficult.

Richardson (2000) talks of a '*static writing model*' requiring the writer to have identified what they want to say before picking up the pen. "*This static writing model coheres with mechanistic scientism and quantitative research .... [which] requires writers to silence their own voices and to view themselves as contaminants.*" (p925). Dadds (2008) also comments on the traditional reverence for neutrality, objectivity and detachment. In research such as mine which relies much on relationships and trust, where possible interpretations arise through open exploration and discussion any '*distance [between researcher and research participant]... can be seen ... as dysfunctional*' (p167). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) note that from a post-modernist perspective the qualitative researcher, does more than observe history, s/he plays a part in shaping it. For me the researcher is neither invisible nor a '*contaminant*' but does influence both the research process and outcomes and this should be made explicit.

I was a participant observer because I went on the same visit and shared the same experiences with the others. I am an insider because my world, at least in part, is also one of schools and education. I was an insider because I shared with many of the participants a similar age, gender, educational history, language, moral code and cultural background. The overlaps between myself and many of the participants were multiple, enabled me to form relationships more easily and to have a genuine understanding and empathy with the feelings and insights expressed. It also meant that colleagues were more comfortable in challenging my interpretations and understanding. There are downsides. Barriers may be raised if the research participant is concerned s/he might reveal information to someone they may meet regularly in a different context. As both researcher and research participant I may be drawn towards the experiences of others that most naturally resonate with my own and minimise other equally significant areas. Alternatively I might limit my exploration to comparisons with my own experiences. The example below shows how this did, in fact, happen.

Having read about and considered issues of identity (Sarup (1996), Rossan (1987), Gecas and Mortimer (1987), Rose (2000)) and transition (Lewis and Parker 1981) I decided I would discuss with the research participant their sense of self concept using the dimensions of values, attitudes, career plans and personality. My definition of profound learning included some kind of personal transformation and I thought this discussion might generate some useful insights. I particularly wanted to look at whether they were satisfied with what they had achieved. Had they been able to settle back into a routine or had they developed, as I had, a certain restlessness and dissatisfaction with their lives and a desire to do something that had a more immediate impact and made a more obvious difference?

It was only when I revisited these questions that I began to realise they were based on a set of comparisons with my own experiences. The issues I wanted to explore were increasingly being shaped by my own pre-occupations.

Schatz (1993) highlights the importance of self awareness in the research process – particularly now that knowledge is recognised as relative and partial and the confidence in absolute truths has been shaken. Critical approaches, especially by feminist writers such as Lather (1991), advocate greater self reflexivity in the



research process both by the researcher and the research participants. For Lather (1991) the purpose of research is to empower. This means not simply understanding how the status quo has come to be but to then acting to change it. Understanding how our value systems - the things we choose to highlight, accept or ignore - are fashioned by our ideologies is the first step to choosing to act or think differently.

I became aware that I was becoming pre-occupied with my interests at the expense of others through reflection in my learning journal and in discussions with my supervisor and other colleagues. This constant probing of purpose and process did not guarantee to uncover all my blind spots but at least it helped me to minimise them. Ethically speaking the researcher must guard against self deception (inadvertent or otherwise) as well as deception of others.

#### 3.4 Data Collection

A case study approach enabled me to use a variety of data to develop my understanding of the participants and how they had reacted to and interpreted the experiences that we all had. As group organiser and leader I amassed considerable data both during, immediately after the visit and some months later. Although much of this material was produced as part of the TIPD visit, I did obtain the agreement of each of the participants to its use for the purposes of the thesis. The following table lists the range of data that was used during the course of the research:

Table 2: DATA

<b>What was collected</b>	<b>Where was it drawn from</b>	<b>When was it collected/What time period did it refer to?</b>	<b>What data did it contain</b>	<b>How was it used/analysed</b>
Application forms	Initial applications to form part of TIPD group to South Africa	June 2007	Responding to questions giving reasons for applying, personal and school-wide benefit a successful application would bring.	As part of preparation for interviews and during analysis: comparing original intentions with actual experiences.
Minutes of meeting and SWOT analysis in preparation for TIPD visit	First meeting of group following application stage	July 2007	Practical decisions around accommodation, travel arrangements, gifts for hosts.  SWOT analysis – essentially a summary of our objectives and aspirations for the trip.	As part of the preparation for interviews.
Original or photocopies of handwritten reflective journals maintained by each participant	Notes and thoughts arising from the South African experience itself 9 out of 10 journals received.	October/November 2007	Notes on places visited and talks given, reactions to and observations on the schools we saw and people we met.	In preparation for the interviews and as part of the analysis of experience for each participant.

<b>What was collected</b>	<b>Where was it drawn from</b>	<b>When was it collected/What time period did it refer to?</b>	<b>What data did it contain</b>	<b>How was it used/analysed</b>
Notes from group meetings whilst staying in South Africa	Each evening the group met to discuss the ideas and learning arising from that day. We took it in turns to type the key points being made during the meeting. The notes were made contemporaneously and were not revised. The verbatim accuracy depended on a combination of memory and typing speed.	October/November 2007	Notes/quotes from TIPD group members – their immediate responses to things seen and heard – reactions to people, places and issues.	In preparation for the interviews and as part of the analysis of experience for each participant.

What was collected	Where was it drawn from	When was it collected/What time period did it refer to?	What data did it contain	How was it used/analysed
Talking Heads DVD	Each individual spoke directly into a camera on the last day of the visit to record their overall impressions from the week before returning to England	November 2007	Reactions (emotional/cognitive) to the visit. Open ended in response to the question – what are you thinking/feeling now at the end of this week?  Completed by all 10 participants	In preparation for interviews and as part of analysis of data to help identify common themes and ideas. Transcript made of DVD, entered into NVIVO7 and coded by theme.
Host evaluation sheets	Each individual completed an evaluation sheet provided by our South African Host	On the final day of the TIPD trip - November 2007	Initial reaction sheets - asking questions such as what went well and what might have been improved. Completed by all 10 participants	In preparation for individual interviews and as part of analysis identifying common themes and concepts.

<b>What was collected</b>	<b>Where was it drawn from</b>	<b>When was it collected/What time period did it refer to?</b>	<b>What data did it contain</b>	<b>How was it used/analysed</b>
Photographs	Each TIPD member shared the photographs they had taken as part of the trip. These were compiled into sets of CDs and sent round to all participants. They were use extensively by individuals to produce displays in schools, for powerpoints (see below) and in our newsletter (see below)	October 2007 – collected throughout the visit by all participants	Images of South Africa and the experiences of all TIPD members.	As part of preparation for interviews, reminders of some of the key episodes in our collective and individual memories of the South African learning event. Inspiring the ‘stories’ written to illustrate individual experiences of South Africa

What was collected	Where was it drawn from	When was it collected/What time period did it refer to?	What data did it contain	How was it used/analysed
Publications produced by TIPD group	<p>(a) Three powerpoints produced predominantly by group leader (myself) but confirmed and amended with the group and using photographs from the group members</p> <p>(b) Newsletter produced by group</p>	<p>November/December 2007</p> <p>December 2007</p>	<p>(a) Powerpoints consist of (i) overview of South Africa – challenges and contrasts, (ii) overview of schools and issues faced by schools (iii) use of teaching assistants</p> <p>(b) articles by each of the schools outlining some of the experiences and the activities each participant(s) hoped to undertake in their own school. Offer of presentations to other schools if requested.</p>	Background information, preparation for interviews (especially newsletter articles)

<b>What was collected</b>	<b>Where was it drawn from</b>	<b>When was it collected/What time period did it refer to?</b>	<b>What data did it contain</b>	<b>How was it used/analysed</b>
Visit report to TIPD organiser	Drawn up by TIPD group leader (myself) using reflective journals, minutes of meetings, evaluation sheets, talking heads – all completed by TIPD group members.	December 2007	An analysis of the learning and use of learning particularly in relation to the specified outcomes of the visit (ie the deployment of teaching assistants) but also of broader personal learning and overall impact on both the individual and the wider community.	Used in preparation for interviews and in the analysis of themes and concepts.

<b>What was collected</b>	<b>Where was it drawn from</b>	<b>When was it collected/What time period did it refer to?</b>	<b>What data did it contain</b>	<b>How was it used/analysed</b>
Notes from post-visit meeting	Meeting – part social/part formal of all TIPD members (8 attended) to share experiences and reflections and to offer support.	February 2008	The meeting enabled all of us to reflect on how we felt about the TIPD visit some 3 months later, what we had been doing in our schools and elsewhere to share the learning and the reaction/support from our schools on return.	Preparation for interviews and identification of themes as part of analysis.
Medium term evaluation pro formas required by TIPD Organiser	9 of TIPD participants completed and returned medium term evaluations which were collated by TIPD Group leader and forwarded to TIPD Organiser	June 2008	The pro forma was a medium term evaluation asking us to reflect on learning, impact and use of learning arising from TIPD visit	Used in preparation for interviews and ongoing analysis of themes and concepts.



What was collected	Where was it drawn from	When was it collected/What time period did it refer to?	What data did it contain	How was it used/analysed
Follow up interviews	<p>Semi-structured interviews specifically for the purpose of supporting the doctoral research.</p> <p>Interviews with 9 participants and 3 headteachers:            5 interviews were with individual participants.            2 interviews were with both participants present            1 interview was with a headteacher where the participant was not present.            2 interviews were with both headteacher and participant(s).</p>	November 2008 – March 2009	The interviews were semi-structured and flowed according to the memories, thoughts and experiences of the individuals. Key areas of exploration included: stories particularly remembered; definitions of 'significant'; experiences and learning; opportunities to share and apply learning; personal and professional change; perceived 'value' of the experience	The interviews formed one of the main data sources for the development of the individual analytical studies and the identification of concepts, categories and themes which informed the analysis. Each interview was tape recorded, transcribed, returned to the participants for checking before coding using NVIVO7 to assist with this process.

What was collected	Where was it drawn from	When was it collected/What time period did it refer to?	What data did it contain	How was it used/analysed
Email from deputy head	Given to researcher (myself) by TIPD participant on day of interview.	November 2008	Summary of perceived impact and learning arising from the experience of one of the TIPD participants from a school leader unable to attend for interview.	Used to provide an external perspective on the experience of one individual TIPD group member

What was collected	Where was it drawn from	When was it collected/What time period did it refer to?	What data did it contain	How was it used/analysed
Emails	Between the whole TIPD group and between individuals and the TIPD group leader	June 2007 – July 2009	Throughout the lead up to the TIPD visit and following the visit individuals communicated with the group leader and each other by emails. The emails had many purposes – specific questions relating to South Africa, to professional development generally, to provide news and information, to offer support and congratulations. These emails were very frequent following the TIPD visit and have gradually become more occasional over the last 30 months.	Key emails were kept and used in preparation for the interviews and as part of the analysis process. They provided further evidence of different impact, outcomes and thinking in relation to the South African experience.

What was collected	Where was it drawn from	When was it collected/What time period did it refer to?	What data did it contain	How was it used/analysed
Learning Journal	Group Leader Learning Journals (additional to that compiled during the week of the South African visit)	November 2007 – November 2009	Reflections, observations, readings, notes relating to South Africa, my wider reading around the topic of learning and the interface between the two.	Used to sensitise myself to some issues around learning, identity, self concept, the changes in my thinking over time and reaction to the events of South African. These journals have formed the core of the data I have used in structuring the thesis, exploring my own personal learning journey and constructing my own analytical studies.

What was collected	Where was it drawn from	When was it collected/What time period did it refer to?	What data did it contain	How was it used/analysed
Supervisions	<p>Regular half termly meetings with doctoral supervisor</p> <p>In particular an extended supervision in June 2008 which was recorded, transcribed and analysed using NVIVO7</p>	November 2007 – March 2010	Critical and constructive reflections on the progress and nature of the thesis and my own thinking about my personal learning.	<p>The supervisions have helped direct thinking in preparation for the interviews with participants, in identifying the research focus, key research questions and thesis. The thinking stimulated has helped in the identification of core concepts and themes arising from the interview transcriptions.</p>

<b>What was collected</b>	<b>Where was it drawn from</b>	<b>When was it collected/What time period did it refer to?</b>	<b>What data did it contain</b>	<b>How was it used/analysed</b>
The Stories/Analytical Studies	10 analytical studies. Nine written on the basis of the interview transcripts with research participants. The 10 <sup>th</sup> piece is my own story stimulated by entries in my learning journals and interviews with fellow Team Durban members.	April 2009 – July 2009	Each story reflects the voices of the TIPD participants and picks out some of the key themes arising from the interviews conducted Nov 2008 – March 2009	The analytical studies are one of the outcomes of the analysis of the research participant interviews. Each piece was returned alongside the interview transcript to the participants for checking.

What was collected	Where was it drawn from	When was it collected/What time period did it refer to?	What data did it contain	How was it used/analysed
Responses to 4-stage Model of the transition from experience to learning	The model was developed as part of the analysis of the data. This was sent out by email with an explanation to each of the 9 research participants asking for comment. Two responses were received	September 2009 – November 2009	Individual reactions to original Model (see Fig 3), ideas for extension, relevance to their own experience	I used the responses to revise the model to give it greater sophistication and potentially broader applicability (see Fig 4)
Internet Research	Used continuously for literature searches and to ensure I was up to date on government policy in relation to CPD and Children's Services	July 2007 – July 2010	Literature on learning processes, organisational culture, identity, methodology, presentation, continuing professional development	Used to inform interview structure and content, presentation of thesis and data analysis.

### 3.5 Data generation: why interviews?

It would have been possible to use the wealth of material generated as a result of the TIPD visit to explore the range of learning and change identified without further reference to the participants but the outcomes of such an analysis would have been highly subjective and interpretative. To draw conclusions about an individual's learning or changing sense of self without involving them directly in the process of analysis and meaning making would not have met one of my research criterion *“that the process should be collaborative and the outcomes have meaning for the participants”*. It would have invested in the researcher an authorial omniscience which however tentatively the findings were expressed I would have found uncomfortable.

I was keen to involve the participants in the research as much as possible because, in my experience, the data is richer and the participant responses more reflective where there is a combination of trust and ownership. The quality of the relationship is therefore paramount. The TIPD experience provided the opportunity to establish close relationships and the intensity of the emotional experience we shared during our time together has cemented this.

Schatz (1993) emphasises the importance of examining the research process itself. He suggests that the relationships between researchers/research participants crucially affect research outcomes since the type of relationship and consequently the nature of the interaction will influence the resulting knowledge, meaning and interpretations.

My experience endorses this. The positive relationship between myself and the research participants facilitated both access and the subsequent discussions. It provided the context within which knowledge was generated, interpretations offered and meaning made. The data on which this thesis is built was made possible because of the willingness of research participants to share ideas, personal history, experiences and time with me and each other. Ultimately the research thesis grew from the possibilities of the research process.



I decided to add to the data collected through the TIPD visit by interviewing the research participants. I wanted to use a method that would allow for an in depth consideration of the issues and give the participant the chance to reflect on any changes in their lives. I also wanted to give the participants the chance to be a part of the process of constructing meaning and interpreting ideas and data.

The time I had with each of the participants, who were based in schools and scattered across the rural shire, was limited and because I wanted to make comparisons I chose to use semi-structured rather than open interviews.

I felt that the relationships we had developed during the Durban visit and the friendships that already existed within each school would allow for a full and frank exchange of views. For me the interview was a vehicle through which meaning could be constructed and experiences re-visited from different angles and points in time. The presence of a third and even fourth person, therefore, was a bonus.

Madriz (2000) makes the point:

*“The interaction occurring within the group accentuates empathy and commonality of experience and fosters self disclosure and self validation” p837*

I was acutely aware of the way in which perceptions of power might limit how comfortable colleagues felt. Fontana and Frey (2005) suggest that the interview has its roots in a masculine, individualistic culture and that the presence of an interviewer representing a dominant culture, gender or with a particular status might impact on willingness to discuss or disclose freely. Whilst I made every attempt to strip myself of any vestiges of this power I could not escape the fact that I had originally selected the TIPD participants, that I was the group leader and it was at my suggestion that the group kept their learning journals, completed their evaluations and allowed themselves to be filmed as *‘Talking Heads’*.

How much my position and the formality of an interview situation impacted on the discussions is difficult to gauge. There is always the danger of collusion: the public face that is presented when something is explored in a group setting. But I thought this would be unlikely here. We had seen each other laugh and cry,

shared intimacies and frustrations. Whilst I recognise that a discussion about one's self – change, learning, sense of being - can be very emotive, this exploration was not about reputation or achievement which may risk the emergence of an alternative agenda and re-invention of the self. It was more likely that the participants might seek to find meaning when it didn't exist because they knew of my interests and wanted to help. This did in fact happen to some extent on more than one occasion as the following extract illustrates.

Interview with Tina (Feb 2009)

*FD: But . of course it's very difficult if we're honest isn't it to say that ..*

*TL: Yes*

*FD: the way that you feel and the way that you've coped and reacted .. comes from what you saw in South Africa. I mean it's just not that easy is it?*

*TL: No .. because we never know how we are going to deal with things until they happen do we?*

*FD: No .. and it might be you didn't go to South Africa and all those things happened to you and you'd have dealt with them just as well and in exactly the same way.*

*TL: Well.. yes .. yes .. I think um .. perhaps .. those sort of perhaps personal parts I might have done*

Any data collection method has its disadvantages. Had the interviewer been a neutral third party without the insight I had as a member of Team Durban, they would have been unable to respond and probe in the way that I was able to. Even a personal and reflective journal kept for only the writer's eyes can be limited by literacy levels, the absence of stimulus gained from discussion with others and the way that language itself filters experience. What I can say is that the sheer quantity and quality of data arising from the interviews provided a rich resource to draw from.

### 3.6 Involvement of others

The presence at the interviews of a headteacher or member of the senior leadership team raised the same issues of power, status and freedom to speak. In my original research proposal I wanted to interview the person who had supported the initial application and agreed to pave the way for the implementation and dissemination of learning both in the school and beyond. I wanted to find out what s/he felt had been the benefits of TIPD for the school, how these had manifested themselves and what factors s/he felt had helped embed and sustain the learning.

My revised focus was on participant themselves rather than on what they had actually done. Consequently I needed to think through why and how I might involve others. The involvement of a respected colleague might enrich or develop thinking. This new perspective, overlaying the articulated ideas and thoughts of the participant, allowed for a 'rhizo analysis' of sorts (Alvermann 2000). It might illuminate features of the 'roadmap' that had hitherto gone unnoticed. This was not about triangulation – checking that something had happened or validating a particular interpretation - it was about offering new ways of thinking, opening new possibilities for interpretation.

Given my wish that the research be collaborative, transparent and democratic, I felt that it might not be appropriate or even ethical to meet separately with a third party. I felt the research participants would need to agree to the involvement of others and, if possible, they should identify and invite that third party themselves. Because I was looking at the 'whole self' it didn't have to be a work colleague. It might be anyone who had been close enough to the participant since their return to be aware of any changes in their thinking, feeling or action.

Where two people from the same school had gone to South Africa – they might feel that the other was best placed on comment. I wanted to open the possibilities of involving others but leave the final choice with the participants themselves.

I shared my ideas on the involvement of a 3<sup>rd</sup> person at one of our infrequent get-togethers (July 2008) Did the research participants want to be interviewed

separately or together? How did they feel about the involvement of someone else? Who might that third party be and would they want to be present during the discussion? The variety of responses indicated that the participants were very receptive to the idea and did not feel uneasy at the thought of a discussion with a third party when they were not present although this was something I also discussed with them on an individual basis. Some felt a separate conversation might be preferable in case their presence had an undue influence on what the other person might say. Most felt that any 'observable' and 'quantifiable' changes had occurred in their professional lives and that involving other work colleagues rather than family members or friends was more relevant.

### 3.7 The interview: Using the literature to inform content and format

Having decided to undertake follow up interviews I looked at ways of opening discussions and conversations that might enable participants to think about and talk about themselves.

Grounded Theorists (Strauss and Corbin (1990), Glaser and Strauss (1967)) suggest that the extensive use of literature should be avoided prior to undertaking research for fear of being blown off course by a commitment to ideas that blind us to what is emerging from the data. The data should speak for itself. In this claim there is a positivist presumption that somehow data is untainted and pure. I believe (See Section 3.2 p58), that the data itself as well as the meaning is constructed. It is formed in part simply with the telling and unravelling of the story but it is also created through the interaction with the interviewer.

Abercrombie (Nias 1993) also points out how familiarity can lead to unquestioned assumptions.

*“What individuals see and hear is part of their past experience. Conditioned by repeated consistencies in sensory or emotional input they build up assumptions, expectations or schemata with which they unconsciously and unquestioningly interpret and transform new experiences. The existence of these basic assumptions shapes and limits people’s ability to absorb new information, adopt different attitudes or behave in different ways” p20/21*

Like Strauss and Corbin (1990) her argument on the potential limitations of prior knowledge (which may be said to include the use of literature to inform research planning) is that it limits our ability to make links and connections. It stifles our creativity.

My own perspective is somewhat different. In November 2008 (p96 Research Journal 7) I noted my thoughts on using literature, namely:

- *“To situate my area of interest in a body of research, philosophy and literature...*
- *To help develop a more specific focus to my research;*
- *To consider the most effective strategy of enquiry;*
- *To inform the methodology I used;*
- *To generate ideas about how to approach my chosen methodology;*
- *To inform my thinking on ethical and presentation issues.”*

I was keen to use literature as a stimulant, a source of ideas and a way of sensitising me to nuances or implications that might possibly go unnoticed.

Consequently, to help find some ways of talking about learning I drew on literature relating to self and identity, transition and organisational culture, not only to familiarise myself with some of the core issues and conceptual frameworks but to look at creative ways to stimulate thinking and discussion with participants on these subjects.

Initially I wanted to find a range of stimulus material to encourage deep reflection because I was not convinced that asking direct questions would give the participants the opportunity to really develop and reflect on their ideas. A further disadvantage of direct questioning for me was that it presupposed the interviewer and participant have the same understanding of the words used to frame the questions. The opportunity to think about an idea from a different angle allows different interpretations to emerge, be explored and perhaps reconciled. The process of clarification inevitably means that people re-visit thoughts and reactions. I do not see the first words as the only window to some inner truth. Other understandings just as valid may be buried deep.

Using the Johari Window (Luft and Ingham (1955), Luft (1963) provides a helpful way of thinking about how we can increase our self awareness. The Window has 4 frames (See Fig 2 below). There are things about myself I know and things I am not aware of but others know. Through interaction with colleagues, friends and family I can increase my self knowledge. There are some things, however, that are not consciously known either by myself or others and it may take a particular stimulus to catch sight albeit obliquely of some other facet of my personality. The interview situation can provide a place where we can come to know ourselves and our motivations better although there may be aspects of the self buried so deep they may never be known but “*appear as displaced symbolic media*” (Sarup 1996 p29) that govern our actions and inform our motivations.

Fig 2 – The Johari Window

I am aware Others are not aware	I am aware Others are aware
I am not aware Others are not aware	I am not aware Others are aware

Shoshano Felman (quoted by Madan Sarup (1996) p39) suggests that:

*“We change our life stories or the telling of them as we change the stated or implied questions to which are our life stories are answers .... personal development may be characterised as change in the questions it is essential or urgent to answer”*

So that the way I understand myself changes over time and is a response to the particular stimulus that precedes reflection. This has implications for me as an interviewer and the questions that I choose to ask and, just as importantly, those I do not ask. The stories of my fellow travellers are constructions of meaning that are pertinent at the time of the interview and in the context of current life

experiences. However they will be influenced by the way I choose to scaffold the discussion and the stimulus material used. The story will be different the day before or the day after according to the individual's feelings, environment and the questions asked. So certain aspects of identity and experience may be foregrounded one day but seem less significant the next.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the nature of learning by investigating the impact of a significant experience. If there has been profound learning, then this will have changed the way that we think about ourselves. Sometimes we are not consciously aware of the ways our self perception has changed, if at all, without probing. Sometimes the very act of delving deep changes the way we perceive ourselves as we begin to unpack an experience and the meaning of that experience. Latent, dormant or unconscious emotions and thoughts are uncovered by the act of talking about them.

Holly (1997) made a similar point in relation to keeping a professional journal

*“the act of writing may lead to further reflecting on and reconstructing of experience”* (p12)

I see my role of researcher/interviewer as helping to uncover meaning even at the risk of also being part of a meaning construction team. Coupland (2007) speaks of the interview context operating *“as a particular venue for the construction of identities”* and makes the point that an interview situation is by its nature a place for social interaction. Capturing identity without distortion or modification through the process of examining it may not be possible. Indeed it leads to bigger questions of whether the self can exist prior to speaking about it and is only made available through language which itself is a signifier or mirror of the 'real'.

Like Coupland I do not believe the interviewee is a *'vessel of answers'* (2007 p278). Instead I see the interview as a place where versions of reality are jointly constructed.

*“the interviewee, construed as an active subject describes details of life experience and, in interaction with an interviewer, actively shapes that information” (Coupland 2007 p279)*

The key words here, for me, are ‘*active subject*’. It is the interaction and free thinking of the participants that shape meaning.

Writers such as Richardson and Adams St Pierre (2005) and Jones, Thomas and Schwarzbaum (2006) also draw attention to the self as fluid, changing, often contradictory and multi-faceted. The elements that constitute ‘self’ include: our individual traits, our idealised selves, the perception of us by others and how we understand that perception, the discourses of family, friends, nation and work and their respective value systems. At any time anyone of these may exert, temporarily, a greater influence on us.

*“People do not wake up one day and decide to act in a certain way. Historical, sociological, anthropological, political and geographical explanations are needed to make sense of a person’s life choices” (Jones and Schwarzbaum (2006) (p4)*

Sarup (1996 p24) suggests that, if identity is fully determined by competing discourses, then freedom comes from the fissures that appear when competing discourses clash – a sort of rift in a linguistic space-time continuum.

The language used by the research participants reflected their pre-occupations, value systems and the different discourses that shape their identity. I accept that we are the product of a multitude of influences and can never be free of them. However, to focus purely on the power relations implicit in institutions means ignoring our biology. Our genetically-defined individuality reacts in unique ways to environmental influences and is what gives us some internal coherence and consistency, sufficient for us to recognise when we think or behave differently. I believe that we can choose how and when to act, that our self concept or identity is formed through the interaction of our unique selves with the environment. It is not fixed but can change as we make sense of new experiences.



West, Nicholson and Arnold (1987) identified 4 dimensions of change in self from longitudinal studies of career transition.

- a) values – what is important to me in life (family/work-life balance)
- b) attitudes – the things I like/dislike (eg prefer my own company)
- c) career plans – my ideas about the future
- d) personality - what kind of person am I (eg outgoing, friendly, extrovert)

I felt these dimensions would be a useful starting point for talking with the research participants about what kind of changes, if any, we had experienced in ourselves.

I also wanted to look at enablers and inhibitors of learning and to find whether and how much the organisational culture of the research participants' schools was a factor in influencing how they thought about themselves and what they did as a result.

To this end I looked more generally at literature on organisational cultures. Scholz's (1987) typology makes use of 'slogans' to encapsulate the value systems of different organisations. A '*reactive*' organisation, for instance, has an introvert personality, a '*present*' time orientation and looks for minimum risk and minimal change. Scholz offers the slogan. "*Roll with the punches*".

Brown (1998) develops Wuthnow, Davison Hunter, Bergesen and Kurzweil (1984) theory that simple artefacts can contain the essence of a whole social system. He usefully itemises some of the many elements that can contribute towards the look, feel and taste of an organisation's culture. These include clearly visible artefacts (sales brochures, physical layout of buildings), language used, norms of behaviour, heroes, symbols and symbolic actions, beliefs, values, attitudes, ethical codes and history. It also includes deeply embedded and almost unconscious basic assumptions that are difficult to see directly and tend to manifest themselves through observable behaviours.

Coming up with organisational slogans or taking artefacts like a school prospectus or staffroom layout and exploring hidden messages seemed interesting ways to approach a subject. I tried them all with varying degrees of

success and ultimately was not convinced how much they added to the quality of the interviews. The research participants were very comfortable with conventional open questions and willing to explore and return to topics from different angles without the need for what might be construed as 'game playing'. To some extent I was diverting participants from thinking about the Durban experience by introducing a new and perhaps unfamiliar dimension to the process. I also wanted, as far as possible, our conversations to be one of equals and for me to introduce these strategies might undermine that equality. As the example below illustrates these linguistic experiments were taken in good part and the results were often amusing. They offer an insight into the quality and nature of the relationships and perhaps increased the receptivity of the participants to the interview process itself but did not offer the depth of insight I had perhaps hoped for.

From Transcript of interview at Cedarwood Primary – January 2009

*FD: ..... If you had to have a metaphor to describe this school or a slogan .. what would it be?*

*DS: Let's ask the deputy that ..*

*RP: The creative one*

*DS: She's the person who does metaphors here .. she's in charge of metaphors. (laughter).*

*.....*

*DS: The ethos is .. you know that willingness .. that openness to try .. and that commitment to wanting to do the very best for all our pupils and to give, you know, the best opps .. learning opportunities possible .. so if you translate that idea into a metaphor.*

*DG: And support for each other as well*

*DS: Yes*

*DG: Isn't it?*

*....*

*RP: We want everybody to succeed. Whether it's a child or a teacher.*

*DS: Yeah .. have a go .. have a try. Let's see how it goes. Sounds like a good idea .. have a go at it.. If it doesn't .. well we've still learned something. It's not about .. not quite a metaphor*

*FD: No but it captures ... complicated one .. metaphors. But it's a sentiment I was looking for and I think that's what .. what we have .. captured.*

*DS: Element of being strong .. being supportive ...*

*FD: Flappy ears? (laughter)*

*DS: Long nose*

*FD: Intensely loyal*

*DS: Yeah .. yeah*

*RP: We're all of that.*

*DS: Yes .. some of us are quite big and grey.*

I continued for some time to use a range of approaches to explore my chosen themes. However my misgivings from both an ethical and a practical point of view grew stronger. I began to feel the need to approach these subjects more directly. I sensed that the process of analysing participant responses to oblique questions outside the interview context would move me even further from the individual's direct experience. It occurred to me that it was possible to be too clever.

In this chapter I have focused on the opportunities and process of gathering data. I have looked at the reasons behind my choice of case study as a strategy of enquiry and the movement from a multi-case study to the study of a quintain or theme. I identified the criteria by which I wish the research to be judged and how this reflects my ontological perspective. I considered the ethical implications of the research process and the choices I made about data collection and use. I have also considered some of the tensions arising from my role as research participant, group leader and researcher. In this section I focused on the value of the interview as a tool for reflection and possible strategies for exploring concepts of self and organisational culture. In the following chapter I look in more detail at my approach to analysis and presentation.

#### 4.0 Chapter Four: An Approach to Analysis and Presentation

My own experience, reinforced by the literature on adult learning (eg Brookfield (1986), Knowles (1975) and Boyatzis (2002)) and the evidence arising from this research (see Chapter 6.2 p144) suggest that deep and profound learning are best achieved when the learner interacts directly with an experience and has the freedom to choose what they take from it.

I wanted to present the research in a way that kept faith with this premise, allowing the reader to engage directly with the data and to make their own choices as to what, if anything, they took from it. I was interested in using a form of presentation that facilitated a deep/profound learning experience. I wanted to make the data accessible but in doing so I didn't want to suggest (either implicitly or explicitly) how that data should be interpreted. Whilst I accept that everything is mediated, there are degrees of access. I wanted the reader to be able to re-live the experience of the research participants. One way of achieving this was to limit my presence in the text and not to offer any interpretation or argument that might distract the reader from his/her chosen focus.

However, traditionally the researcher's role has been to create some order and sense from the mass of data accumulated in the course of a research project. The doctoral thesis becomes the place to present and argue for a particular interpretation. Given my aspirations for the researcher's role, the process of analysis and the doctoral thesis format becomes problematic. Arguably the way in which a doctoral thesis is presented works against the possibility of engaging the reader in a profound learning process because it is an illustration of the writer's own deep or profound learning.

These tensions and their resolution were, for me an important part of the thesis. Consequently, rather than dealing with presentation and analysis in the methodology chapter I decided to add an additional chapter.

#### 4.1 A Grounded Theory approach to analysis

It had always been my intention to let the data speak for itself. When I began the research I did have an focus (ie learning) and my research proposal (Appendix One) identified an aim:

*“To investigate the conditions under which the learning resulting from a significant continuing professional development experience can be sustained.”*

I was interested in using a Grounded Theory approach (Strauss and Corbin (1990), Glaser and Strauss (1967)) to organise the large quantities of data in a way that was helpful and meaningful. I was less interested in using the process to generate a particular hypothesis believing this might preclude the possibility of the reader generating his/her own theories. Like Charmaz (2000), who proposes a Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) approach, I was not seeking ‘truth’ but to gain insight into the realities we construct.

The computer programme NVIVO7 (later NVIVO 8) makes use of a Grounded Theory approach in the analysis of qualitative data. Using this software I undertook open coding (line by line coding), individual case coding and cross case coding of both the interviews and my own reflections in order to identify themes, concepts, categories, properties and dimensions. NVIVO allowed me to identify, code and link concepts electronically so that it was easier to make comparisons across interview transcripts. I coded the interviews as I transcribed them and the coding process helped me to identify ideas that in turn informed the shape of the next interviews. This re-iteration or progressive focusing is what Strauss and Glaser (1967) refer to as theoretical sampling.

Appendix 4 provides a snapshot of this work. After the initial coding work I had 107 categories some of which were very specific (eg thoughts on travelling alone) whilst others were more like themes (eg inspiration sources) containing a number of examples. The categories were wide ranging and included fundraising, stereotypes, global awareness, professional practice, identity, leadership and the research itself. From the 107 categories I identified 42 themes each of which could have been a research topic in its own right. I then explored other ways of thinking about the data. For example, I looked at the feelings and emotions that seemed to be underpinning some of the statements. The topics were all things that the research participants (including myself) had chosen to mention and I looked at why these things might have been felt to be significant enough to share and what impact they had on us (outcomes).

In line with a Grounded Theory approach I used '*memos*' throughout the data collection and analysis process to help me extend my thinking and make sense of what I was hearing. Sometimes the memos were analytical notes, sometimes ramblings in my learning journal, sometimes discussions with others such as the useful conversations I have had with my supervisor.

The process of transcribing, coding and re-coding gave me a familiarity with the data which would otherwise have been difficult to achieve. It also provided me with an insight into the process by which an experience becomes learning: something I developed into the model outlined in Chapter 6.4 (Fig 4 p162) and which has become my personal contribution to the field.

Using this approach, and in an ideal world with infinite time, the theory would emerge gradually from the data. Initial categories would come from a pilot study, refinements through a first tier sample and then further refinement through a second tier sample until "saturation point" was reached when no new concepts could be wrung from the data. The realities of time and access meant that in my study these stages merged. For example in Chapter 6.2 – 6.7 (pp144-170) this thesis evidences different learning types, the impact of a deep learning experience and offers a model tracing the process through which an experience may become deep or profound learning. It is based on the experiences of the 10 individuals who went to South Africa, a sample too small to reach '*saturation point*'. In order to support the model I developed I would need to look at a wider range of learning experiences from a more diverse participant group. In Grounded Theory terms my research ends at the first tier sample.

Moving from data to analysis to hypothesis was not a straightforward, linear process. A Grounded Theory approach helped me to make sense of the data I had collected. The coding helped lay out the possibilities of the research data but I also made use of other stimuli (eg literature, conversations with others, mapping processes, story telling) to redefine my research aims and in analysing/synthesising the data. I was uncomfortable with some of the assumptions that inform Grounded Theory and preferred to see it as one of many techniques to support data analysis rather than a philosophy.

Both Glaser and Strauss (1967) and later on Strauss and Corbin (1990) focus on the representation of concepts not people and their lives. Categories are abstractions of phenomena observed in the data.

*“the researcher is an active sampler of theoretical data not an ethnographer trying to get the fullest data from the group.” (Glaser and Strauss (1967) p58)*

There is some irony in using a Grounded Theory approach to think about ‘deep learning’, especially given the highly individual and unpredictable nature of this kind of learning. Theory moves us from the very particular to the general. It provides a helicopter view that, however grounded in data, inevitably uses words and frameworks that are one step removed from the individual’s experience. So theory, by its nature, creates a sense of tidiness and symmetry that divorces it from the messy reality it claims to represent. Theory brings order and certainty to chaos.

I believe that my research does provide an insight into the types of learning that can arise as a result of a particular kind of experience and how sensory experience translates into learning. However I also wanted to illustrate ‘learning in action’ and to give a sense of the individual research participants and the multiplicity of forms that learning can take.

It was because I was looking for flexibility in the both the conduct and the presentation of the research that I chose to use case study as my strategy of enquiry (see Chapter 3.1 p55).

I do have an interest in thinking about my story in relation to some kind of overarching theory. Something that enables me to identify what may be unique or common about my experience and offers a way of thinking about it. I also have an interest in the individual story with which I can empathise at both a cognitive and emotional level, which may resonate with my history and enrich my understanding of my situation. Both offer the opportunity to improve my understanding but it might be argued that theory lacks the ability to engage me emotionally and it is this element that supports deep learning and takes me from knowing to understanding.

#### 4.2 Analysis through presentation

In Chapter 3.2 (pp58-60) I outlined my belief that research should be both collaborative and transformational. My interpretation should not be the final word *“a single interpretation thrust upon a passive reader by a writer whose enquiry has resulted in uncertainty.”* (Winter (1989 p42)).

The stories of the Durban participants are personal and unique. To undertake an analysis and use a form of presentation that removes the reader from the primary data – the words of the participants – might result in a loss of richness, nuance and complexity. However the word ‘*research*’ evokes, in me at least, an expectation that threads will be drawn together. I am interested in typologies, models, frameworks, overlays (I use these words interchangeably). I believe they can help our understanding by offering alternative perspectives. However is it possible to analyse, categorise and synthesise across the stories without losing their breath, range and personality? Carefully chosen extracts that support my argument may hide the full picture and obscure other readings. They require the reader to trust in me - accepting my expertise, my omnipotence as a narrator. Readers cannot engage as equals if I restrict their opportunity to draw their own conclusions and engage in their own deep learning. Can I create order without losing meaning? Should I concentrate on describing the ‘messiness’ rather than attempting to make sense of it?

Arguably the construction of meaning taking place during the interview becomes the analysis. As soon as experience and feeling are translated into words we have started the process of interpretation. Any additional attempt at analysis removes the reader still further from the source data. Should the analysis therefore stop at the creation of meaning between the participants? Is the interview transcript itself the analysis? Can the words of the interviewee be left to tell their own tale?

These concerns raise fundamental questions about the purpose of research and the role of the researcher. Arguably the form of presentation I use is a barometer of the strength of my convictions. Do I believe in the power of the participant researcher's voice? Do I trust that the reader will find the meaning without the need for signposting? If I believe in the value of deep learning then there will be multiple meanings and multiple readings and each will have value



to the reader. What is my role in this process? Do I have a responsibility to draw attention to possible and interesting interpretations? Is this a legitimate role for a researcher or is it pure ego?

I saw a certain tension between my declared aspiration and the requirements of a doctoral thesis. I felt under pressure to offer a reading of the data whilst recognising that a different pair of eyes with a different perspective and interests would have joined the dots in another way. My role as final arbiter seemed inevitable since the finished product would be my analysis and re-presentation of the data. However I did have some choice over the degree to which I placed myself between the reader and the primary data.

Initially I also felt uncomfortable with the way this thesis had changed from an exploration of unique experiences (a multi-case study) to the investigation of a phenomenon (a quintain). Was I betraying my aim to celebrate the rich diversity of individual experience by placing an idea centre stage? In constructing theories about the translation of sensation into learning and the way we currently prize different types of learning was I privileging my interests, preoccupations and reading of the text over others?

I saw merits in all arguments and have tried to respond to these competing positions. In Chapters 5 and 6 I make constant reference to the data and the words of the participants; offer a reading of the data whilst continuing to emphasise my partial position; and challenge the reader, through the questions I ask, to engage pro-actively with the text.

#### 4.3 Forms of presentation

In the previous section I explored the tension that arises when trying to give the reader direct access to the data whilst offering interpretations of that data. I also wanted to foreground the constructed nature of meanings that participants give to their experiences. This is not to deny the validity of experience or interpretation but inevitably it is time-bound and subjective. It is a particular reading of the self and is mediated through a myriad of influences that may include a desire to be seen in a particular way.

I agree with the idea that direct access to any sort of 'reality' or 'inner truth' is eternally blocked and whatever we do we have to look at it through the medium of language. MacLure (2003) writes that we can never '*jump clear of language*' (p106) and refers to Derrida's (1982) '*detour of the sign*' (p117). The written or spoken word both gets us closer to meaning and ensures that we never quite reach it.

Traditional forms of writing (eg scientific writing or accounts that speak from the third person) have an omniscient narrator and seem to preclude the possibility of an alternative focus. The language and sentence structure refers beyond itself to the thing it is trying to describe. The plain text seeks anonymity unlike the showiness of other genres that make use of imagery, metaphor or stylistic devices such as alliteration. Words and language are structured in such a way that the reader barely notices them. They offer a window on to world rather than a mirror which reflects, refracts and distorts according to how it is held. And yet as MacLure points out - the traditional presentation of research draws on its own literary inheritance – the guidebook format, the realist novel where '*transparency of language is the paramount effect that realist writing aims for*' (MacLure (2003) p93).

One concern in drawing on literary genres such as poetry is that stylistic excess will get in the way of meanings, ideas and reason. "*Those who look at the text will be diverted from the truth*" (MacLure (2003) p113) which, of course, presupposes there is a single truth. And yet this kind of writing is becoming increasingly common. Almost 20 years ago Schratz (1993) citing Lather (1991) identified "*shifts in methodological consideration*" since the '*loss of the theoretical hegemony of positivism*' (p1/2). Lather (1991) drew attention to the use of a range of stylistic devices including multiple quotations that de-centre the single voice. Bricolage, collage, montage, pastiche are concepts that conjure images of perspectival overlays. The physical appearance of the words on the page: typographic spacing; textual upheaval; intersecting surfaces; discontinuous texts; interesting but enigmatic quotations from other literary works ask the reader to take pause. These techniques give the voices of the participants more room and draw attention to meaning as co-construction between participant(s) and researcher, researcher and text and finally between

text and reader. They also draw attention to the ephemeral and fluid nature of knowledge.

I am fortunate to be conducting my research at a time when, thanks to many writers including those quoted above, it is more acceptable to choose from a range of conventions on how to present the data. Richardson (2000) writes *“The postmodernist context of ‘doubt’ .. distrusts all methods equally. No method has privileged status.”* (p928.) The impassable ravine between scientific writing and literature has been somewhat bridged. She quotes the novelist E L Doctorow who, even before 1980, declared *“There is no longer any such thing as fiction or nonfiction, there is only narrative”* ((2000) p926)

Through my research and its presentation I want to offer an interpretation of the data. I recognise this interpretation will reflect my value system and be a subjective construction of the text so I also want to ensure that the voices of the research participants, their descriptions and interpretations, are centre stage. And finally I want to provide sufficient detail to allow the reader space and opportunity to construct alternative readings of the data and to find new and different meanings.

In section 4.2 I identified some of the problems for a researcher who seeks to preserve the richness of the individual case and yet to offer a conceptual framework that moves from the particular to the general. I felt that the use of ‘case study’ as a strategy of enquiry gave me the opportunity to do both. As Stake (2006) writes:

*“It is important to examine the common characteristics of these phenomena but it is also important to examine situational uniqueness, especially complexity and interaction with background conditions.”* (pix)

I wanted to use a presentational style that offered the same flexibility.

In my Research Proposal (Appendix One) I had anticipated presenting the data as a work of fiction or Readers Theatre. This would keep the potential for multiple levels of meaning and complexity. It would avoid fixing meaning.

Fiction and creative non fiction both allow contradictions, tensions and ambiguities to co-exist and do not necessarily seek resolution.

Richardson and Adams St Pierre (2005) talk about crystallisation, a multi-faceted endlessly reflective form that has no stable meaning but constantly shifts according to perspective and context. It seems to me that fictional pieces can take on the form of crystals.

How then is this different to other forms of presentation including case studies which can have all the qualities outlined above and yet are not necessarily presented in a fictional form? One response is that the case study format allows for a wide range of presentational styles including fiction. The key, it seems to me, is to use the most appropriate medium for the message. This might be a 3<sup>rd</sup> person description of a sequence of events given in chronological order. Alternatively to convey something of the emotional impact of a situation or event I might use a fictional or creative style of presentation.

A particular quality of fiction or creative writing is that it increases reader accessibility. There has been considerable interest in left-brain, right brain differences within educational debates and the tendency of Western society in particular to undervalue the right brain functions and to focus on strengthening linguistic and analytical skills associated with the left brain. Bogen (1975, 1977) writes extensively on the over emphasis by Western society on the 3 Rs (reading, writing, arithmetic) and the need to use instructional techniques that encourage right hemispheric thinking to realise student potential in art, music, spatial awareness and creativity.

I can see the value of developing and strengthening all types of intelligence. Learning events or activities that strengthen or make use of all brain functions – analysis, empathy, intuition, creativity - are as necessary as those that develop specific skills. Fiction, creative non-fiction and storytelling with their use of image, metaphor and emotional depth combined with a narrative structure have the potential to appeal to or stimulate response from those with both right and left brain preferences.

That people of all ages respond to stories was brought out clearly in my discussion with some of the research participants.

Interview with Dave, Rose and Diane in January 2009

*FD: So how did you sell it to them and how did you bring it alive for them? .....*

*DG: I think the stories .. the assembly had quite a big impact didn't it? We showed some of the slides and I talked through. I suppose I'm quite good at telling stories really and engaging the .. I'm not that good at many things .. but storytelling is something that I am quite good at and so you kind of talk to them and tell them in a way .. they're just listening and .. and they really take it on board and then because you all . .you know.. we both did it together and we ended with the singing which is very powerful and it had a huge impact on the children and on the adults.*

Why do we seem to like stories? I find them non threatening and yet highly motivating. Is it because they are usually written using language and format with which I am comfortable? Is it because they are not about me or directed at me but still resonate with my experiences? Is it because I can choose how I receive a story and what use I make of it? Is it because story telling is something I am familiar with from childhood and puts me in touch with a secure past or helps me re-create a pastoral idyll? Is it because I can relate to it at a cognitive but also at an emotional level? Do stories press buttons at many different levels and as a consequence have a greater impact on me?

Richardson (2000) suggests that writing stories is another form of theorising. Traditionally theories are 'constructed' but increasingly from the 1970s onwards feminist researchers began to think about theory using a different metaphor. The concept of theory as story gave many women a sense of freedom to tell their individual or collective tales. This *"became understood as 'theorizing' their lives. The boundary between 'narrative' and 'analysis' dissolved."*(p927)

For me, telling a story or writing a descriptive piece allows me to compress time, create composite characters and even introduce events that did not take place, enabling me to make a particular point. All of this, perhaps, runs counter to ideals of research that require the faithful representation of experience.

Arguably all representations involve choices of emphasis by the author. Moving away from a chronological representation of events would still enable me to meet the criteria by which I have asked that this thesis be judged, namely:

- a. the research has been conducted in a way that is ethical and collaborative;
- b. the data and interpretations offered reflect the experiences and understanding of the participants but also enrich and deepen them. They have coherence and validity.
- c. the presentation of the data is accessible to both fellow researchers and to interested 'lay' readers;
- d. the process and the conclusions of the research offer opportunities for positive and beneficial action and transformation for both the participants and readers. They have pragmatic value.

After long internal debates and discussion I decided I wanted to represent my analysis of the experiences of the research participants as analytical studies or stories. For me this involved compressing time and combining incidents. I changed words. I altered the past tense to the present. I extracted and selected from the diaries, journals and interviews. I am aware that for some authorities (eg Gutkind (2008)) this crosses the line between creative non fiction and fiction. However, mine is a painting, not a photograph. It is still recognisable but it draws on a different way of seeing. My 'triangulation' or credibility is the reaction of my co-authors. My aim was that the results should resonate with the participants.

Most of my analyses take the form of short descriptive pieces with a structure – a beginning, an exploration of a theme and a closure. Some compress and shift time and place or make more extensive use of metaphor. All are written in the first person and tap into the memories and emotional responses of the participants. The collection provides a body of words designed to stimulate, to offer the reader a way of engaging more deeply with lived experience and giving them space and opportunity to think about their own significant experiences.

*“Creative non fiction doesn’t just report facts, it delivers facts in ways that move the reader towards a deeper understanding’ (Cheney 2001 p1)*

In an ideal world these vignettes would have been jointly crafted. Given the time, geographical distance and availability of participants I opted, with their permission, to write the pieces myself and to send the results to the participants for comment and amendment. My starting point was usually a central image or event or dominant emotion and, wherever possible, I used the words they had used in those second interviews and created a structure to contain what I understood were their feelings and observations.

I do acknowledge, like Diane in the quotation above, that these pieces are intended to engage the reader with the people we met in South Africa. I have written a great deal about reader accessibility: enabling the reader to understand the range of learning and the reactions that the research participants had as a result of the South African experience. I believe that if I can create a space where the reader feels able to relate emotionally as well as cognitively the understanding and empathy will be greater. This is what Dadds (2008) labels external empathetic validity – resonance between researcher and reader. However this is not just about developing a greater understanding of the research participants’ learning. Through their stories I also want to encourage empathy with the children and adults that stole our hearts in South Africa. I am trying to take the reader with us on our learning journeys not just so that they can understand more fully what it was that we learned, or to illustrate the range, value and process of deep learning. Ever the evangelist I want to provide an opportunity for experiential learning so that the reader comes as close as possible to seeing, touching and smelling a world they may never visit.

Dadds (2008) quotes from earlier research describing similar motivation in other practitioner researchers:

*“Jo came to care so much for the people with whom he had worked that he sought a mode of representation that would be capable of engaging his audience, along with him, in understanding and identifying with people with autism (p66) .....Jo could not reconcile traditional forms of reporting with this*

*empathic intention ... He deliberately chose a narrative approach "that would engage the reader emotionally" (Dadds and Hart (2001) p67) (Dadds (2008) p285)*

#### 4.4 Representing 'the Other'

In this research project and in the thesis I have spent some time considering how best to ensure the voice of the research participant is heard.

One of the research criterion I chose directly reflected this, namely:

*the data and interpretations offered reflect the experiences and understanding of the participants but also enrich and deepen them. They have coherence and validity. (See Chapter 3.2 p61)*

The research itself is based upon our experiences of South Africa, the people we met and the things we heard. Whilst much of the profound learning relates to personal value systems it comes about because of engagement with the people there. What of the voices of those we met? Where do they fit into this?

At one level this thesis was not about South Africa: it was about the learning that arises from a significant experience and that experience might have been anywhere or about anything. However the entire thesis is based upon the impact that the sights and sounds of South Africa had on us: from learning about colour, patterns, geography, history, economics and politics to reappraising our values and behaviours. Many of the actions we chose to take involved continuing the relationships with the schools we visited, fundraising or raising awareness of the country's political and economic situation. This is something I refer to in the preceding section.

*"Ever the evangelist I want to provide an opportunity for experiential learning so that the reader comes as close as possible to seeing, touching and smelling a world they may never visit." (see Chapter 4.3 p103)*

The thesis does not deal directly with the experiences of the people of South Africa except as mediated through the voices of the research participants. This raises ethical questions about the extent to which the interests and learning of



one group of people (the research participants) should be based on the lives and experiences of another group (the people we met in South Africa). Is this exploitation? Just another form of colonialism? South Africa wasn't the focus of the research and yet it was there. It infused everything that we did and thought about.

Marcus (1986) draws attention to the way in which the 'other' is often portrayed in ethnography: "*the subjects of ethnography have usually been victims, or because of modern ethnography's commitment to social criticism, they have been portrayed as such*" p168.

This quotation highlights two issues: firstly the perception of the 'other' as a clearly identifiable group and secondly as a vehicle through which the ethnographer can satisfy his/her social conscience.

In her essay '*Can the Subaltern Speak?*' Spivak (1988) comments on the dialogue between Foucault and Deleuze and draws attention to how '*intellectuals*' choose to re-present or speak for the 'other'. Even those who champion the importance of the 'other' speaking for themselves can find they are using a language (eg '*the workers' struggle*') which reduces that 'other' to a homogeneous mass.

Clifford (1986) provides an overview of the way in which the popular image of the ethnographer as a "*sympathetic, authoritative observer (best incarnated, perhaps, by Margaret Mead)*" has by the 1970s been "*hardened into caricature – the ambitious social scientist making off with tribal lore and giving nothing in return, imposing crude portraits on subtle peoples*" (p9). Rabinow (1986) makes the point that the "*crisis of representation in ethnographic writing*" (p251) is itself historically located in a particular context that reflects a period of enormous changes, lack of certainty and a loss of the absolute. Nevertheless the genie is out of the bottle. There is increasingly a recognition that '*every version of the other ... is also the construction of a self*' (Clifford 1986 p23). The focus has moved to the messages conveyed by the textual location of the ethnographer and the way in which the voices of the 'other' are represented. As Clifford (1986) observed:

*“the general trend [is] toward a specification of discourses in ethnography: who speaks? When and where? With or to whom? Under what institutional and historical constraints? p13*

Harvey (1989) considers the influence of post-modernism in its emphasis on heterogeneity and dignity of the ‘other’. He considers it has been particularly important in acknowledging the multiple forms of otherness as they emerge from differences in subjectivity, gender, sexuality, class and race. Clifford (1986) similarly acknowledges the contribution of feminism, in particular, to this discussion:

*“[Feminism] debates the historical, political construction of identities and self/other relations and it probes the gendered possibilities that make all accounts of, or by, other people inescapably partial”*

Tyler (1986) suggests that traditionally *“the urge to conform to scientific rhetoric made easy realism of natural history .. the dominant mode of ethnographic prose”* However he claims it *“has been an illusory realism promoting ... the absurdity of describing ‘non entities’ such as ‘culture’ or ‘society’ as if they were fully observable.”* (p130). He offers the term ‘evoke’ rather than ‘represent’ because it frees ethnographers from the idea of ‘mimesis’. Like Clifford he argues that there are no ‘things’ in ethnography: instead there is an ‘ethnographic discourse’ to be explored. Cultures do not exist as independent objects and to attempt to represent them is both making a claim for the impossible and setting oneself up as knowing more. A post-modern ethnography, he continues, is fragmentary because *“it cannot be otherwise ... It is not just that we cannot see the forest for the trees but that we have come to feel that there are no forests ... we refuse the moment of aesthetic totalisation, the story of stories, the hypostatized whole”* (p130). Tyler argues against synthesis in ethnography. He points to the creation of meaning in the constantly changing dynamic between reader, text and author and the possibility of ‘evoking’ transcendence without synthesis.

Whether we describe, represent or evoke: Clifford (1986) argues for ‘dialogism’ and ‘polyvocality’. The ‘monophonic’ text gives too much power to the ethnographer and is a reflection of a science that claims it can represent

cultures. A polyphonic mode of textual production moves the 'other', from a position of informant to one of co-author.

These ideas are developed further by Marker (2006) when he writes:

*"Empowering or advocating for indigenous communities is a suspiciously ethnocentric and patronising goal" p37*

and Alcoff (2006) questions whether ethnography should only be written by insiders.

*"There is a strong, albeit contested, current within feminism that holds that speaking for others – even for women – is arrogant, vain, unethical and politically illegitimate" p117*

This uneasiness, she explains, is based on two broadly accepted claims. Firstly, the inability of the speaker to 'transcend' their location' (p118) in speaking for others. This could be because of the speaker's own (overt or hidden) agenda, her interpretation of the data, her relationship with the research participants and what they were willing to share. Secondly, she suggests, that by speaking on behalf of others, the speaker may reinforce the oppression of the group spoken for. This may not be the intention of the speaker or researcher but it may be the unintended outcome.

Alcoff asks the question "Is it ever valid to speak for others who are unlike I or who are less privileged than I?" p119. My response, much like Alcoff's, is that no one is like anyone else and, on this basis, no one can claim to represent any group. Furthermore if I don't speak for others am I abandoning my human responsibility to speak out against oppression wherever found?

This is something that Hannah (*Toby* Chapter 5.3) specifically addresses. Part of her learning was that single voices can make a difference.

*"Through Toby I understood how important it was to find my political voice and use it and that actually I can make a difference. Even if it is only a difference to*

*one person or one school it is my job to do that and to shout out loud and long to make others hear.”*

Perhaps the answer lies with being alert to when it is appropriate to keep silent and when to speak.

As Alcoff (2006) notes:

*“Rituals of speaking [Foucault] are constitutive of meaning, the meaning of the words spoken as well as the meaning of the event. This claim requires us to shift the ontology of meaning from its location in a text or utterance to a larger space, a space which includes the text or utterance but which also includes the discursive context.”(p121)*

There are humanitarian crises that we need to respond to as humans. It is possible to read ‘aid’ as patronising, alleviating our own consciences, or as failing to deal with much more deep rooted political struggles and economic interests. However not to raise funds or to help relieve suffering when it is in our power to do so might also be regarded as an abdication of our responsibilities as human beings. We need to operate at all levels. Furthermore there is a difference between caring without fixing and taking over. Aid that empowers communities to resolve their own problems and aid that simply deals with the presenting problem are not the same. Ann (*Not Black and White* Chapter 5.8) recognises similar complexities when thinking about apportioning blame.

*“I was working in a bar in London and we used to get a lot of white South African travellers. I always had to work hard to give them a fair hearing ..... It was Patience who put me straight. Patience – the black teacher in a township secondary school where the doors hung off the ovens and the science laboratory was a broken cupboard and a hole in the floor.”*

All of the research participants returned with an express intention of raising awareness of some of the need they had discovered in South Africa. At one level such an intention and the consequent action, however well meaning, may have the effect of reinforcing the voiceless ‘otherness’ of those we had visited.

However one outcome of the visit was an enhanced awareness of diversity, of the impossibility of consigning a complete country to a particular category and an understanding that poverty and impoverishment are not the same thing. All of the research participants wanted to develop relationships with South African schools that were based on a principle of reciprocity: believing that the South African schools and children had as much to give as to gain. And it is this message that the research participants also communicated as they talked to colleagues and pupils about their experiences.

The following quotations drawn from the analytic studies in Chapter Five illustrate this understanding:

*I'm making it sound bad and it wasn't. It was a wonderful experience. There were beautiful human beings, beautiful landscape but there was this deficit. And it wasn't, I think, a deficit that we were imposing on them like, 'Oh you poor souls you don't have enough paper'. It wasn't a need that they had identified and I don't think it was a need that I was giving to them. It was just there. A fact that, in a certain world, they would have more to educate their children with. (Not Black and White Chapter 5.8)*

*It was a whole person experience. It made us see the world was such a wonderful place with the animals and the culture. And that's rather bizarre when we were immersed in such poverty. How can you have a consistent response to such a world? (Mrs T Chapter 5.6)*

*I feel embarrassment and a little shame. All week I've been thinking, 'it's not appropriate and you know we wouldn't do that in England .. because it's not led from the children'. All my philosophies of teaching. Thinking, 'you don't really quite understand it yet but it's not your fault' ... But here, now, looking at this. It's blowing me away. I stare round the room. I look at the role play area. It's just ... I don't know what .. just scraps and rags .. stones and twigs. And the paint is still peeling off the walls. But they know what needs to be done and they are doing it. Could I do this? Without the help of other adults, my big budget, my great resource base. With all these trimmings do I do better? (Knowing tigers definitely weren't in Africa Chapter 5.2)*

I was acutely aware of the tensions around speaking for the 'other' – both the research participants themselves and the people we met in South Africa. However, ultimately the research topic was about learning and it was the learning of the research participants I was drawing on in the development of my model (Fig 4). Consequently my focus was on them and their perspectives. In Chapter 3.3 I mentioned BERA's ethical code and the idea of '*protection from harm*'. I thought about the extent to which my representation of South Africa reinforced stereotypes and contributed to post-colonial exploitation and marginalisation. I came to the conclusion that the way in which the research participants and I represented South Africa at least drew attention to the richness and diversity of the culture and the people we met and the impossibility of representing them as a homogeneous 'other'.

#### 4.5 Just stories?

I felt that the creation of stories was an effective way both to analyse the data and convey the uniqueness of each research participant's experience. I also wanted to go further and to offer my own ideas and interpretations. Perhaps it is because I have experienced the value and added benefit that comes from working with and revisiting text I feel the need to do more than tell a story; even a story that has been carefully constructed following an analysis of interview and other data. At one level a story is a series of words on the page. I have to engage with it to find a meaning. And I engage by picking it up, putting it down, looking at it with one eye, on one leg, far away or close up. What does this story - this scene - tell me? To leave it as a story does not help me find the meaning. I need to prod and poke at the words, turn the thing upside down and shake it. Meaning has to be courted, woo-ed, teased. It peeps out and then scuttles back to its hiding place.

No matter how detailed the description, we (Team Durban) proved to each other in our conversations that meaning is refined and changed over time. It is not, perhaps, that there are multiple realities just many ways of perceiving a single reality. Not to use the tools at our disposal, the full armoury of language, to represent that reality is to limit our potential to understand. For these reasons I decided not to let the stories of my participants stand alone but to signpost the reader to possible readings of the data.

I do not claim to speak with authority but as Richardson and Adams St Pierre (2005) point out “*a postmodern position does allow us to know something without claiming to know everything ... qualitative writers do not have to play God ... [they] still have plenty to say as situated speakers (p961)*”

Any form of presentation seems to meet some objectives and miss others. By using rhetorical devices such as metaphor, alliteration and repetition I draw attention to the ‘created’ and artificial nature of the text. By painting pen pictures I show rather than tell, allowing the reader to interact with the text and create his/her own links and connections. I create the conditions through which deep learning can occur and trust to the process. Alternatively by offering a commentary I continue the debate and signpost the reader to other possible interpretations.

In presenting the data therefore (see Chapters Five and Six) I have used an eclectic presentational style which reflects a desire to include my own voice whilst not excluding that of others. I am using different forms of presentation because it seems to me that there is no best fit and representation has become a personal judgement about what is fit for purpose.

Following the analytical studies in Chapter Five I use a more traditional form of analysis and commentary in Chapter Six which reflects on, evidences and interprets the nature of my learning and that of my fellow travellers.

I also present a conceptual model on learning processes in Chapter 6.4 (Fig 4 on p162) outlining the translation of sensation into a deep or profound learning experience and subsequent action. It is based on the data but distant from it.

In deciding how to re-present the data I discovered a continuum. At one end the researcher extracts meaning and presents a theory to the reader, often allowing only the occasional glimpse of the original data to support or gainsay the hypothesis. I was at this end of the spectrum when I developed a model to illustrate the learning process. It was intellectually very stimulating to think in this way. At the other the researcher opens a door to other worlds and the reader steps through. Somewhere between the two on this continuum is a ‘*situated speaker*’ (Richardson and Adams St Pierre (2005) p961) who has

something to say by virtue of their immersion in the research experience but also allows the possibility of other interpretations or other voices. I was in this place when I wrote the analytical studies and when I offered by own interpretation of the texts and interviews. It was here I felt most comfortable.

#### 4.6 Storytelling: experiential learning

Deciding that short stories conveyed well the South African experiences was one thing. Actually producing something worth publishing was quite another. Before committing myself to the task I wanted to see how it felt, whether I had the ability to convey analysis through creative writing, what it might add to my own understanding and analysis of the data and whether it did improve reader accessibility. It was in this spirit of enquiry and adventure that I wrote the vignette '*Under the Flamboyant Tree*' (see p7).

*'Under the Flamboyant Tree'* had been the title of my thesis long before I thought of using short stories to illustrate the experiences of the research participants.

In my Learning Journal (8) I wrote:

*"Why do I want to call this thesis '*Under the Flamboyant Tree*'? Why has that photograph haunted me and wound itself into this part of my life?" (14 April 2009)*

It took a great deal of thinking to get even close to an answer. The more I tried to grasp it, the more it evaded me. And yet I instinctively felt there was an answer. It was only in the process of writing and in thinking about the choices I was making about what to include and exclude that the cogs started to turn. Even when I finally laid down my pen I still hadn't got it. It was only as I walked away from the words – both literally and metaphorically – that the "aha" moment struck.

Richardson (2000) calls this kind of writing '*evocative representation*'

*... "When using creative analytical practices, ethnographers learn about their topics and about themselves that which was unknowable and unimaginable*



*using conventional analytical procedures, metaphors and writing formats. Even if one chooses to write an article in a conventional form, trying on different modes of writing is a practical and powerful way to expand one's interpretive skills, raise one's consciousness, and bring a fresh perspective to one's research. P931)*

The scene itself and the way I discovered its meaning – at least its meaning for me – are metaphors for profound learning. This was not a pleasant experience. It ruptured something smooth and uncomplicated. It forced me to pay attention, to think. Passive contemplation became active engagement. There was an emotional dimension. And the experience changed colour and tone as I revisited it. It told me something about myself. It wouldn't leave me alone. It nagged and gnawed inside me and finally it changed me. In the same way I can no longer respond to the Flamboyant Tree as something of splendour. The silent family beneath clamoured for my attention. The purity of the image was shattered and I felt the reproach, the guilt of wanting to ignore palpable need and the inadequacy of my response.

Profound learning doesn't offer neat and pretty solutions. My experience of South Africa left me out of kilter with my own world, with an ache to do something or be someone but with no easy options. It simply left me with choices that involved leaving my comfortable life in pursuit of a pot of gold that might be as ephemeral as the rainbow that pointed to it. It is also a highly personal response. It is triggered by and triggers things that have no effect on others.

Words and experiences are not the same. So experience can never be fully represented by words. But by using images and hyperbole I may come closer to an understanding of my experience than through more conventional forms of representation. Ironically by re-staging my experience I don't conceal a truth, I reveal an insight. The process of writing, the struggle to find the 'bon mot', to capture the essence of my experience becomes an analysis of that experience. Richardson (2000) writes that *she 'consider[s] writing as a method of enquiry ... a way of 'knowing' – a method of discovery and analysis. By writing in different ways, we discover new aspects of our topic and our relationship to it.'* (p923)

The process of writing revealed to me the difference between description and

meaning because I came to understand my experiences through the act of writing about them. Meaning is about resonance. It appeals to the senses, the emotions. It more closely approximates experience. Description involves painting by numbers. Meaning has depth, dimension, perspective.

The experience of writing '*Under the Flamboyant Tree*' was both emotional and cathartic in nature. Everyone I showed it to seemed affected by the scene I had painted and the images I had conveyed. It showed me the power of language to effect change and convinced me that writing these stories was another useful way of analysing the original data.

#### 4.7 The feedback loop

At the point of writing the analytical studies, I was acutely aware that I was capturing a point in time and that yesterday's story or the one in 6 months could be very different. In writing I make the ephemeral solid; perhaps more so than it has a right to be. We are complex beings and have many voices with many layers of meaning and understanding. I wanted to write stories that gave an insight to the lasting impression that South Africa had made. Between 3 and 9 months had passed since the interviews when the participants received the stories and the interview transcript on which they were based.

I awaited the responses of the research participants with some trepidation. I had, through an ongoing email correspondence, explained my change in direction and the narrative form I wanted to use to represent experience. I encouraged them to challenge and change things they felt did not truly reflect their interests and ideas. I decided that each story should be relatively short (500 to 800 words) so that it would not take too long to read. I sent it out electronically first to each individual with a hard copy of the story and the interview transcript following later. This meant they could refer to the main source of data themselves at leisure and wouldn't feel overwhelmed by the wealth of material in the first instance. I hoped in this way to increase the likelihood of a response without adding pressure that might arise from a personal phone call. I could have just returned the interview transcripts for checking but this would be like providing ingredients of a recipe. The taste, smell and texture of the final dish also need to be recognisable. I really did seek their input despite fearing the thing I sought.

This approach was very successful in eliciting a response and resulted in almost immediate feedback from nearly everybody. I was pleasantly surprised at the levels of enthusiasm and the apparent endorsement of my efforts.

*“This story is just amazing Fiona ... it’s so lovely” OM email – 27 June 2009*

*“Perfect Fiona! Actually bought a lump to my throat bringing back the feelings and memories. Captured it perfectly. The biggest lesson I learnt that day was how important the role of the adult really is in teaching. It doesn’t matter how much money you have, if the adult doesn’t have the right attitude it’s all wasted” – RH email 4 June 2009*

*“Just read the south African “story”. Reads really well – I’d forgotten I’d told you some of the things you have included – Funny to see it written down by someone else.” – HA email - 4 June 2009*

*“Wow Fiona, very creative and it certainly captures my South African experience and subsequent influence on my outlook to life in general.” – RP email 4 June 2009*

*“Having read through and it sounds fine. It was moving to read and you have captured ‘my voice’ very well!” (email Dinah – 29 July 2009)*

I felt that the reaction justified the use of this form of narrative. I have, in the past, returned transcriptions and drafts of half completed reports and got far less, if any, reaction from the participants. I do accept that the brevity of each piece and my personal relationship with the recipient encouraged them to respond and this is a clear advantage of insider research. No one asked for a single word to be changed however. Again it is not possible to say how much this was down to politeness or the fact that the participants felt more reluctant to interfere with something that was overtly ‘crafted’. However I did use their words as far as possible and the level of enthusiasm of the response indicates that the participants felt I had captured and understood their voices.

*“As for the transcript, brilliant – I could hear myself saying it without hardly reading it (I hope that makes sense!). These ARE my thoughts. I have printed it off to add to my South African folder. Well done!”*

*email from TL – 20 July 2009*

Although this research is not ethnography, it has elements of an ethnographic approach. I was immersed alongside the participants in the events of the week. I witnessed the same sights and heard the same tales. I went through the same reflective processes, joined in the focus group conversations as an equal and, like my fellow travellers, had a range of emotional responses to all that we witnessed. I believe my sensitivity to their voices was due in a large part to this immersion. I was not ‘the researcher’ on the visit itself, I was the group leader. I was aware that my research would be based on our experiences and so I was anxious to absorb and retain as much as I could of what we saw and felt. However it wasn’t my intention to observe the research participants closely during the week. I gathered data during the visit that might or might not be used in the doctorate but anticipated that much would come, as it did, from reflections on the experience sometime afterwards. I did, however, use the knowledge and insights I gained to help inform my subsequent discussions and interviews and to help mould and shape the analyses and I am aware that the stories would have looked very different and could not have been written so intuitively if I had not been so involved

#### 4.8 Other forms of representation

In this research I have concentrated on written forms of presentation. However, in my search for accessible media I could have considered other formats such as drama, cartoons or photo journalism. I did seek permission to include a range of photographs to illustrate the stories in Chapter Five. I agree with Walker’s (1993) suggestion that photographs can build on language especially at the level of description and offer ways of thinking differently about subjects. They stimulate reaction without telling. I spent many hours looking through the group’s South African photographs before turning my analysis of their experiences into stories and in reflecting on my own learning and I personally experienced the liberation of thinking that comes with moving backwards and forwards between words and images. Eventually problems of permission and

attribution precluded the use of all but one picture of the family '*Under the Flamboyant Tree*'.

The power of images in stimulating and re-visiting ideas became evident to me. Like the stories, they operate at an emotional as well as an intellectual level: the multiple voices clamour for attention and the possibilities for interpretation are legion.

However they are also a crafting and shaping of one situated voice. Each photograph is taken for a reason. It contains something of significance to the taker and has stimulated them in some way – shock, awe, curiosity. The image has undercut or exceeded the photographer's expectations and becomes a commentary on their own culture, personal history and values.

For me, an individual photograph presents a sense of absolute: '*this is how it was*' rather than '*there are many interpretations and this is how it was for me*'. Prosser (1998) explores some of the concerns surrounding the use of static images (eg photographs, cartoons, symbols and signs) and provides examples of where these concerns have been successfully overcome.

*"there is a recognition that support for the relative trustworthiness is best achieved by multiple images in conjunction with words."* P106

The picture of the family under the Flamboyant Tree is an image that resonated with me and on to which I grafted my own symbols and meaning. I am happy to include it here because this story represents my own learning journey. It is a crafted account of my personal response and it does not pretend to be more. The inclusion of a single photograph helps the reader to enter my world more fully and perhaps to see as I saw. If I was seeking to depict Swaziland per se then this picture on its own would be inappropriate. It should be part of a montage of images and words that illustrate the complexity of a nation state. Such a montage would also need to include the words and images of residents and not simply the impressions of those travelling through.

Which data to use and in what form to present it are editorial decisions that place the writer/creator between the original research data and the reader.

However there are degrees of distance. I deliberately chose to include this extra chapter to look at approaches to analysis and presentation because I felt the choices I had made about the way in which I conducted the research and my belief that it should be '*collaborative*', '*accessible*' and '*offer opportunities for transformation*' (see Chapter 3.2 p61) had implications for both. The research topic and the conclusions I formed about the most powerful forms of learning and the conditions under which they are likely to be nurtured and sustained also influenced my thinking about how best to work with the data.

The next chapter presents a response to this discussion on analysis and presentation: ten stories. Each is based on an analysis of the data and encapsulates some of the research participants' key South African learning experiences.

## 5.0 Chapter Five: Looking at the data

My original research questions were:

1. What kinds of learning are there?
2. What kind of learning comes out of a significant experience?
3. In what ways can the learning resulting from a significant experience change you?

To these were added:

4. How does experience translate into learning and
5. Is learning [especially deep and profound learning] always valued?

The preceding chapters defined the scope and intention of this doctoral thesis and looked at literature on learning, methodological approaches, forms of analysis and presentation. In this chapter and Chapter Six the focus is on the research data itself: how it evidences and develops typologies of learning, especially ideas around deep and profound learning; and how a consideration of the experiences of the research participants led to the development of a model that explains the movement from experience or sensation to learning.

As the author of this thesis I made the final decisions as to which quotations and ideas to use. However the mix of presentational styles and voices is intended to give the reader a sense of the breath, variety and intensity of the experiences. Through the montage of images and ideas readers will judge for themselves to what extent the data supports the points made in the previous chapters, here and in Chapter Six.

### 5.1 Organisation of Chapter Five

This chapter contains ten analytical studies: one from each of the research participants (including myself). Each piece draws together the key memories of the participants at the follow up interviews some 12 - 15 months after the original experience and answers the question 'what stays with you from that visit?' Collectively they offer an array of responses to the research questions on types of learning and the impact of learning on both personal and

professional self. They also provide indicators to the process whereby stimulus becomes learning: something which is returned to in Chapter Six.

In writing I tried to remain faithful to the spirit and, where possible, used the actual words of the participants. I returned the final drafts for comment. Originally I had structured this section with each vignette followed by a commentary. After reviewing the chapter I decided to group all the voices together. This appeared to offer a more powerful medley allowing the reader to engage directly with the text without an intermediary. The collection evidences the range of ideas, connections, perspectives and emotions that arose from these shared experiences and how they impacted on the individuals after the events. There are similarities and overlaps but the 'voices' are unique.

The last of the 10 studies is my own and I developed it in a different way. By the time I came to write it I feared I no longer had a voice of my own. I felt I had become a blend of the memories and ideas of others.

I wrote the piece in one sitting. I had planned to ask a colleague to interview me and then analyse the interview transcript to help identify key themes and structure the piece. This was the approach I took with the other participants. However in the end, after much thinking, I just wrote in the belief that something useful and significant might result from so long a period immersed in the experience of South Africa and the ongoing reflections and conversations about what it had meant.

I wanted something that talked about complexity, showing how threads within a story got tangled up, how past, present and future were inextricably linked and how difficult it was to make a direct correlation between cause and effect. What I discovered in the process of writing was how the 'real' impact of an experience could remain hidden, ignored or sidelined. In the expectation of some dramatic outcome I became blinkered and oblivious to other possibilities. I found this process of deconstruction through construction absolutely fascinating. It generated new insights and perspectives and created new links.

I recognise that in the previous paragraph I have reflected a belief that 'true' meaning exists and can be revealed over time. Alternatively, as Richardson



(2000) suggests, 'insight' is just another stopping off point in an endlessly changing kaleidoscope of possible meanings: *"Because individuals are subject to multiple and competing discourses in many realms, their subjectivity is shifting and contradictory, not stable, fixed, rigid"* (p929)

One of the criteria I identified for judging my thesis was that:

*"the data and interpretations offered reflect the experiences and understanding of the participants but also enrich and deepen them". (Chapter 3.3 (p61))*

The process of writing these analytical studies and the words themselves were a way of getting beyond description to emotional connection. It might have been simpler to use verbatim quotations to illustrate the range of learning arising from the experience and I have used this technique in Chapter Six but I wanted to move beyond description and to find a way of entering the world of the research participants. Their reactions (see Chapter 4.7 p115) suggest that, to some extent at least, this aim was achieved.

## 5.2 Rachel's story: Knowing tigers definitely weren't in Africa

*The minibus clatters up the red soil dirt track. In the distance I can see the last of the schools we are visiting. A single storey, horse stable arrangement. Breeze blocks surrounding a quadrangle. As we approach a sea of black excited faces crowd round and then part to let us through. You can touch the excitement in the air. We drive into the quadrangle and the bus stops. The children surge forward chattering and cheering. Our cameras, already out, clicking and whirring. 200 faces beaming up at us.*

*A group of adults emerge from one of the buildings. Governors, teachers, the headteacher. Mostly large ladies in colourful dresses and headscarves. They hug us and shake our hands. I am embraced at least 15 times. The warmth is overwhelming. It is difficult to know where to look or what to do next. I feel myself welling up. I glance across at my colleagues. All of us seem stunned. The children continue to run around, laughing, calling out to one another, watching us, unaware of the effect they are having. The most beautiful scenery blighted by such poverty. Aids. Orphans. No electricity. No furniture. No toilets. Desperately sad.*

*A wall of sound erupts. Unaccompanied and multiple harmonies. The 150-strong choir of children and adults. Such sweet, sweet sounds. All of us sway with the rhythms, caught in the moment, in the warm, windy, dust-filled square that fills this empty space where complete strangers meet for the first time. The shabbiness, the poverty of the children, the lack of electricity and running water – all is forgotten, irrelevant in the joy of the moment.*

*We have permission to go into the classrooms. I head towards the reception room. The paint on the walls is flaking. About 20 children are in the room. The teacher tells me there can be many more. The wind and the cold keep them away but the promise of a hot meal from the drum-like cauldrons draws them here.*

*It's one of the first schools I've seen with a reception class that actually practices the way I would. They have a role play corner and a maths table and a sticking area. It is the poorest .. one of the poorest schools we've seen and*

*yet, here, in the middle of nowhere, is this oasis.. I am moved. Later, I knew, in the darkness of the safari hut I would cry .. the tears would fall for these children ... this poverty ... and for this glorious practice.*

*I feel embarrassment and a little shame. All week I've been thinking, 'it's not appropriate and you know we wouldn't do that in England .. because it's not led from the children'. All my philosophies of teaching. Thinking, 'you don't really quite understand it yet but it's not your fault' ... But here, now, looking at this. It's blowing me away. I stare round the room. I look at the role play area. It's just ... I don't know what .. just scraps and rags .. stones and twigs. And the paint is still peeling off the walls. But they know what needs to be done and they are doing it. Could I do this? Without the help of other adults, my big budget, my great resource base. With all these trimmings do I do better?*

*I can see clearly here that learning is about dreams and ideas and helping the imagination grow. It's about the quality of the questions the children ask and the way everyone pulls together here.*

*They are coming towards me again. Great welcoming smiles, offering me bottles of water. Some days your heart just breaks.*

### 5.3 Hannah's story: Toby

*You can tell a lot from people's eyes. You can see enthusiasm and joy. You can see that thirst for knowledge, keenness, interest. And we had seen it everywhere we went. You can also see hope and expectation. It just shines through. I would be the last to say we don't have that in England. There are children everywhere who are motivated in their education but here it was endemic. Not just in the pupils and staff but in everybody. Like catching sight of the sun after a long hard winter and feeling your soul light up. And I saw it in Toby.*

*I still often think about her because she was somebody who really wanted to make a career for herself. She lived in one of those shanty towns. Sorry 'informal accommodation'. I have the image before me - the corrugated iron roofs, walls festooned with newspaper and the television flickering through the half open doors.*

*She was determined she was going to get an education and make her life better by working as a chambermaid in our hotel. And she seemed to me to represent all those young children and their aspirations and how they hoped that through their education they would get on, get a better job, somewhere nice to live. She had dreams. Everyone I met did. Their language just sparkled with it.*

*It reminded me of me: how I came late to teaching and started off as a governor and then got interested in schools ... didn't have any A'levels and managed to forge my way through and did my degree and everything. Twelve years ago. Hardly seems believable. I just thought how important it is to feel the door is open and how optimistic everyone is here and now, after apartheid. Like someone has lifted this enormous and oppressive weight. Where everything is possible if you just 'give a little whistle'.*

*Through Toby I understood how important it was to find my political voice and use it and that actually I can make a difference. Even if it is only a difference to one person or one school it is my job to do that and to shout out loud and long to make others hear.*

*And I do have an important job, not just as educator but as a line of defence against the bulldozer 'apartheid'.*

*Toby was such a mix of hope and naivety with her unshaken belief that things were on the up. She had this passion for books. And she gave one to me. The most wonderful thing. She gave me an Andy McDowall book. I've still got it. I haven't read it but it's kind of precious to me without reading it. She saw me reading a sequel to Peter Pan and I bought her the original. A story of hope, eternal youth, boundless energy and a capacity to carry on believing in the impossible. It seemed highly appropriate.*

#### 5.4 May's Story: Kirsty's Cake

*Kirsty baked a cake to help raise money for Qinisani. It seemed strange: selling food to raise money for children that don't have anything to eat but it's a response from the heart. I expect she baked the cake with her mum in a modern kitchen. Not like the kitchen in the rural primary school. Two cauldrons and a gas cylinder.*

*The children all crowded round the photographs as I put them up. "What's that Mrs Mitre? That kitchen isn't like my kitchen." And straight away we made a connection through a disconnect. Pictures are very powerful. They touch you inside. I did my assembly on Tuesday. I was scared stiff but I was on a mission. Sometimes you know when the children are listening. The silence has a different quality to it: a stillness, an intensity. I took my story to the primary school yesterday and today Suzy's mum, who works here, told me how Suzy came home asking questions and telling her about my journey. That made Suzy's mum interested.*

*I can't do much. I don't have a class and I don't have a lesson to teach. But if I can touch 10 people it will be something. I came back so fired up. It's not difficult to feel that way when all you see is hungry children and basic facilities. But the lack of feedback is a real dampener and it's difficult to keep it going. I want to be able to say to the children 'you made this difference' but it's not that easy. Suzanne at ProjectBuild says the money will help buy uniforms for some of the orphans at the school. But the cheque I sent came back again yesterday and time is lost again.*

*I saw a news story last night and it brought back all the memories. I still can't get over the hunger. I wasn't prepared for that. Each school was just that little bit more shocking. Just when you thought you'd seen it all there was another level you could go down to.*

*At times I've felt quite irritated. It's been very difficult coming back into school and seeing all our children have got and how ungrateful some of them are.. and how they don't appreciate things and . . . how they don't want the opportunity to learn and the children out there did. They were hungry to learn. The children*

*here just don't realise how lucky they are. They don't cook round a cauldron.  
Their ovens aren't 50 years old with the doors hanging off.*

*It's not only the children who don't get it. People ask me if I had a nice holiday.  
There are some similarities I suppose. I've got a lot of pictures and a lot of  
memories. The memories are etched on my mind..... Still it was nice of Kirsty  
to bake that cake.*

## 5.5 Rose's story: Bursting Bubbles

*My bubble burst. It was a very pretty, comfortable bubble and I enjoyed floating around in it. It gave the world a nice tint and I felt safe and secure looking out and floating past.*

*I thought I'd float round South Africa. But the bubble completely burst when I visited King Shaka secondary school and saw the doors hanging off the cookers, the holes in the ground where the science lab used to be and the barbed wire all around the compound. I didn't understand the full impact of the political situation on ordinary people's lives and I just was incredibly naive I think. I'd left behind this lovely little western, almost middle class, background, cosseted from the world and I just didn't come back the same person. Knowledge and understanding can be two uncomfortable friends.*

*And I think what we saw has kind of opened my eyes. I think "well that was South Africa and that was the best of the African countries. What are the rest like?" How awful is it for some people? And may be it's not so awful for some people. Maybe they're still living their type of lives and some of them are not as bad as we think. But I think the vast majority of them have a fairly miserable life and it doesn't seem fair or right.*

*Aids was just a huge issue and I could almost see it spreading before my eyes. I couldn't get my head round how the children were orphaned in such huge numbers. I mean how that happened and how we as human beings have got to do something to stop it spreading. Just have to do it.*

*In terms of what we set out to do: to look at how teachers and adults work together we brought nothing back. But I think we came home with something much deeper and richer for our school. Something it didn't have before. We've been able to communicate to the children our first hand experience, the difficulties that some other children face and they've been able to take that on board and show sympathy and want to do something positive about it. And I've seen some children taking that outside school - fundraising and telling their parents 'this happens and this happens'. I think the children sensed my passion. We had so much to share.*



*Somehow all this has made me more tolerant, less quick to judge, more willing to accept that other people have different priorities and standards. It's just a greater understanding that people live their lives in different ways and they have different things to contend with and their personalities are, well, very different and that's OK because diversity's great. And I think I've probably said those words before but I don't know that I really meant them. But now I mean them.*

*So now my bubble has burst but the upside of that is I feel more connected with the rest of the world. It's more messy but it's more real.*

## 5.6 Diane's Story: Mrs T

*"Aids is a massive problem. I would say 200 of our children were affected by aids last year – someone in the family dying and often the parents. We send home some 50 food parcels a week. Last year 9 of our 10 cleaners died of aids-related illnesses. Why do I stay? Why did I come? Because I want to cultivate the seeds and not just cut the flowers." The headteacher Mrs T beamed at us. The golden, chunky necklaces and bracelets jangling and sparkling in the afternoon sun. Her staff nodding wisely as she held court. One minute shocking us with tales of poverty and starvation, the next inspiring us with stories of fortitude and children who had overcome the odds and won a scholarship to a better school and a better life.*

*No shrinking violet. This lady was one tough cookie. Unashamedly pressing every emotional button she could find.*

*There was a dissonance: the drab room, the understated dress of her colleagues and the flamboyance of a woman dressed for a garden party at Buckingham Palace.*

*When I think back even 15 months later that scene always pops into my head. How many children they had in each class and how everyone was trying really hard. And there was the headteacher bedecked in gold. All those bracelets. Well fair enough if you've got it ... but to be wearing that with all those poor children. I mean it just seemed such a clash to me. Almost decadent amongst such poverty. It didn't feel quite right.*

*Mind you this was a land of extremes. I think someone told us it was 15 years since Nelson Mandela had been freed and it was completely over. I've since reflected on that and thought about England and changes that have taken place since women got the vote or, for that matter, any kind of significant change in social history - well it takes 10s of years. Things just don't change overnight.*

*For all the good intentions nothing had really changed. Things had just shuffled up a bit. I suppose for years one group of people in South Africa had blanked*

*the need or felt that they were nothing to do with the needs of another group. I guess it will take a long time before they all feel like one nation.*

*I always thought I was fairly up to speed with that sort of thing. As a student I was quite politically aware - went on marches and so on. But it's not until you actually witness something you start to grasp its meaning.*

*So what we brought back was a little piece of the world wasn't it? To help the children and the adults, everybody, in their understanding of global issues. And that feels like a big deal. It was a whole person experience. It made us see the world was such a wonderful place with the animals and the culture. And that's rather bizarre when we were immersed in such poverty. How can you have a consistent response to such a world? So it's probably highly fitting that Mrs T rattled her gold chains as she talked about the human suffering*

## 5.7 Olive's story: It's not just a pencil

*Patience was singing and bouncing up and down, waving her arms around. Her wooden leg lifted lightly and then sunk back down on to the wheelchair. The song involved playing different instruments. Patience and her friends had banged drums, whistled through piccolos and were now fiddling imaginary violins. Very little of it was either in tune or in time but the sun was shining and everyone was very enthusiastic.*

*If there's one thing I don't get it's disability. It was the one time I really cried. I don't think it was particularly because it was South Africa – it would have got to me anywhere. I just haven't had much experience of it. It's just that here it was full on. But if someone like Patience ... seeing like these kids in wheelchairs, like kids that couldn't see, kids with legs missing and they were having fun and enjoying themselves and not even thinking about their disability. It's just ... one story .. one thing .. but I went into the music room when they were singing and jumping up .. and even the ones in the wheel chair were trying to jump up. How could they be like that?*

*I just had such a hard time understanding why God would do this. But there was so much love in that school I guess he had to have been there. It took some time to work it through. At the time it seemed so unfair. After we left and got back, instead of writing my journal - it lay on my lap unopened - I just sat and thought. These kids are not feeling the same as me. They're not even sad. They still feel able .. the singing .. the dancing .. they're not letting it wear them down, they're not moaning. It was just beautiful with these kids.*

*I hate the idea of any kind of waste now. Wasting resources, wasting time, wasting life. When these children who had so little could make so much of it. The kids here in England think I've gone mad. 'Don't just tell me you've lost your pencil. You need to find it before you get another one. It's not just a pencil 'You don't know how lucky you are .. not to have to pay for an exercise book. Not to have to pay for your pen or your pencils, you know' I'm totally converted. Even with like .. tinned tomatoes. I hate having to put them in the washing up. I'm like .. 'it's dirty .. it's not going to be recycled' ..but now I go through the*

*stress of washing it up and think 'what am I doing?' So now I even wash out the tins of tomatoes.*

*I've still no patience – I can't sit still for more than 10 seconds. But Patience was a bit of a catalyst in helping me better to understand who I am and what I believe.*

## 5.8 Ann's story: Not black and white

*I was working in a bar in London and we used to get a lot of white South African travellers. I always had to work hard to give them a fair hearing. When apartheid stopped and they kept streaming out of the country I always felt like shouting from the roof tops. 'You should be part of the solution not running from the problems.' I felt very indignant on behalf of those left behind. White flight. And the great white storks flapped into London, into my bar and away from the land that had nurtured them.*

*It was Patience who put me straight. Patience – the black teacher in a township secondary school where the doors hung off the ovens and the science laboratory was a broken cupboard and a hole in the floor. Where the 50 students, many without pens or books, sat on broken benches and sang out the answers to the teacher's questions like a gospel choir. Question and answer, board and chalk, on hot, airless, dusty days drowning out the relentless and invasive noise of the traffic.*

*Patience pointed out that white people were also oppressed and had to cope with censorship. Yes they did live in opulence and surely they could see what was going on. But in fairness there wasn't much they could do. The internal security levels were quite harsh and people were frightened by the black township system.*

*I had a very good conversation with her and it's constantly before me now. I know it was a huge thing that's changed about me. I thought I knew what was just and what was not. Now I'm more tolerant. There's a disappointment really - a realisation that I've been a bit unfair. I can still have my political views and I can still kind of like challenge people but I shouldn't forget that there is another side. Now I can think, "Well, you know, it's dangerous out there." That little boy we met. I'll never forget him. He was like, "We've been robbed loads and my mum and dad can't cope with it any more and we've got to leave".*

*Bitter-sweet just about sums it up. Those libraries with their empty shelves still haunt me. The guilt because we didn't take anything with us to the schools while they wanted to share the little they had with us. How weird it was to go on*

*the luxury of a safari after the poverty of that final school and then more guilt because I enjoyed it so much.*

*I'm making it sound bad and it wasn't. It was a wonderful experience. There were beautiful human beings, beautiful landscape but there was this deficit. And it wasn't, I think, a deficit that we were imposing on them like, 'Oh you poor souls you don't have enough paper'. It wasn't a need that they had identified and I don't think it was a need that I was giving to them. It was just there. A fact that, in a certain world, they would have more to educate their children with. And being blown away by their generosity. This poverty-stricken (but never impoverished) community that wanted to feed us. Perhaps it isn't guilt. Perhaps I just felt overwhelmed by so many people who had so much to complain about and yet ... didn't.*

## 5.9 Tina's Story: Seeing Terry

*I can still see Terry, the little blind boy sitting at that desk tapping away at the keys on his computer, headphones clamped securely to his ears. Just such a happy, happy little boy.*

*Of all the places we went the Open Air school made the biggest impression on me. The mix and level of disability was so much greater than anything we have in our school but the way they encourage independence is just the same. Watching the little blind girl with her white stick all by herself taking her work down to the braille room. It sounds silly to say it, given the circumstances, but these children were so lucky. This was such an oasis. It was just a very sunny, special place.*

*Everything I saw in South Africa had an impact but I think this place meant the most to me because SEN is my professional home and I was constantly comparing it to where I work in England. The stories that went with it too like how they told us that in the early days these open air schools were built because it was thought that children with disabilities did better outside in the fresh air. Beds were pushed out underneath trees. Old diaries say how the monkeys came out of the trees and took the children's fruit and you could just imagine it.*

*My heart went out to those dear albino children with their poor eyesight and sensitive skin. Learning how they are regarded even by their own families. Seen as - I hate using the word but that's what we were told - freaks. These children born to be black, perfectly formed as black children with tight curly hair and facial features that boasted their genetic inheritance and yet, by some trick of nature, white. To think how their families more or less treat them as outcasts. And the lifeline offered by this school. Practical help with the provision of sun lotions to protect their skin and positive affirmation of their worth, refusing to let their poor eyesight limit their possibilities. There was just smiles and laughter everywhere. To see all these children together: some blind; some without limbs; some lying completely flat with neurological conditions and back injuries. And then to hear that some of them won't be returning after the long summer holidays because the families just can't cope with them the way they can in the*



*school. So they develop bedsores and worse and then they don't make it through the neglect back to school.*

*In such a world the Open Air school stood out like a beacon. It was just wonderful. I mean it was a real inspiration. So many of the schools we visited left us feeling depressed at what we'd seen and I suppose in a way the Open Air school might have seemed to some just as depressing given the state - the case of the children there. But for me it was uplifting. It offered such hope.*

#### 5.10 Dinah's story: Waste

*I hate waste in any form – wasted talent, wasted time, wasted energy and wasted opportunity. When I saw the extent of the poverty and the sheer need I felt overwhelmed by it and cross with my ignorance. I was cross with everyone: with the programme organizers; with myself - at my naivety in thinking everything would be OK; with the fact we were taking from these people, these schools, these children when we should have brought chalks, pens, stickers – anything to show we cared. Instead of giving we came to philosophise about the deployment of additional adults in a classroom. Something that was the luxury of a first world country and had no place here.*

*The frustration I felt in South Africa has changed into an uneasiness at how little I feel I have done since I came back: how circumstances and other demands have taken over leaving a niggling guilt that constantly chides me.*

*The sheer enormity of it all is part of the problem. The school, the children, me. We need something concrete – something tangible we can get our teeth into, to say 'we made a difference'. Otherwise it feels too big, too impossible, too unreal. At the moment I am full of good intentions and without focus – just drifting. This inertia saps my energies and diverts me to unimportant but pressing problems that absorb my attention and distract me.*

*Whatever else, South Africa has been life changing. Whether that's because it's going to push me into a different path, not now but sometime in the future, or whether it's because it was such a moving week I don't know. Whatever it is I feel I've got to use that experience and those feelings. I don't know what or when but it will happen.*

*I like to be doing. If I see a need I like to meet it. I was so excited that first few weeks when we came back. We did our assembly, we spoke to the students, we laid out our plans for the exchange. 'Just tell us what you need. We can get everyone behind us .. and then ... nothing... an empty void ... a black hole, a silent reproach.*

*I wanted to open the eyes of our students to another world. Living on the coast we're a bit out on a limb. You know we had some 6th formers who went on a drama trip down to London. It was the first time they had been to London. Sixth formers. That felt quite shocking. They'd never been on the underground. So I think to open their eyes to this new culture is like offering a key to a magic box. I wanted to share with them. I wanted to say 'look at what these children have and look at what they do and what they need'. So yes I do feel disappointed because I haven't done what I set out to do, because it's hanging there, because it's such an opportunity and if we waste it then I will feel eternally guilty.*

5.11 Fiona's Story: Blending Time

*Jog ....Jog.....Jog*

*The owl has moved to a different tree today. It is 5.30 am, a beautiful, calm, still, July morning. The sun hurls her first rays across the golden corn on one side of me and the remnants of the early morning mist hang over the distant fields on the other.*

*I haven't seen the owl here before. He stares down at me. Those big round eyes fixed steadily on mine. He flies off to the next telegraph pole and the eyes fix on me again. Just as I reach him he flies to the next and the game continues for a while until he gets bored and takes off over the sun flooded wheat into the distance.*

*Something familiar in a different place.*

*Jog ...Jog.... Jog*

*I'm getting to the point of the run that always reminds me of the reserve in South Africa where we stayed before visiting the Anglo-Zulu battle fields. The empty road, the slight inclines and slopes, the absence of people or any sign of the usual flotsam and jetsam that hints of human life. The landscape green and cool, sparsely populated with trees.*

*Jog.... Jog.....Jog.*

*Turning the corner and running past a group of giraffes.*

*Jog ... Jog ... Jog*

*Round another corner, a herd of impala wander across the road.*

*Jog... Jog ... Jog*

*A wildebeest emerges stage left.*

*There are no giraffes, impalas or wildebeest here, possibly the odd hare. But still... Every time I turn the corner the landscape takes me back and I feel the old excitement and nervous anticipation. Memory plays funny tricks. Blending the past with the present, drawing out feelings and images that distort and reform over time.*

*Jog.... Jog... Jog*

*This scenery is so familiar to me now, and yet constantly changes its colour and climate with the seasons and the time of day.*

*Something familiar in a different landscape.*

*Over the last few years I've gradually increased the distance I run. And I've got bolder and more confident in my capacity to handle what life throws at me.*

*The running has been the one constant in the tragedy and joy of my life. It has been the necklace onto which the incidents that mark out my existence, like beads, have been threaded. Each bead is different, bringing new patterns and texture so that the whole changes constantly, a kaleidoscope of shimmering colours. The polyvocal harmonies make it hard to distinguish one note from another and yet each bead has its own form, its own beauty.*

*South Africa wove a magic spell that captivated me. I forgot to stand back and look at its place in my life as a whole. My South African bead became, for a while, an obsession, a source of guilt, a complete focus. I have weighed myself against the difference I have made to the lives of the people I left behind there and, in my own eyes, I have been found wanting. A teaspoon of salt in the Indian Ocean.*

*Jog ...Jog... Jog*

*Over 4 years I am fitter but each day feels hard. Only when I step back can I see the progress I have made. Only when I look at the beaded necklace and not at the individual beads do I see the blends, the nuances, the shapes of other*

*possibilities – do I realise that I have made a difference. Not out there in South Africa but in me and in the relationships and the possibilities I have carved out here. Another pattern has emerged, silent, unannounced, seen initially only obliquely. But once seen - so obvious that I marvel at my own blindness.*

*The next time I run the owl has moved on.*

*Like me.*

*Jog.... Jog.... Jog.*

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## 6.0 Chapter Six: Analysing the data

This chapter draws on both the analytical studies from the previous chapter and the original data to support a typology of learning at surface, deep and profound levels. It is also in this chapter that I detail the model I have developed tracing the movement from sensation to learning. Included here are specific examples of deep learning experiences (many of which emerged over time and often unexpectedly) and evidence to support the different stages of the model. I refer to literature on identity, organisational culture and transition because it has helped me think about the nature of learning and the learning process. I also look briefly at how the expressed thoughts of the participants may reflect the internalised discourse of an audit culture.

In addition to a conceptual model this chapter contains verbatim quotations from the individual interviews and my own commentary combining the perspective of research participant with that of researcher.

### 6.1 What is significant?

My original research focus (see Appendix One) was:

*To investigate the conditions under which the learning resulting from a significant continuing professional development experience can be sustained.*

I had assumed from the outset that this TIPD experience would be *significant* for everyone and that the more significant (Oxford English Dictionary '*noteworthy*') an experience the more impact it would have on behaviour and thinking. The historical antecedents, the culture, the climate of South Africa were all so different to our own that such assumptions seemed reasonable. The term, however, is relative and not absolute and I felt it was important to check what the research participants understood by the word '*significant*' and whether they regarded the South African experience in that light.

As a group, we variously defined the term as:

*"life changing,"*

*"staying with you for the rest of your life,"*

*“changes my path”,*  
*“something that you had to put quite a lot of thought into and think about afterwards”,*  
*“something that will change my views on something .. the way I look at something and therefore the way I deliver something.”,*  
*“something important”,*  
*“different”,*  
*“something has happened. You no longer see things in quite the same way”.*  
*(From interviews with participants in research 2008-2009)*

All of us agreed that the South African visit met our respective criteria and that the experience was significant. Our definitions also indicated that the impact of such an experience would lead to some kind of change.

*“Significant has got to be something that .. that matters and changes you .. if you're talking about [something] significant to somebody I suppose something that matters a lot to them, something that's going to change them. So yes, that was undoubtedly one of the most significant parts/periods in my life.” (from interview with Dinah (March 2009)*

The indicators of ‘*significance*’ were to be found in the sharp memories and the vivid images that we could recall more than a year later. The elements we labelled as ‘*significant*’ were different for all of us and included influence on our thinking, our approach to life, our conversations with others and our heightened sensitivity to issues such as poverty, waste, geography and politics. Perhaps unsurprisingly this was also where we felt our learning was greatest.

## 6.2 Examples of Surface, Deep and Profound Learning

The analytical studies in Chapter Five provide some useful examples of the ideas and learning that individuals took from the South African experience.

Initially Tina (*Seeing Terry*) and her colleague Dinah (a teacher), were hopeful of establishing links with one of the secondary schools we had visited in South Africa. However this was not realised. Tina also sensed that as a teaching assistant she had limited opportunities to make a difference across the school.



However by our meeting in February 2009, Tina had found a way of making a difference that wasn't dependent on others.

TL From "Notes in preparation for our discussion: February 2009"

*One project last year was Victorian Schools.... The similarity to the poor rural schools in South Africa struck me immediately. Especially the picture one girl had found of inside a Victorian classroom – showing a blackboard with repetition of sentences chalked on it, an abacus, old wooden desk and a bare floor. Almost a replica of a photo I had taken of inside a South African classroom. A didactic form of teaching was also used in both. This led me to compiling a set of my own photos of South African schools to study with my group. We discussed in detail what they noticed in each photo and they soon made their own links to Victorian schools. I told them how many South African children walk miles to their rural schools, education being such a privilege. I told them so much more about the children's lives and why food schemes are needed. They were so interested and I felt so confident in sharing this experience with them from life.*

In Chapter 2.7 pp40-41 I looked at definitions of deep and profound learning. Deep Learning is a process by which connections are made that result in cognitive, behavioural or attitudinal change and is about developing insight based on understanding. Profound learning extends this and is to do with intuitive understanding and personal transformation. In the example above Tina has made links between past and present and found a way to broaden her students' understanding of the current world as well as the Victorian age. Moreover the experience of South Africa has given her confidence to facilitate an exploration of new ideas and thinking rather than deliver a lecture. She talks of '*sharing an experience*' and encouraging the students to draw comparisons and develop insight themselves. This example illustrates how Tina has acquired knowledge (surface learning), made new links (deep learning) and that the experience itself had resulted in a confidence to work in a new way (profound learning)

It would have been impossible to predict the many ways in which this visit might impact on Tina. The example she gave of the way in which she was able to use the experience to inform the session she did on Victorian schools came out of

the blue a year after the visit itself. It emerged unexpectedly as she waited patiently for the looked for links with Eagle Secondary School to be realised. Perhaps the hallmark of a '*significant learning experience*' is that the mind continues to make links and connections or stimulates thoughts and ideas without conscious effort long after the original event. This is the exciting and frustrating nature of deep and profound learning. It will not be bound by learning objectives or timeframes. It has a will of its own and it will out. It will take a form whose origin we may not recognise either at the time – perhaps ever. We have to trust both that it will happen and that it will be a positive, life affirming outcome. In a world that wants more certainty this is an uncomfortable proposition.

For Rachel (*Knowing tigers definitely weren't in Africa*) the visit reminded her that life is messy and the important thing is not the answers we give but the questions we stimulate. She also replicates the conditions for deep learning in her classroom by encouraging questions and trusting to the process.

Interview with Rachel (Nov 2008)

*"This is the journey I've been on .. originally to teach the children it would be Handa Surprise [a story about an African girl]... then I went on the trip and it was then.. you know.. there's a hell of a lot more to Africa than that.. so it was a big topic of Africa .. and now it's even wider than that .. it's just getting them thinking every day so that their everyday play should be picking up a pair of chopsticks or knowing that the pizza they're going to have for dinner today came from Italy ... we might have a little interest table .. just to spark off their interest and get them to say, 'oh – what's that for?' or 'where's that come from?'*

This example provides a further useful illustration of the movement to deep and ultimately profound learning. Rachel has taken what has become a habit and re-visited it in the context of her experiences. The result is ultimately a complete re-design. She does not claim new knowledge per se but a personal understanding of the benefit of a particular way of working. Rachel is a high calibre, reflective practitioner in her own right and has key practitioner status for the Early Years Foundation Stage in the LA. Even so, the South African visit gave her the confidence to revisit standard resources, to question their value and how best they might be used. She thought again about what she was trying

to achieve and why. Her knowledge, understanding and empathy with the world which she and children were exploring gave her the freedom to do different and the self belief that doing differently can often be better.

There were many other examples of surface, deep and profound learning resulting from the South African TIPD visit. Table 3 below illustrates some of these. They are drawn from the interviews, learning journals and group discussions.

TABLE 3: Learning outcomes

<b>Name</b>	<b>Surface</b>	<b>Deep</b>	<b>Profound</b>
<b>May</b>	History of South African education, statistics on crime, aids, poverty.	Understanding the excitement, hope and belief in education as a way to a better life.	Empathy: human connection with poverty and suffering in a world far distant from our own
<b>Diane</b>	Colours, patterns, music, textiles, wildlife	Applying the inspiration of S Africa across the curriculum	Working to live rather than living to work.
<b>Rachel</b>	Wildlife Geography Distances Differences in and between people	Questioning resources designed to promote diversity. Do they promote stereotypes?	Changes in professional practice: the value of asking questions, not just giving answers.  Good practice is not about resources it's about understanding pedagogy.
<b>Olive</b>	Political realities Educational system pre and post-apartheid	Why re-cycling is so important. How distance creates stereotypes about Africa – the people, the countries, the cultures.	Empathy: How it must have felt to be black during Apartheid years.
<b>Ann</b>	Wildlife in Africa Educational systems The reality of pedagogical choices given numbers, capacity and resources	The difference that individuals can make: demonstrations and protests by individuals in England really did have an impact on outcomes in South Africa.	Greater understanding of complexity and greater tolerance of personal choice

<b>Name</b>	<b>Surface</b>	<b>Deep</b>	<b>Profound</b>
<b>Dinah</b>	The levels of poverty in South Africa and their impact on educational resourcing	The limited global awareness and aspirations of so many of the students in her school	Awakening social conscience. Understanding the meaning of words such as poverty and the hope education brings. Raising awareness of future possibilities (eg VSO) and the contribution that can be made.
<b>Tina</b>	The 'Open Air' nature of Special Schools The proximity of first and third world living conditions	The complacency of 'plenty' in England compared to an appreciation of 'little in South Africa	Greater patience, tolerance and perspective when meeting an obstacle. Energies into overcoming problem rather than bemoaning it.
<b>Hannah</b>	Drumming and musicianship	The impact of poverty, the value of spiritual richness and the legacy of apartheid	The role that educators play in supporting the democratic process and that education plays in promoting life chances
<b>Rose</b>	Colours, patterns and textures in African tribal life	Greater awareness of the real and human cost of apartheid	Less fear of failure, more willing to take risk.
<b>Fiona</b>	Mandela Soweto Riots District 6 Apartheid	Disability or Differingly Abled – how important language is in shaping perception	My role as an enabler

### 6.3 Identity, self knowledge and profound learning

In the previous section I described the learning that Tina and Rachel experienced as a result of the South African visit. These work-related examples had an emotional depth to them that resulted from making connections and doing differently. Using the surface/deep/profound learning typology developed by Marton and Säljö (1976) and extended by West-Burnham and Coates (2005) I would categorise these experiences as profound learning because of their potential for personal transformation. Profound learning comes from seeing ourselves and the world in new ways and therefore has the potential to change our sense of identity.

Since the South African visit in 2007 many of Team Durban have experienced changes. For some it has been a new role at work, a different job or work challenge; others have taken on more responsibility as caregivers where a member of the family has become ill or become patients themselves. Two research participants have become mothers. Some of the group felt their 'character' had changed as evidenced by changes in their behaviours, interests, practices or attitudes. For some it was a greater tolerance (Rose, Ann, Tina), others recycled more (Ann, Olive, Rachel); or were more politicised (Hannah, Diane, Fiona, Rose).

Interview with Rose (Bursting Bubbles) in January 2009

*Yeah .. black and white.. I'm much more grey now. Much more ...*

*.... It's just a greater understanding that people live their lives in different ways and they have different things to contend with and their personalities are .. very different and that's OK.*

Gaining confidence was mentioned by almost all of the participants. It manifested itself in different ways including surviving and even thriving in unfamiliar territory

Interview with Hannah (Toby) in November 2008

*"It just empowered me in such a way to actually believe in myself as a professional... it gave me the absolute confidence to know I could go down and teach reception" [moving from Year 4 to reception class]*

and was often noticed by others.

Interview with Hannah's headteacher in November 2008

*One of the big differences is that Hannah, before she went, always gave the impression to everybody that she was free and easy .. But actually I knew her .. that she was giving the impression to others to .. hide the sort of feelings she was feeling inside. And she wasn't feeling like that at all.. she was actually going through hell inside but she didn't want to admit to that. ... when she came back there was a freedom that was much better ... I think the parameters are higher now so her comfort zone is higher so she .. to be out of her comfort zone she'd have to go further.*

The connections between visiting South Africa and believing you could teach a different age group are not direct. For Hannah they came in part because she was so inspired by the people we met and the adversity they daily struggled with.

Interview with Hannah in November 2009

*"the Eagle secondary school .. and he said you know .. if hope .. if hope um was dollars I'd be a millionaire or something .. and that just, at the time, just absolutely knocked me for 6 and .. there's a wonderful .. you know ... sort of concept really."*

Such a response was entirely personal and the impact (in this case Hannah's enhanced self confidence) could not have been predicted in advance. Yet its value as an outcome seems, to me, much greater than acquisition of knowledge or technique which might have been anticipated.

All of the research participants believed the experiences, sights and sounds of South Africa had, to some extent, transformed them as the stories in Chapter 5 evidence. It is as if we now see the world with different eyes. It has taken on a different shade and we can never turn the clock back and see the world as we used to see it.

Brown (1998) writes of 'axis' shaking experiences such as parenthood and the discovery of a significant health problem. For many of the research participants including myself the South African experience was comparable.

Interview with Dinah in March 2009

*FD: so what would that go up along side. Other significant experiences for you.*

*DS: I suppose it's a big thing is the children, having the children. Um becoming a teacher .. that was a big.. um big moments as well because that took a lot .. a lot of ..effort obviously. That would be up there with things like .. yeah .. that is as much ... it sounds .. I don't want it to sound corny because that's not what I mean but it is .. that you know that is such a branded moment. I mean that .. you said .. you can remember the key things of your life and they were some of mine and Africa would be up there alongside it.*

All of the research participants indicated in their learning journals and interviews (see Chapters 5.2 – 5.11) how the South African 'big moment' resulted in a re-assessment of values and beliefs and touched on their sense of self.

Dictionary.com (2010) defines identity as "*the sense of self, providing sameness and continuity in personality over time*". This suggests identity is fixed or at least stable, consistent and slow to change. Richardson (2000), as we saw in Chapter 5.1 (p120) offers another perspective:

*"Because individuals are subject to multiple and competing discourses in many realms, their subjectivity is shifting and contradictory, not stable, fixed, rigid"* (p929)

What then is identity? Is it stable or continuously changing? Does it reflect an inner core or essence? To what extent is identity pre-determined and/or changed by factors over which the individual has no control?

Sarup (1996) describes identity as a kaleidoscope the patterns of which continually change. He offers a post-structuralist view of the individual as composed of a set of multiple and contradictory subject positions. If we all have many subject positions how can we have an experience of continuity?



*“Identity, in my view, may perhaps be best seen as a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings blend and clash. These writings consist of many quotations from the innumerable centres of culture, ideological state apparatus and practices: parents, family, schools, the workplace, the media, the political parties, the state.” (p24)*

Post-modernism insists on pluralism, accepts ephemerality, fragmentation and discontinuity. Sarup (1996), referring to Foucault, suggests (like Richardson above) there are no meta-narratives, no inner core or truth to be discovered. The focus is on discourse analysis and textual play: everything is fashioned and re-fashioned. As such it contrasts with a modernist perspective where despite an acceptance of multiple perspectives and relativism there was still a belief in a unified though complex underlying reality.

*“In his later work Foucault conceives of the self as constituted through practices or techniques which are determined by the social context but are mediated through an active process of self fashioning by the individual ... the reinvention of the self is primarily an aesthetic experience .. the principal aim of which is to make one’s life a work of art.” (p88)*

I welcome the emphasis on individual difference and complexity that a post-modernist approach highlights. In my research, I do accept that each person’s South African story is the story of the moment they are telling it. As the influences around them change, so too does the way they tell the tale and the elements they choose to highlight. The stories are real and true to the participants then and there but may resonate less over time as other preoccupations arise. The presentation of the self therefore can be regarded as ephemeral and constantly changing. Given this, can the content of these stories make any contribution to our understanding of our selves as social beings?

I do accept that we can never know ourselves fully and that the aspect of self that is present to me today may be different from the one that I catch sight of tomorrow. This is in part because humans are complex and every day we respond to different stimuli that touch different aspects of self. Additionally, as

Freud's work on the unconscious (eg 1910) shows, there are parts of us we will never fully or directly know. In my professional world we often use the image of an iceberg as a metaphor that creates a distinction between observable behaviour and the unseen drivers of those behaviours. That which is visible is only a fraction of the whole. The deeper we go the more entrenched, powerful and obscure are the elements of our make up.

Lacan agrees with Freud that *"the unconscious undermines the subject from any position of certainty"* (in Rose 1987 p52). He suggests that identity can only become visible through language and is a fiction. Lacan's '*mirror*' (a concept he introduced in the 1930s) freezes an image of an individual and provides a coherent identity. However the image is partial and a fiction. So too language can give a sense of wholeness that actually conceals infinite fragmentations. Lacan suggests that the self is unknowable and that the idea of a coherent identity is an illusion. I may not disagree but I would ask whether our inability to articulate our identity fully means we have no inner, stable core or simply that we cannot reach it.

My personal definition of identity has to do with values: what I believe and how this manifests itself in my behaviour and relations with others. For me the process of describing South Africa and its impact enabled the research participants to increase their self awareness and to think through how their value base had changed as a consequence of that experience.

I accept the idea of multiple subject positions and that we can only achieve a partial understanding of ourselves. However I believe identity *"exist[s] independently of the narratives which speak it"* (Sarup 1996 p24). Our sense of self changes but it does so over time. It is a gradual process.

I see identity as an outcome of the interaction of biological self with environmental, political, historical and ideological influences. It is moulded by past experiences and there are causal links or connectivity between aspects of the past and present. I believe our identity changes over time but not all aspects of self change simultaneously. There remains what might be regarded as a recognisable core which gives the impression of stability and continuity. I would also suggest that character traits (or aspects of identity) once they have taken

hold become buried deep and can infuse our way of thinking and being in ways that make complete and sustainable changes in self, not impossible, but difficult to achieve. I believe that our identity manifests itself to others through our behaviour. We learn to respond, at times almost automatically, in ways that reflect our value systems. A change in identity would require a change in those habits of behaviour. Under stress empirical evidence suggests that people often return to type: a reflection of how deeply rooted some of our convictions are.

This is why for me identity is not completely fluid. There are some consistencies in the way that we respond to situations that indicate a stable value base.

It was through reading and discussion with the research participants that I became increasingly aware of the way that identity or self concept takes shape within a complex web of influences. Much of the literature on identity suggests that, whether stable or continually changing, it is shaped by external influences over which we have little control. These external influences include socialisation (role theory); ideology (Althusser's state apparatuses (1971)); language as mediated through the institutions of family, school, workplace (discourse theory (Foucault 1972)) or through the unconscious (Freud (1910), Lacan (in Rose 2000)).

Honess and Yardley (1987) review and add to the debate. They note that the traditional psychodynamic concept of self as biologically determined and individualistic is challenged by alternative perspectives that look at cultural, systemic and intersubjective conceptualisations of identity recognising the primary importance of the care giver and significant others. Such emphasis is closer to developmental, constructivist psychological approaches and sociological perspectives. However influence and pre-determination are not the same. Empirical evidence (including the reactions of the South African TIPD research participants to common stimuli) suggests a filtering of such influences. Their impact on our sense of identity and our resultant behaviour is difficult, if not impossible, to predict. Perhaps it is this awareness of our different responses which gives us a sense of freedom and choice.

Indeed it may be as Sarup suggests (1996 p24) that our freedom comes in the way we move between, negotiate or assimilate those different influences.

*“Our identities are multiple and mobile. Though the process of change dissolves the fixed, stable, homogeneous identities of the past it also opens the possibility of new articulations – the construction of new identities, the production of new subjects.” (Sarup 1996 p57)*

So new stimulus, experiences, adventures that result in profound learning offer the possibility for reinvention of self.

Based on observation and empirical experience I believe our identity or value base comes about as a result of inherited pre-disposition fused with familial, community, cultural and political messages about values and behaviours (nature via nurture). However, regardless of whether our values are a product of nature via nurture, inherited pre-disposition only or through the internalisation of dominant discourses, they tend to be slow to change. They allow others to know and esteem us and enable us to predict how we will react in given circumstances. This stable self allows us to experience change in self. We could have no sense of change if we were not aware that what we feel now or how we behave is other from how we used to be

Having taken the view that our identity is based on some relatively stable value base and that we do have some freedom to re-visit those values, I looked at how the descriptions of change in self provided by the research participants might be categorised.

Rossan (1987) identifies 3 main components of identity:

- a. sub identities or roles (wife, mother, carpenter – an individual may have many of these)
- b. generalised traits, characteristics or attributes (eg I am generally positive, good with my hands)
- c. core or fundamental sense of self (eg I am a woman, I am Roman Catholic)

Gecas and Mortimer (1987) use different categories but essentially the same dimensions: role identity; character identity (disposition and attributes) and existential identity (that sense of uniqueness or biographical self).

We all have a number of roles or sub identities in life (eg worker, mother, sister, band member) and the importance of these sub identities depends on the amount of time that we spend in each role and the network of social interactions that these roles bring. This can change over time and consequently the respective importance of different roles can change. For example the role of mother will transcend that of worker. The more salient a sub identity the more likely it will influence behaviour. In the quotation from Dinah (above) she identifies some of the roles which have impacted most on her life. The interviews and learning journal data indicate that South Africa became a catalyst for changes in all 3 of the areas identified by Rossan. This in turn helps to explain why so many of us felt that who we were or what we were (our sense of identity) had also changed.

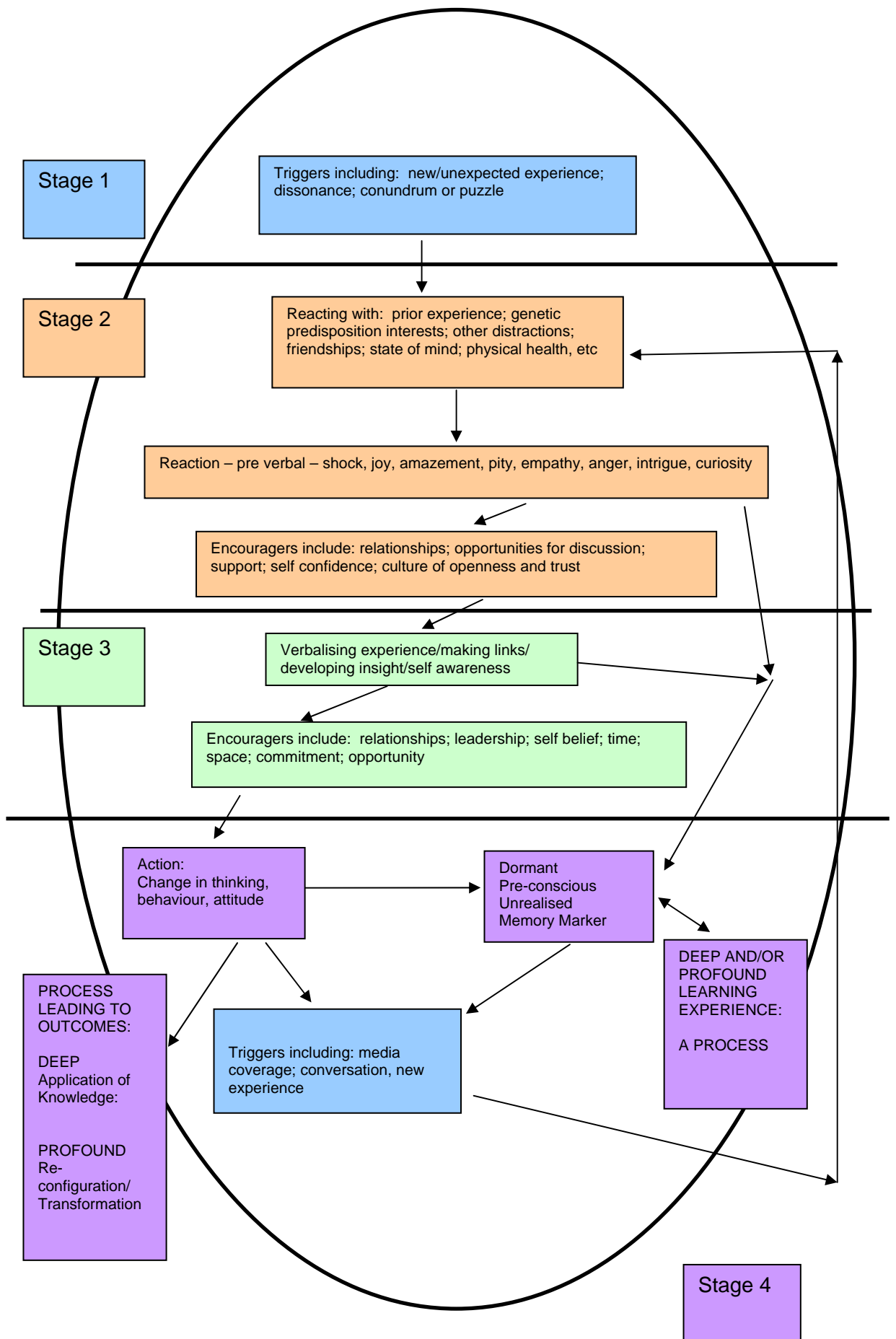
#### 6.4 Developing the model: stimulus to deep and profound learning

In Chapter 1.5 (p21) I referred to a model I had developed which captures the key stages in the movement from stimulus to deep or profound learning. In this section I describe the model in more detail. It was created through an analysis of the research participants' experiences and in the section following I have provided two examples to show how the model was developed.

Going to South Africa was like entering an Aladdin's cave. I was overwhelmed by the images and information before me. I was struck by the poverty and by the inequalities I witnessed and was motivated to raise awareness of the post-apartheid situation; make links between areas in my LA and South Africa and raise funds. But there were many other impressions and ideas I lighted on which, temporarily at least, fell by the wayside. Back home I still find, on occasion, that something re-lights the touch paper of remembrance. It might be a news item, a photograph, a conversation, an opportunity or some artefact such as a child's work and I find myself acting, thinking or doing differently as a result. The model I developed offers an explanation of why and how this occurs.

It was created after talking to the other research participants, transcribing and coding their interviews and then re-integrating the key memories into stories. I realised that although the interests were different, the process whereby ideas turned into conversations and action seemed to have some common features. It was on the basis of this that I developed the first draft of the model (Fig 3 see below) some 20 months after our visit.

FIG 3



I sent an email with the model to all of the 9 research participants asking for feedback. I would have preferred a face to face meeting but this proved not to be possible. I thought I would get little if any reaction to my ideas and that the framework and timescales would be too far removed from the actual experience to be of any interest. So I was delighted to get a response within a few days of sending the email from one of the research participants confirming and building on some of my ideas.

E-mail extract from Rachel on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2009

*Hi Fiona,*

*I have read through your email and attachment twice, once to digest, and once more to reflect.*

*I am trying to think of some insightful comment or observation that will help you with your thesis and the development of your theory.... but.... everytime I read it, I simply agree with everything you say.*

*I like how the model you have created explores the way learning can be surface level as well as becoming engrained in us.*

*What kept popping into my mind as I read, was, could this model be used and applied to children in my setting and their learning? Also I am fascinated at the moment with XXX and her learning, and I am also trying to apply it to her learning.... so when children learn something as they play it is maybe learnt at a deeper level than when they are simply talked at.*

*Anyway, I know you always like our honest reactions to things, so there you go.*

The process outlined in Fig 3 was based on the related experience of Team Durban, a group of female adults from a particular professional world. Whether the model can apply to other individuals or groups (eg children, young people, male adults) would need further investigation. The model suggests that to move from experience and reaction into deep learning requires the articulation of that experience – at the very least the movement from a pre-conscious to a

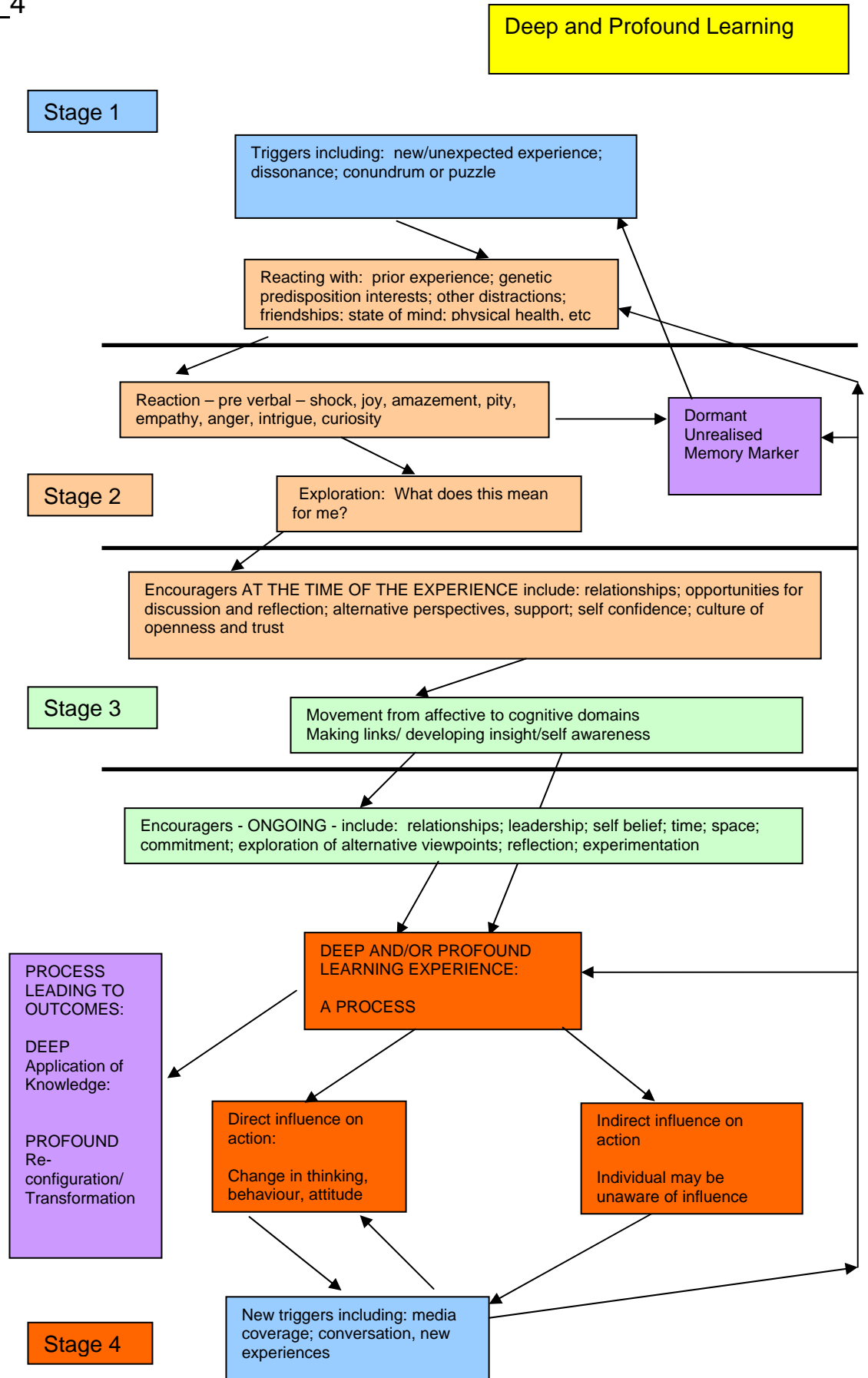


conscious awareness. Rachel (see above) questions how the model might relate to young children who have not yet learned how to verbalise their experiences and yet are constantly making connections and developing awareness of self and others. The concept of play as another way of moving from pre-conscious to conscious awareness is a very interesting one.

Following discussions with my supervisor I began to feel something else was missing from the model I had developed. It seemed from my own experience and that of the other participants (as illustrated in their stories) that there were times when there was 'cognitive processing' and action or changes in one's sense of identity but these were only indirectly linked to visiting South Africa. The model needed to be able to reflect this important dimension as well.

The consequence of these discussions was a revision to the model (see [Fig 4](#) on p162).

FIG 4



In Fig 4 I have removed any expectation that experience be verbalised. In this model the focus is on moving from the emotional to the cognitive domain. This allowed me to encapsulate the idea that any activity – reflection, discussion, play – could be the catalyst that moved a sensation into the domain of learning.

I also included the concept of influencing as a potential outcome of a deep or profound learning process. So for example my feelings about my work-life balance are attributable to many experiences which include the reflections I made on my values and priorities when in South Africa. This was an indirect outcome but nevertheless it did impact (and arguably had a greater impact) on my feelings and my sense of self.

I give below a brief outline of the 4 stages of the revised framework. In the section following I trace the model through the experiences of two of the research participants. I then further illustrate and evidence aspects of each stage using data collected throughout the research period. The key to the framework is that it is flexible. Although the process can be conceptualised the starting point and the actual nature of the learning will be entirely dependent on the initial trigger and the mix and strength of influences – environmental, genetic, social, economic and cultural – on the individual.

The 4-stage framework starts with a trigger(s) or stimulus(i). The nature of that initial experience is not prescribed but it is likely to be more impactful when it is new or unexpected.

Stage 2 begins when the individual reacts to that experience. The process may stop at this reaction. This does not mean that it disappears. The model suggests that the experience and the reaction to it may lay down a memory marker which can be re-triggered at a later stage. Alternatively the individual may begin to consider and to make sense of their experiences. This is more likely to happen if the right conditions or '*encouragers*' exist.

Stage 3 is when new insight is developed and is the point at which an event translates into deep or profound learning.

Stage 4 shows how that learning may lead directly and consciously to action or it may mesh with a range of other factors and exert an influence of which the individual may or may not be aware. This is not the same as the memory markers in Stage 2 because the individual has moved from an emotional to a cognitive plane in their relationship with the experience. The experience has influenced their behaviour and, on reflection, they will be likely to be able to explain and trace that behaviour to the original influences.

The model helps explain why some deep learning experiences have such an overt and observable impact while other opportunities are not realised. It suggests the importance of reinforcing activity including time for reflection, serendipity and our own self belief in moving from sensation to learning and from learning to performance or action.

The model separates emotional reaction from deep learning. An emotional reaction to an experience can open a door to the possibility of deep learning. It takes us to the brink but we need to translate feelings into a language – words, patterns - that we can relate to. Otherwise all that may remain is a sense of uneasiness. An itch we just can't quite reach.

I make a distinction between deep learning as a process I engage with and deep learning as an outcome - some kind of observable change in behaviour – perhaps a change in practice or approach resulting from a particular insight. I may experience the first kind without it necessarily leading to the second. However I do not believe deep learning outcomes transcend time. My learning, be it in the sphere of politics, teaching, fundraising or environmental awareness, may result in action that has value to myself and others. However I cannot assume that this action will always be of use. If I repeat the activity without thinking through the reasons why, it may lose value. When I begin to apply formulae regardless of context I am in danger of moving without realising it from a position of deep or profound learning based on understanding to rote or surface learning. Deep/Profound learning is alive and of the moment. In my interview with Rachel she explained how she felt over time the use of the resource '*Handa Surprise*' (See Section 6.2 p146) had become a way of ticking a box that showed both Africa and diversity had been covered. Revisiting the resource in the light of her deeper understanding of issues of diversity changed

the way she delivered her sessions and provided the children in her charge with a more exciting and meaningful learning experience.

#### 6.5 Creating the model: drawing on the evidence

Each of the analytical studies in Chapter 5 provides an example of how the participants interacted with a particular experience and the learning they drew from it. In showing how the model (Fig 4) was created I have chosen to focus on the stories of Ann (Not Black and White) and Hannah (Toby). I could have used any of the 10 studies since it was at the point of analysing the transcripts in order to write the stories that I started to recognise the common features that became the basis of that model (see Appendix 4).

#### 6.6 Creating The Model: Ann's experience

It was on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of our stay in South Africa that we visited King Shaka secondary school. By that time we had visited a number of schools – formerly white, Indian and Black – and seen an increasing level of poverty. We had heard from educationalists and witnessed at first hand the ongoing division between rich and poor that still largely appeared to correlate with race. King Shaka (an exclusively black school) seemed to reach new depths of poverty. The library was a series of empty shelves. There was no science laboratory just some holes in the ground where equipment had once been. The old cookers in the home economics room had doors hanging off them. According to our guide, the teachers at the school and the evidence of our own eyes the surrounding community had major social and economic problems with massive unemployment, high levels of crime and high rates of mortality. For Ann these triggers or stimuli (Stage 1 in the Model) reinforced her already keen sense that one group of people (whites) had done little or nothing to stand up against the injustices of a particular regime and that when the regime changed they left rather be part of a solution (Stage 1 triggers reacting with prior knowledge/opinion). This feeling marks the opening to her story '*Not black and white*'. For Ann these images at King Shaka had resulted in a greater sense of injustice and inequality. (Stage 2 reaction).

Interview with Olive and Ann (Jan 2009)

*.. I have to confess that I was not very positive about .. like .. South Africa and I .. I think .. that previously I might even have argued .. not in a mean way .. but*

*just sort of may be to level things out that everybody ...you know nobody did seem to be clear about what had happened ,... in sort of apartheid .. So I always found myself trying to be that level .. going 'no well come on now let's [look at] things from a different perspective' And in the end I think I got quite sort of almost the other way.. quite biased and .. and possibly .. in a different context became quite unfair to a group of people*

Ann was able to articulate and explore her feelings with Patience – one of the teachers at King Shaka. As a result of this conversation she began to re-frame her ideas. Patience became for Ann a 'Stage 2 encourager' (See Fig 4 Model). She was offering space and challenge to enable Ann to re-visit the world of apartheid from the perspective of an insider.

*Patience at .. at King Shaka .. that school .. she pointed out that white people were very much oppressed and um .. that they had censorship and that even though .. despite sort of obviously she said that there is issues because they lived in opulence and they had .. you know .. there were white communities that surely could see .. that .. that there was stuff going on .. `but she said in all fairness there wasn't really a lot .. the .. the regime was a regime ...the secu .. the internal security levels were quite harsh and people would have been frightened by the .. the black town ..township system. So .. and I kind of already knew that and .. she said that .. she .you know .. she acknowledged that white flight was an issue .. that white people are leaving now things weren't so good and whatever ... was an issue ... but she said also she could kind of challenge that so .. I had a very good conversation with her that's allowed .. to .. that's constantly before me now ..*

As a result of that conversation, Ann was able to process what she saw and heard slightly differently. Her initial emotional reaction became a mature consideration of the issues and an acknowledgement of the multiple pressures and fears facing all South Africans at the time of change. In the model this movement from the affective to cognitive domains occurs in Stage 3. Ann begins to develop a deeper insight and understanding of the complexities of post-apartheid South Africa

*AW: ..... yeah .. that people have children, they're frightened ... even if we're .. if I'm looking at what I call 'white flight' which is a negative term for white people leaving South Africa now the regime isn't favourable to them. Actually I think well.. you know .. it's dangerous out there. That little boy .. I'll never forget him.. He was like we've been robbed loads and ... my mum and dad can't cope with it any more and we've got to leave. And ..and I .. I.. you know .. people didn't think about this ... appreciate it .. I mean you can't like .. sort of be negative about people just because they didn't think .. 20 .. 30 years ahead. So I suppose that's changed.*

The fact that Ann chose to share this particular experience with me some 15 months after the visit to South Africa is an indication of the significance of that conversation with Patience. Furthermore it was not just the way that she had thought about the South African situation that had changed. There was also a greater general awareness that things are not always as they seem and an acknowledgement that people's actions may not always be noble but they are often understandable.

*AW: I know that's a huge thing that's changed about me ... I was very much like ..*

*FD: Black and white sort of thing..*

*AW: ..impatient with the South Africans for leaving and coming back here and .. and as much as I developed .. I worked in a bar where we had a lot of South African travellers and young people come in and .. and .. and I've had friends that are South African .. white friends .. um ..I still did really have ... I started from very ... you know ... they may be had to work a lot harder um .. to get ..um .. me to see that .. that they sort of had a different context to them.*

*FD: But you feel more tolerant now?*

*AW: Yeah.. hugely and more aware that it's not .. well I'm... I'm that kind of person so I suppose I'd .. I've .. there's a disappointment really .. a realisation that I haven't can still kind of like challenge people and their political views but I shouldn't assume...*

There has been an ongoing reflection and a series of further encouragers since returning to England. I label these as Stage 3 encouragers in the Model. For Ann they included the conversations she has had with Olive and others, the books she has bought and read, the films she has chosen to see because of the link with South Africa and even the discussion with myself that January 2009. All of these have sustained, embedded and developed her thinking since.

*AW: This is it isn't it .. and that's what I think .. that's why I came away from it with a different.. Because like you say though .. I don't think anyone would be able to see it ...but .. it's really helpful doing this isn't it.. because you think .. 'wow' I have .. I have changed.*

In Chapter 2.7 p41 I suggested that deep learning involved the ability to reflect. Profound learning extends deep learning. It involves developing personal theories and undergoing personal transformation. Using this definition the evidence indicates that Ann has engaged in profound learning which has directly and indirectly influenced her thinking, her attitude towards others and even her conversations (Stage 4 of the model). In the quotation above Ann also indicates how sometimes these changes are relatively subtle and how it is only as a result of pausing to take stock that she has become aware of them and how they have impacted on her.

#### 6.7 Creating the Model: Hannah's experience

One of Hannah's triggers, as captured in her story 'Toby', was a room cleaner at the hotel where we stayed. It was Toby's boundless energy and belief in both the power of education and in the possibilities for self advancement through hard work that so inspired Hannah. They were drawn together because of a shared love of books. So Hannah's reaction (Stage 1) to the experience of meeting Toby was one of admiration for her 'can do' attitude that seemed endemic among the people we met and indignation at a regime which had inflicted so much suffering on non whites.

Her story indicates how she made connections between Toby's aspiration and belief in education as the way to a better life and her own journey as a mature student towards gaining qualified teacher status. It reminded and reinforced the



value of the profession she had chosen not just in opening doors to individual dreams and possibilities but as one of the defences against the rise of apartheid. She also saw and understood in a very real way how important the individual voice could be in helping to effect change and the need to '*shout out loud and long*' even when you cannot see an direct impact. South Africa was a valuable reminder for Hannah of the difference that we can and do can make.

Hannah was drawn to these ideas because of her own personal experiences and interests but also because of her values and beliefs – her commitment to fairness and opportunity for all. When she returned to England she was one of the most active members of the group in writing articles for the local paper, giving presentations to the local church group, enlisting the help of her school in fundraising and collecting materials she felt would be particularly useful for one of the schools where the headteacher's passion and commitment to the black students and community had so inspired her.

The following is an extract from an email she sent the team almost immediately after coming back from the visit.

*"You'll all be surprised to know that I haven't stopped talking all day. Even took assembly (wearing my leather safari hat) to present the drum to the school! I got up really early this morning (5 am!) and wrote short individual notes to every member of staff (including the school cook) saying how much they are appreciated and how lucky we are to have them. (First objective from my 'to do list' – to tell everyone how special they are!!)*

*... My school has definitely agreed to fund raise with Carrington Heights. (I didn't really give them any choice!) so we are going to redirect our main fundraising to them... I've also talked to the local Church about giving a talk .. and made contacts with the local paper... I will also get down to writing an article for Scholastic's Literacy Times." (email 30/10/2007)*

Hannah had boundless energy and enthusiasm. However the first hand experience of South Africa gave her energy a particular focus. It also gave her an inner confidence and renewed belief both in her profession but also in her self.

This was something both she and her headteacher commented on:

*One of the big differences is that Hannah, before she went, always gave the impression to everybody that she was free and easy .. But actually I knew her .. that she was giving the impression to others to .. hide the sort of feelings she was feeling inside. And she wasn't feeling like that at all.. she was actually going through hell inside but she didn't want to admit to that. ... when she came back there was a freedom that was much better ... I think the parameters are higher now so her comfort zone is higher so she .. to be out of her comfort zone she'd have to go further. (November 2008: interview with headteacher)*

Hannah reflected continually on what she saw and heard through her Learning Journal, her discussions with myself and the other research participants (Stage 2 encouragers). In so doing she made the links between Toby and her own life and on a wider stage it also enabled her to revisit and reinforce her beliefs about her chosen profession, human nature and the need to act or to speak rather than to remain silent in the face of oppression of both self and others.

*"I will go home with so many amazing images and memories but most of all with excitement and hope. It has reinforced my belief in the human spirit to overcome apparently insurmountable problems.*

*.... I also learnt that funding is not everything, you need passion and belief in order to make a difference. South Africa seems full of these resources, wonderful people working extremely hard to make a difference. I only hope I can do a little back home to support them by telling others about what is going on here." (Learning Journal October 2007)*

On return to England this reflection and the practical and emotional support of family, friends and colleagues (Stage 3 encouragers) gave her opportunities to develop her thinking and to take positive action in a whole range of spheres from fund raising to awareness raising to curriculum development (Stage 4 direct influences). It also increased her confidence and self belief allowing her to take the lead on other initiatives (eg Fair Trade) and to move to teach in other year groups (Stage 4 indirect influences).

Headteacher interview: November 2008:

*Hannah has always been the centrepiece of the school in the sense of personality. The parents love her. The teachers love her .. everybody ... but .. she's got this deep care about people ... since she's been from Africa .. she can get into other people's skin ... much more quickly and understand their standpoint .. where they are coming from.*

*Fair Trade.. has been her passion .. more so when she came back. Oh yes .. she's in charge of the school .. tea and coffee .. that's all Fair Trade.. everything's Fair trade ... she's had lesson plans and she's done assemblies on Fair trade so that .. that's another element of it I think. Trying to get people aware of this situation so that .. and that's where her passions lie.*

This profound learning experience for Hannah led to direct and observable action. For Ann the change was less apparent to others but she showed in her discussion that the experience had transformed the way she thought.

The model I created was based upon the experiences of all the South African research participants. Each participant had different memories, triggers, encouragers and outcomes. However, as the stories of Ann and Hannah indicate, the framework of the model can be applied to each.

In the following sections (6.8 to 6.14) I reflect on different stages and elements of the model showing how the framework emerged from the experiences of the research participants including myself.

#### 6.8 Triggers, re-triggers, memory markers, prior experiences

Triggers, memory markers and prior experiences are predominantly features of Stages 1 and 2 in the model although as Fig 4 (p162) indicates there is the possibility that dormant ideas will be re-triggered in response to new stimuli outside/away from the original experience.

From our arrival in South Africa to our departure we were bombarded with sensory and cognitive stimuli, much of it new information and ideas (the Trigger(s) – Stage 1). These experiences gave rise to a reaction the nature and

intensity of which depended on a mesh of influences and prior experiences (Stage 2). Some of these reactions lost momentum or were temporarily forgotten. However the original experiences and our response to them seemed, as a minimum, to have laid down some kind of marker (labelled 'memory marker' in Stage 2 of the model) which is permanent. Re-activating this marker brings the experience back to life and offers the opportunity to take new learning forward.

The ease with which these memory markers can be re-activated suggests that the original experience made a significant impact. Gestalt theory suggests that when we make connections or gain insight we experience a release and our learning is accompanied by a chemical/physical change. Whilst I do not intend to explore this idea here I have found that my physical state alters when I realise I have made a new connection and experience feelings of excitement or joy. Similarly chemical changes themselves can stimulate new thinking. I have noticed that ideas often occur to me when I am jogging – at a time perhaps when the chemical composition of my body has changed. Some artists (eg Rossetti, Van Gogh), musicians (eg Bob Dylan) and writers (eg Bryon) have deliberately chosen to taken drugs to enable them to see differently, to develop creative perspectives and insights. Perhaps it is this combination of emotional, physical/chemical and cognitive change which gives the 'memory markers' referred to above a particularly powerful signature.

In my interview with Olive (*It's not just a pencil*) and Ann (*Black and White*) we discussed how easily the memories of South Africa could be re-kindled. The triggers included books, films, wildlife documentaries, TV programmes, stories, conversations with others and student behaviours. Ann commented that, even when she was not specifically or consciously thinking about South Africa, ideas and images would catch her unawares. She reflected in our discussion on how the whole experience had been assimilated into her life and how it cropped up in all shapes and forms.

Interview with Ann on January 2009

*Yeah .. I have to say .. it's made me different at work .. and I try and .. you know .. I think it brings different things into your life as well .. because I have .. I have different conversations ... I'm sure I do. Wierd isn't it?*

*I don't want to look everywhere but I just think your approach then invites different things and you then notice different things and then before you know it you're having different conversations sometimes.*

Other participants made similar points. Whether it was conversation round the dinner table, making links with a South African dentist, picking up books about South Africa or even watching television programmes about elephants—somehow the experience had permeated our lives and sensitised us to issues and ideas in ways that increased our ability to connect with others.

Interview with Hannah on November 2008

*HA: And .. and I also um.. socially .. you know... I don't know if, you know, you find this but you go out with a group of friends .. of different professions .. doctors and so on.. and you say 'oh I'm a primary school teacher' and it's 'oh yeah alright'. 'Yes. But I'm so good that I went to South Africa.' No I feel that actually in our profession we get to do exciting things as well. You know I know I think that's kind .. it's trivial but its .. it does make a difference*

Interview with Tina in February 2009

*TL: Well . yes and there again . because then the LSAs [Learning Support Assistants] 'what have you got there Tina?' .. perhaps new ones who weren't here when I went .. So I was showing them all bits and then one of them said 'oh my daughter's doing a thesis at university um... yes .. at university about school and education in different countries. Will you speak to her about some things and that led to another outlet.*

*FD: Another conversation?*

*TL: Yes .. yeah .. and once I get going .. I just love it you see. Come alive with it really.*

*..... It's funny I mean each day .. I feel I'm saying or thinking something that links back to that ... you know and it's been .. it's opened so many conversations ..... even my daughter she's um .. got a South Africa .. she's a dental nurse and is now a South African dentistry and of course she said 'oh my mum went out*

*there' and he's .. he's liked me to go in and have .. sort of have talks with him about it and all different things and he's actually .. the part they lived in .. he's now brought his family .. that's why they're in England .. for the children's safety and well-being. And he said .. it's quite upsetting when .. his older son is upset because he misses his grandad .. but he said I wanted to bring them here to make them a whole new life and um .. it's been quite interesting talking to him as well.*

In this last extract, Tina is able to make links and show empathy because she doesn't just know but understands that South Africa is a dangerous place to live and can communicate this to the dentist in a way that enables him to share details of his life with her. The ability to make connections that strengthen bonds in the home community was another unlooked for outcome of this visit.

Each of the participants in the research took something different from the experience. From their comments and reflections it seemed clear that this was, to a greater or lesser extent, influenced by age, point in career, culture, prior experience, value system, educational antecedents and things we had become sensitized to. For example Ann (*Black and White*), Hannah (*Toby*), Dinah (*Waste*), Diane (*Mrs T*), Rose (*Bursting Bubbles*) and myself (*Blending Time*) who are all of a similar age spoke often in the interviews of the impact of apartheid, its legacy and how naïve we had been to believe that a decade could make such a difference. All of us had been adults during the apartheid period and our comments during the interviews on the injustice of this regime included reflection on what we had done or not done in protest and how much we had understood what was happening. Some of us had taken part in student protests but none of us really understood the nature and implications of the segregation until we witnessed it first hand. Ann's story about 'white flight' (Chapter 5.8) depicts a movement from polarities – right and wrong - into greater understanding of complexity.

By contrast Olive's (a 29-year old Nigerian-born mathematics teacher) interest in apartheid seemed more personal. Her learning journal entries indicate that she was putting herself into the shoes of those we met whereas the other research participants including myself wrote more as outsiders observing a different world.

Most of the learning journals, for example, mention the talk we had on the introduction to the South African education system. We were given a flavour of the prevailing attitudes and a number of us recorded in our Learning Journals the words of Dr Verwoerd (Minister of Native Affairs – South Africa) in 1954 *‘When I have control over native education I will reform it so the Natives will be taught from childhood that equality with Europeans is not for them’.*

Olive also made a note of what followed:

Olive: Learning Journal October 2008

*“he then went on to say that there was no point in teaching them mathematics because they will never have to use it .....*

*Imagine having to go to different schools, hospitals, buses, sections of a shop, beach and I suppose different churches and yours are no doubt much more substandard - in your own country!! ... I am getting very interested in South African history – what a day!!*

.....

*“It would always amaze me that South African blacks suffered so much in the hands of their white leaders ... It must have been very difficult as a black South African (I keep putting myself in their shoes).*

This sense of empathy through association is reinforced by other journal entries, her comments on the Talking Head DVD and at the later interview over a year following the visit.

Meanwhile we, European travellers, made our recordings as empathic and indignant observers rather than participants.

Tina: Learning Journal 22 October 2008 entry

*“The comment made in 1954 practically saying if you believed in equality you could not be a teacher!”*

All of us returned to England with an increased understanding of just how unequal life was both within a country and between countries and a desire to do something about it. Boyatzis' Theory of Self Directed Learning (Fig 1 Chapter 2 p27) suggests that our subsequent behaviour was motivated by a sense of our idealised selves: people who wouldn't stand by if we could make a difference.

At Stages 1 and 2 of the model, the focus is on stimulus and emotional reaction. For some this was the end point. However other experiences brought different responses. We thought about what we had seen, formed judgements and the intention to act. These responses were highly individual and depended on a wide range of factors that included our prior experiences and value systems.

For example in Tina's case it was the poverty that most drew her attention.

Tina: Learning Journal 22 October 2007

*Reflecting on the information I have been given today as well as what I know myself... I know I must share this information when I get back to the UK but to a wider audience than I expected! ie not just with teachers, other TAs, etc but also with high school students themselves.....Even the school meals UK children/students complain about, even throw away are the main daily meal to many children here ....- today has been very humbling.*

Olive, on the other hand, reacted to the diversity she witnessed. She had an equal desire to make changes but for different reason. She spoke of being both Nigerian and African: of feeling an imperative to educate others about what Africa is - not a single country but a continent of 60 + countries. Not a land of uniformity and sameness but a land of difference and contrast.

Interview with Olive in January 2009

*OA: This continent has got 60-70 countries that it's made up of. Massive countries .. bigger than England .. you know .. bigger than that.*

*FD: That's really interesting. 'Cos that was a point in your ... in your diary .. that that you wrote.... that you could differentiate .. within South Africa .. it wasn't all about poor people living in huts. .... That people were different and it was*



*good so you could break down stereotypes. And is that a bit the same .. your Nigeria as opposed to Africa. It's all about not having a stereotype?*

*OA: Stereotype . yeah*

In Chapter 2.7 (p42) I challenged the centrality given to 'permanence' as a distinctive feature of deep or profound learning. Writers such as Biggs (1999), Entwistle (1988) and Ramsden (1992), Houghton (2004) and West-Burnham and Coates (2005) argue that retention is aided by real understanding of a topic. I would not dispute this but the evidence of my own experience and the descriptions of the research participants indicate that profound learning can both have deep roots and at the same time be ephemeral or unrealised. Profound learning and permanence are two separate concepts. They may be linked but permanence does not have to be part of the definition of profound learning. Discussions with the research participants indicated many of the ideas and conversations that we had in South Africa had not been revisited since (see interview with Ann Feb 2009 (p168)). The memories and the ideas could be quickly revived especially if they were associated with a strong emotion such as indignation, surprise or pride. However it was only as a consequence of discussing and revisiting those experiences that we began to re-connect with them.

#### 6.9 Stages 2 and 3: Encouragers

The sights and sounds of Africa gave rise to a range of reactions and emotional responses which in turn offered the potential for deep or profound learning. However the model (Fig 4) I developed indicates that the nature and sustainability of any activity is dependent on a range of other factors. In the previous section I looked briefly at one of these: self motivation (see 6.8 p176). In this section I look at some others.

The model (Fig 4) suggests that a movement from experience to learning requires some kind of processing and that there are conditions which enable that processing to take place. These are labelled '*encouragers*' and include the opportunity for reflection and experimentation. They are a key component of the process through which stimulus becomes learning. Encouragers exist at both Stages 2 and 3 but their purpose is different. In Stage 2 encouragers are

present at the time of the original experience to support the learner in processing their emotions and reactions. Without them the experience may not move from the emotional to the cognitive domain. In Stage 3 the purpose of the encouragers is to provide conditions that allow for ongoing reflection and opportunities to make use of the learning. There may be overlap in the nature of the encouragers at each stage and their relative importance will vary according to the needs of the individual.

One of the principal encouragers at both Stages 2 and 3 of the model is the need for trusting and open relationships. At Stage 2, the period immediately surrounding the experience, the important relationships for the research participants were with each other. Once we had returned to England where the learning process could be regarded as at Stage 3 other relationships and support became equally if not more significant

By the end of the week in South Africa the TIPD group had become something of a family and even started to develop its own language. We could conjure up shared images in a few simple words. We teased each other and developed group characters: the organiser, the eagle-eyed observer, the talker, the individual who was game for anything. The closeness is clearly illustrated in a comparison of group photographs taken before and after the trip. Before we were 10 disparate individuals smiling but maintaining the kind of physical space common between relative strangers from a Western culture. The photograph at the end of the visit shows a greatly reduced physical space: typical of people who are used to and have developed a fondness for each other. The interviews themselves and the informal tone of the emails that flew between us after the visit reinforce this sense of '*Team Durban*' as we called ourselves. One of the reasons that I believe we came back from the South African visit so determined to make a difference and so full of self belief was the quality of that support which made us feel, perhaps unrealistically, that anything was possible.

TL: Email 30<sup>th</sup> October 2007 to Team Durban

*Thank you all again for being such good friends last week and I can't wait to see you all again. (over to you Social Secretary Rachel – 'strike a pose')*

HA interview November 2008

*HA: Well I think us as well .. as a group. That was fab .. meeting .. making such a fantastic group of friends. I know it's a long way to go. But we wouldn't .. I mean you know .. if we'd met at an inset or something .. we wouldn't have become the group that we'd become really.*

*FD: The way that we gelled*

*HA: Yeah .. Exactly. That was stunning .. wonderful*

Many writers (Boyatzis (2002), West-Burnham (2006) Rogers (1961) have observed that positive, non judgmental relationships support the kind of reflection and interaction that leads to deep learning and ultimately to attitudinal or cognitive changes. The research evidence would appear to support these observations.

Within this thesis (see Chapter 4.2 (p96)) I have explored the idea of meaning as a co-constructed, iterative and evolving process. Perhaps, because experience is multi-faceted, different aspects of it are highlighted and explored over time. However reflection and discussion often bring maturity and a deeper understanding of a particular concept. Positivist research promotes observer neutrality and warns of possible contamination through researcher involvement. However I would argue that the dialogue between researcher and research participants and between the participants and others (eg friends, family or mentors) has real value in allowing for greater exploration of presenting issues. Trusting and open relationships create an environment where defences are lowered and people feel more able to delve deep.

In my interviews with the research participants the sheer act of talking brought back ideas, memories and links with other experiences. The quotation below from the interview with Hannah (Nov 2009) illustrates this process.

*This amazing film footage and some of it was in South Africa and so .. and of course the music was there .. but just ... and so much of it was very similar .. and they were talking about how the blacks were treated in the 30s and before Apartheid and actually in a lot of ways it was very similar to when Apartheid was on and how then how it's changed since and you know that's 60/70 years of*

*history ... and I suppose that's the other thing is .. is that amazing introduction in the morning [of the visit]. I mean everything .. everything I think about... it's now all coming into my mind.*

The conversation I had with Rose, Diane, Dave (headteacher) and myself provides a further example of this movement of thought. The following quotation is taken from the interview transcript. Our last topic had been the value of the experience to the school itself. Although at that time we hadn't labelled the learning as 'deep' or 'profound' all of us (Rose, Diane, Dave and myself) sensed that something quite significant had happened and our discussion continued after the tape finished. So much so that I switched the tape recorder back on and summarised our conversation because it seemed so pivotal to me.

*FD: We're just had a bit of post-tape discussion about what the real value of this was and .. and one of things we've concluded is that perhaps .. perhaps you can too closely define what success looks like. And if people were just given the conditions to go away and have an experience and the opportunity to reflect on that... Then that in itself would lead to much more powerful learning than trying to steer people into thinking about something which may not be the most significant learning experience available to them... Is that about what we said?*

*DS: I think so .. yes.*

It was my supervisor who made me increasingly aware of my own role as one of the encouragers both at the time of the experience and then subsequently back in England. In the same way she was one of my 'encouragers' allowing me to talk about my experiences and what they had meant to me, asking pertinent questions, setting off new trains of thought.

The role of encouragers within the model is important because they help provide a safe place within which risks can be taken, new associations formed and meaning created. They support reflection. Encouragers can take many forms (eg environment, personal characteristics, opportunities to try out new ideas) and need not always involve other people. What they have in common is a capacity to offer space (be it physical, temporal or cognitive) enabling individuals to process ideas and create new meanings.

The evidence of this research supports theories that value reflective practice. Reflection on pedagogical styles and choices has become an important way of improving the quality of teaching and learning within the world of education (Schön 1983). It is an ongoing process and requires the learner to consider critical incidents in their lives and make use of that new learning professionally and personally. It is regarded as helping the practitioner to develop confidence and autonomy in his/her professional life and is a cyclical rather than a linear process which means that the outcomes of one learning experience feed into the next. Schön's ideas are applicable to other professions and reflect the thoughts of many 20<sup>th</sup> century thinkers on learning (eg Kolb – experiential learning - (1984), Lewin – action research (1946) and Rogers – person-centred counselling (1961))

#### 6.10 Stages 3 encouragers: organisational cultures

Whilst a key Stage 2 encourager was support from inside the group, the interview data suggested that a key Stage 3 encourager was the support offered by the employing organisation.

For me, it became clear that the values of the organisation I worked for, or at least my perception of those values, impacted on the ways in which I felt able to use the learning and passion I had returned with. Discussions with the other research participants indicated that they felt the same. There seemed to be a marked difference between those colleagues who felt empowered to implement their ideas and those that did not.

For some of the research participants, the interview data indicated that their freedom to act was restricted in part by their understanding and interpretation of the organisation's culture. The following quotations suggest the inhibiting factors included low levels of interest, sense of status and support of senior managers. Organisations can send both overt and covert messages about what is and is not acceptable and this can have a significant influence on the behaviour and self belief of employees. Bowles (1989) suggests, employers can be the dominant creators of meaning for individuals, especially where the work role is particularly significant (see also Rossan (1987) above (see Chapter 6.3 (p156))

Interview with DS March 2009)

*DS: There hasn't really [been support]. Especially from the .. the sort of senior level. There's been no sort of follow ups .. 'where are you going?' or you know 'Where is this going?' 'How are we going to do this?' or anything else. We are very much on our own. and I think that's not helped. You know .. I've got Tina there as well but .... we're busy from day to day and it's sometimes hard you know. Perhaps I should have been more pro... and say 'well we need some time' .. you know .. and perhaps get some time.. but again it's always ... whether .. you know .. very conscious that they won't .. don't .. allow too much time off um timetable and things as well .. to organise that would be hard. There hasn't really been much support if .. well there's been no support from .. higher... it's been you know down to Tina and I to sort of generate anything.*

Interview with Olive and Ann Jan 2009

*FD: Was there a lot of institutional support to help you move forward with the things that you wanted to do or did you find yourself working against a tide.*

*AW: I don't think people gave barriers .. I just think they're all so busy .. I think .I .. I. I appreciate that if someone came back all kind of like ... 'wow ... I went to Canada and I .. I'd be like 'OK.. anyway can I get on with my life now ... so I can appreciate why and also because we are twinned with Kenya aren't we so ..*

Interview with Rachel November 2008

*RH: .....that was quite difficult for me because people weren't as interested which is, as we've discussed before, tends to be .. that was just how the leadership is here. But um .. you know .. it tends to be very much like that .. it was ... it was 'oh that experience has gone ... that's .. that's what happened last term. We're now on to this term. Right off you go. And I struggled with that)*

Interview with Tina - Feb 2009

*....I think everybody was so keen and you know whether it did take more of .. you know .. perhaps I have .. perhaps its me feeling ... that as an HLTA or LSA I haven't got the same power Dinah has to go out and see them as a teacher ....*

Where there was pro active interest and support, individuals felt able to implement a whole range of activity both within their own classrooms and across the schools.

Hannah, Diane and Rose all confirmed that this permission to act and the school 'ethos' had given them opportunities to be creative, to spread new ideas and apply learning.

Interview with Dave, Rose and Diane in Jan 2009

*RP: Yes, really . I think it's knowing .. that you've always got the support of Dave..that if you go with him.. to go with an idea .. that .. that he will be receptive to it.*

*DS (headteacher): .....And that's the quality of good teaching that's able to take something and transform it into good learning. And giving your staff the opportunity to do.... that is what is should all be about.*

Interview with Hannah – November 2009

*HA: Generosity. The generosity of spirit and openness to everybody. A caring beyond .. you can't imagine how caring. Er I mean.. the fact that Sharon said before I went .. you know 'yes' you're coming back on the Monday.. you're not coming back to school until the Wednesday because I don't want you dog tired.*

There is no single definition of organisational culture. The anthropologist Geertz (1973) draws our attention to language, symbols, rites, rituals and social structures as they impact on the perceptions of the insider. From a sociological perspective these same features reflect the social reality of the organisation and the power structures it operates through.

Brown (1998) offers a number of definitions and makes the point that “*definitions focus our attention on some parts of a phenomenon at the expense of others*” (p7). I have chosen two which I found helpful in developing my thinking. The first defines cultures as “*a pattern of beliefs and expectations ... that powerfully shape the behaviour of individuals and groups in the organisation*” (Schwarz and Davis (1981) p33). The second makes the point that culture is something

invisible which not only guides behaviour but is itself shaped out of that behaviour (Lorsch (1996) p95).

Does culture actually exist or is it simply a metaphor to help us comprehend one experience in terms of another? If I believe that meaning is constructed rather than there to be discovered and that language is a signifier of meaning then I am more likely to see culture as a concept rather than a thing. I cannot see how culture can be quantified or measured, only that it can be described and some aspects of it will make sense to some people. Of course it has ingredients but the mix and effect of the mix depend on the individual, their personality, their prior experiences, their susceptibility to particular influences. Culture, for me, is a set of messages that tell me what is acceptable and what is not. And my reading of those messages will be different from another's reading. Furthermore organisations have a range of cultures that may compete with each other. Survival (or approval) therefore involves navigating and responding appropriately to the messages one senses. It may be that a range of responses are appropriate and acceptable. However there will be a line drawn. Crossing that line involves not acting in accordance with the, probably, unwritten rules and has consequences which may include removal or exclusion from the organisation itself.

However I choose to define 'culture', it exerts influence over me and shapes the way I feel and act. The data (see earlier examples in this section) suggests that this was the case for all the research participants. We live inside it and can't escape except into another culture. I also recognise that it is possible to internalise a set of values in such a way that we lose sight of their constructed nature and accept an organisation's rules as somehow universal, timeless and immutable.

Brown (1998) acknowledges the immense difficulty of measuring something so complex where the variables can be infinite. Cultural messages can be embedded in physical artefacts, language and social ceremonies. They can permeate processes and structures, employee attitudes, customer experiences and expectations and strategic thinking (Lord et al (2008)). Once engrained they can be difficult to shift and become part of organisational folklore. Perhaps



ultimately the focus has to be on what the individual believes to be the organisation's messages and how they choose to respond to them.

Brown (1998) describes organisational socialisation or '*enculturation*' as the mechanism by which individuals learn the culturally accepted beliefs, values and behaviours of the organisation. This process happens over time in formal and informal ways through induction, training and simply spending time with colleagues. Those that find themselves unable or unwilling to accept the values of their organisation are likely to experience discomfort and unlikely to be productive. In the normal course of events they would leave or be removed.

A number of the research participants including myself reported a sense of dissonance on return from South Africa. The majority of us have undergone significant life changes since the visit and at least one of the group has chosen to leave their employment because of the disconnect between her personal values and those of her employer. Ultimately it may not be possible to disentangle the various influences that impact on our life choices. In following sections of this chapter I look in more detail at how aspects of the research participants' organisational cultures promoted or inhibited professional and personal development.

#### 6.11 Stage 3 encouragers: The impact of status, sub cultures and a mismatch of values

Not everyone working in the same organisation experiences it in the same way. Even the dominant mainstream culture may differentiate its messages according to the type of role and autonomy it wishes its employees to have. The position an individual holds within a large organisation may determine their sense of its values. I may feel I have considerable autonomy in the way I undertake my role and that the organisation supports this. Someone in the same organisation but in a different role may feel more limited and restricted. The scope to do different may come from the job itself. Certainly a number of the participants (both teachers and TAs) felt that their scope to act was restricted by their perceived status in the school.

Interview with Rose, Diane and Dave in January 2009

*RP: But you were the deputy head that allowed that to happen. Had I gone on my own which is what some of the others are struggling with .. it might have been different. But in the fact that there were two of us and that you're in an authority position in the school facilitated anything that we did. (from interview Jan 2009)*

Interview with May and Steven in December 2008

*MH: Well Steven was very supportive .. as in 'yes do an assembly'. I felt I had done as much as I could in my position and I think if there was a teacher who ..er .. had come back in that situation .. they would have more power .. I think there's more standing*

The research data also provided an example of a sub culture working against the declared values and ethos of the organisation. In School X the headteacher was evidently enthusiastic about international professional development opportunities with the result that at least two other members of the same school had subsequently been on TIPD visits. However the research participant felt that the influence of the headteacher was not pervasive across the school and that consequently opportunities to make a difference had been more limited and restricted her impact.

*FD: 'Cos I know that you felt didn't you (talking to May) that there was real mixed reaction within the school. There were some people who said 'did you enjoy your holiday?' and then there were other people ...*

.....

*SW: Well I think .. May will probably agree that some of those that said 'oh it's a holiday' was 'tongue in cheek anyway'.. I don't ..*

*MH: Yeah some of it was ..but.. some of it I do genuinely think they did think that was a big holiday ....*

Elsewhere the South African experience also resulted in a mismatch in priorities between the research participants (eg Tina, Rachel and myself) and our employers.

For me, the needs of the people I left in South Africa were greater than the needs of the people I served in my rural shire and I became frustrated at the limited progress I was making in finding ways of offering support. It seemed that here we were overly concerned with tiny improvements to services that most in South Africa couldn't begin to aspire to. The experience resulted in a disconnect between my employing organisation's priorities and my own thinking. I needed to reconcile the two in some way, leave or remain as a malcontent. I spent the next year negotiating a compromise that enabled me to regain an equilibrium. That I chose to stay is perhaps a reflection of my personality, my willingness to take risks ("*Character is destiny*" Eliot G (1860)) and my recognition that the values espoused by the public sector were, despite this challenge, still closer to my own than anywhere else I might go.

This evidence supports West, Nicholson and Arnold (1987) claim that some work roles attract particular types and meet the psychological needs of those types. The researchers also suggest that work roles don't simply accommodate but can influence one's sense of identity and it is not simply a matter of matching particular individuals with particular jobs. The interaction of role and individual is ongoing. Other research (ie Mortimer and Lorence (1979)/Kohn and Schooler (1983)) reinforces the idea that the work role itself can influence self concept and personality and there are reciprocal causal relationships between work and identity.

Traditionally local authorities and schools have had what Handy (1978) described as '*role*' and what Deal and Kennedy (1982) refer to as a '*process*' culture, where rules, procedures and job descriptions predominate and where power is based on both position in the organisation and expertise. It is slow to adapt and innovate but it offers stability and security. Given the massive changes of the last few years to both schools and children's services it would be interesting to look at whether this still holds true. My perception is that in many ways it still does. The experience of South Africa gave us all a sense of urgency that something needed to be done now and the difficulty of effecting change

quickly (or at all) was frustrating and demotivating. In my case I was looking for a level of dynamism and responsiveness which was at odds with the character of the organisation.

These typologies of organisational culture help explain the personal discomfort experienced when there is no longer a snug convergence of our value systems and those of the organisation we work for.

#### 6.12 Moving between Stages: transition and adjustment

The research participants variously described the South African visit as '*mind blowing*' (Hannah), '*life changing*' (Olive and Rachel), an '*emotional roller coaster*' (Ann) (data taken from DVD *Talking Heads* November 2007). Many of the research participants entered a period of adjustment following the visit when our ideas, beliefs and values were revisited. They reported attitudinal changes (eg greater tolerance – Rose and Ann; greater confidence and willingness to take risks - Hannah). The Oxford Compact English Dictionary (1996) defines transition as "*a passing or change from one place, state, condition to another*" p1102 and, in this sense, the experience was a period of transition.

West, Nicholson and Arnold (1987) research into workrole, career and identity indicates that the point of transition is an unsettling period when assumptions and beliefs are revisited. The decision making process leading up to a transition and the adjustment following that transition are times when the things we take for granted are revisited and the familiar is made strange. It can be a twilight period during which some of our deepest held beliefs and ideas are revealed, tested and perhaps modified. A decision to take on a new role, for example, involves a rethinking (be it consciously or sub consciously) of values, career goal and attitudes and their fit with the new environment.

Even if an individual's priorities or perspective has changed, a flexible approach by employing organisations might accommodate those changes with benefit on both sides. Hannah, for example, found an outlet in her renewed passion for Fair Trade. Rose and Diane re-scheduled Design Technology lessons so the children could build African story boxes and used Personal and Social Education (PSE) lessons to help the children plan fund raising activities. In both cases

they had the full support of their schools and staff who welcomed the energy and enthusiasm they returned with.

For the majority of the research participants, even those who had been able to make changes in their personal and professional lives, time, distance and numerous other personal and professional priorities played their part in diluting the initial evangelical zeal that many of us returned with. Some of the research participants (including myself) commented how something valuable and potentially life changing was slipping away as the reality and pressures of day to day life began to exert pressure.

Interview with Dinah March 2009

*DS ..... I suppose the experience out there will... will have changed me and will have had some .. some good effect .. especially if I was .. you know.. if we decided to do and go back out there .. so it wouldn't have been a wasted effort as such or a wasted opportunity. But I still feel as if .. because we made contact with the schools over there and we saw the people and we met the teachers that I want to be doing something for them. They're the ones that . you know .. that's the concrete thing over there isn't it?*

In West, Nicholson and Arnolds' study of graduates moving to their first careers (1984-1987) the researchers found that encounters with new roles and development of new identities were associated with an initial decline in measures of well being which seemed to recover following a period of continuity and stability. The assumption is that people adapt over time to the new challenges of their role. The quotation from Dinah hints that, for some of the research participants, the experience may have had the opposite effect as the initial energy and motivation declined and was replaced by a sense of frustration.

Other research participants reported similar emotional journeys. However, at the time of the interviews we were at different points on that journey. Dinah was still feeling frustration at unfulfilled ambitions whilst others, including myself, seemed to have reached a stage of acceptance and understanding about what was possible and do-able. Perhaps we had adapted to the limitations of our existing roles or found another way to channel our energies: different but still

meaningful and satisfying. Rachel, for example, talked about the journey she had been on.

Interview with Rachel in November 2008

*RH: We got off the plane and 'ah I'm going to have a baby'. You know it was nothing like that but I think because for me - it was a long slow process of digesting what had happened and you know and initially it was .. you know .. we need to save these children and then slowly that has gone away and it's 'no you .. that won't happen I can't do that. And then it slowly just evolved into this attitude of actually I have an understanding now of what actually happens in the world .. which is actually quite profound and massive really.*

*.....if you had spoken to me 6 months or so ago I would have felt .. I wouldn't have felt that I could say 'it's alright that I haven't done anything'. I would have felt that like I .. would have kept wanting to say 'I'm trying to do this .. I'm trying to raise money for that .. and I'm trying to do this .. I would have still felt that I had to justify to you that .. you know .. and I'm doing stuff I promise .. but now I think ...'No' it's OK because like .. you know .. I've got from this and I am .. and it ... that's not what it's always necessarily going to be about."*

My story '*Blending time*' is a further illustration of acceptance and compromise. It is also optimistic in that it reflects my awareness that I could make a difference in a more indirect way through the relationships, support and leadership I have been able to offer some of the colleagues who came with me to South Africa. For me adjusting to life after South Africa did indeed offer a window through which to re-examine my motivation. However it is very possible to look in the wrong direction and miss the real meaning or significance of an event. Revisiting experiences after the passage of time can be equally, if not more, illuminating. Tina's experience of waiting for some activity in relation to Eagle secondary school mirrors my own. She finally found that she could make a difference nearer home in the way that she worked with her students and the links she made in her own community. (See Section 6.2)

With the benefit of hindsight it is possible to trace a pattern in our responses to the South Africa visit that resonates with later stages of the Transition Curve changes identified by Lewis and Parker (1981). The stages are listed below:

- a. Immobilisation - Shock. Overwhelmed. Mismatch: expectations v reality.
- b. Denial of Change - Temporary retreat. False competence.
- c. Incompetence - Awareness and frustration.
- d. Acceptance of Reality - 'Letting go'.
- e. Testing - New ways to deal with new reality.
- f. Search for Meaning - Internalisation and seeking to understand.
- g. Integration - Incorporation of meanings within behaviours.

The initial reaction for most of us was not immobilisation but an enthusiasm to do different. Following the visit most of us discovered we had been over-ambitious and unrealistic in what we could hope to achieve. Our feelings and behaviours seem to mirror those on the Transition curve from point 'c' onwards.

For example I went from a period of great activity to one of disappointment and disillusionment that I did not seem to have achieved anything and had not lived up to the expectations I had of myself when I returned from South Africa. I felt I had let the daily grind divert my energies from pursuing something of real worth. This has gradually moved into an acceptance and understanding and more recently even some hope albeit with reduced ambition.

This experience is one shared to a greater or lesser extent by all of the research participants. We were keen to do something to make a difference when we returned from South Africa and most of us, in the weeks, months and years following, had to find a balance between what we set out to achieve and what we were likely to achieve. It has been a slow and sometimes painful process and some of us are still learning to accept the compromise.

The quotations below are two from many I could have chosen to illustrate this point. They echo the sentiments expressed by Rachel and Dinah in the preceding paragraphs.

Interview with Tina in February 2009

*FD: So you .. you know .... you start off with all these ambitions and you end up realising that there is something you can do but perhaps it's not as much as you would have wanted to do in a different kind of world*

Interview with AW (Jan 2009)

*AW: But I think .. I think .. I think... quite.. because I could have done .. I .. I've got this link with the football shirts .. I've got the football shirts in a cupboard. And so .. life does ... got to put the posters that the kids .. to get the football boots. And I just can't believe it's been over a year and I haven't sorted out the bloody football boots.*

### 6.13 Personality: the role of self

Of the 9 research participants, the data and my own observations indicate that there were 5 individuals on whom the impact of South Africa was more visible. This is not to minimise its significance for the other four participants. Their learning journals and the interviews are testament to the lasting impression South Africa made. However my observations suggested there were 5 people who were more noticeably affected. The evidence ranged from deep introspection and insight to practical changes in personal life and pedagogy. Four of these 5 individuals have also had major life changes (pregnancy, divorce, ill health of self and significant others) which raises questions around the real catalyst for personal transformation. On the other hand to raise such questions may be missing the point. South Africa, new life, ill health have simply provided experiences that these individuals have engaged with. Other members of the group have also had life changing events but the impact is less apparent. The data indicates that, ultimately it is not the environment or the level of support from organisation, family and friends but the personal character of these individuals which makes the biggest difference.

If it is ultimately character that determines the response to an experience, what difference, if any, did the organisational culture of the schools make? Three of the five individuals where change in self or professional practice appeared most evident came from schools where there was real interest and pro active support from the headteacher and colleagues. The fourth had little ongoing support but considerable autonomy in her own classroom and it was here that she made use of her learning. The fifth research participant perceived she had no status or power to effect change and no active interest from the senior leadership team. Ultimately she decided to leave the school she had worked in for many years. There were many reasons for this choice and it would be impossible to say



what, if any role, the South African experience played. However it was evident from our many email exchanges that the experience did affect her at many levels and reinforced her commitment to her family. Of the other four research participants, where perhaps there was less marked evidence of change in self or practice, three were from schools where there was little, if any, pro active interest. The fourth participant had clear support from the headteacher but felt disempowered to some extent by the reaction of some of her colleagues. The evidence therefore indicates that the quality and support offered by the organisation did have some influence on the research participants' levels of motivation and activity.

The experiences of this, admittedly, unrepresentative sample highlights the difficulty of correlating input with outcome. In terms of the 'encouragers' which are elements of the model at Stage 2 and Stage 3, we can say that there is an increased likelihood that a stimulus will become learning where there is an empathic and supportive leadership or an organisational culture that empowers and provides feedback. As a group leader setting up the visit, I had hypothesised that if 2 people went from the same school, they would be able to effect greater changes when they returned. However even this is entirely dependent on the relationship between the two individuals, the opportunities they have to work together and the response of the school to their ideas and suggestions. It is a potentially enabling factor but no guarantee of change and it is significant that 2 of the 5 individuals who seemed to have made the greatest observable changes were the sole representatives of their schools. However even with key encouragers in place much will depend on the individual, their motivations and their capacity/willingness/ability to effect change.

#### 6.14 Stage 4: direct and indirect influences

The anticipated and actual outcomes of the South African visit were quite different. At the point of applying to go to South Africa the research participants expected that some of the knowledge and skills developed during the visit might result in changes in practice. Some of the schools also hoped to forge international links, others to develop a more multi-cultural perspective to the curriculum. The following extract from one of the application forms (June 2007) illustrates this clearly:

*What are your personal learning objectives?*

- *To compare the educational approach of two different countries*
- *Create new links with colleagues locally [in the LA] to share practice and generate positive relationships between phases [primary/secondary schools]*
- *To develop my understanding of use of space and creating enabling environments*

The original invitation to apply assumed that the learning from the experience would be useful to the employing organisation and that participants would take responsibility for disseminating ideas and good practice within and beyond the schools. However the visit was not expected to be a life changing experience. It was seen as intellectual stimulus rather than emotional engagement.

The model (Chapter 6.4 Fig 4) suggests that any event can have a deep or profound learning outcome although there are factors (encouragers) that can help transform an episode into a profound learning experience. Stage 4 of the model suggests that the outcome of a deep or profound learning experience can influence action both directly and indirectly. If the South Africa visit had gone as planned it is more likely that the most obvious changes in behaviour would have been in professional practice and it would have been easier to correlate input with output. The more open ended an experience the more diverse the outcomes and influences on action.

This section illustrates the range of learning and activity arising from the South African visit. The research data suggests that the breath and depth of learning may have been greater because there was no pre-determined lens through which the research participants were required to gaze. This then presents challenges to those who would pin down learning by specifying outcomes in advance of the experience.

Following the visit many of us felt we were on a mission to make a difference to the lives of others. We had very strong emotional reactions to what we saw and heard. Even when our reactions didn't translate directly into learning or action, they left something with us which could be reactivated in a moment or was

constantly there beneath the surface and came out in all sorts of ways at different times. (See Stage 2 memory markers (Chapter 6.8 p171)).

Tina's Learning Journal written whilst in South Africa revealed the impact these experiences were having on her at the time. On return she and her colleague, Dinah, immediately arranged to deliver a presentation to share their learning on post-apartheid South Africa with the rest of the staff. This 20 minute presentation at a staff meeting turned into something that took over the whole meeting.

Interview with Tina in February 2009

*FD: Because you did an assembly didn't you when you came back?*

*TL: Yes .. yes and the main thing we did .. um within a week and at first it was hard to get it prepared within the week .. we were so tired when we came back .. but I think in a way we'd got that knowledge still set there and we did the talk to the staff and in fact .. I think Connexions were meant to share our staff meeting that night ... and they were brilliant .. they could see ours was running on a bit and they .. just the whole staff meeting that night was our talk really.*

Other research participants were equally busy. The following list (based on the interview transcripts) gives an indication of the activity they engaged in on return from South Africa. These activities can be directly linked to new learning or enhanced understanding resulting from the visit.

- Sharing information with others – pupils and adults – assemblies, staff meetings, talks to community groups, producing publications
- Links with the schools we had seen, sending across gifts and monies
- Fundraising activities – either personal donations or supporting children/pupils to undertake activities that raised funds

- Environmental sensitivity – use of resources, personal commitment to recycling; advocacy of free trade
- Using the influences – sights, sounds, textiles, colours, patterns, music of South Africa in curriculum planning
- Being more aware of and utilising more effectively the resources, budget, additional adults available to support pupil learning.

There were also more indirect and equally powerful influences that we only became aware of, over time, because of feedback from others or self reflection. It is much more difficult to isolate and attribute a behaviour, approach or idea to the South African visit where there is no direct correlation between input and output. Something may have had an influence but it will have been an ingredient in a recipe the end result of which has only a passing resemblance to its constituent elements. Arguably our reaction to every experience is informed by the composite of influences that make up life's journey and in such complex ways that disentanglement is impossible.

Whilst acknowledging the problem of attribution, the interview data shows that many if not all of the research participants realise they often respond to something differently or have been sensitised to an issue that they would not have been before visiting South Africa.

In Section 6.2 I gave examples of the way in which Rachel and Tina were trying to create environments that capitalised on curiosity and encouraged learning through investigation. Their approach was the result of ongoing reflection on their South African experiences. It was also the result of opportunity, many years of experience as a teacher/teaching assistant and an interest in developing forms of pedagogy that would engage and stimulate learners. For Rachel the approach to delivering diversity and global issues developed over time. For Tina it was a photograph of a Victorian school that brought back images of South Africa and suggested a new approach to studying 19<sup>th</sup> century England.

One of the central images in my own story (*Blending Time*) was the beaded necklace. I realised afterwards that this was a reference to the many beaded necklaces we saw made by, and for, Zulu women. These necklaces with their sophisticated decorations and colourful, geometric designs were important cultural artefacts, with often very specific meanings. They were a form of communication. In Zulu culture the patterns made by the beads in combination have a significance and purpose much greater than their individual beauty. When I chose the image I had not made the link with the South Africa at all. It had just felt like an appropriate way of expressing a particular idea: in this case the events marking out my life. Perhaps at some subliminal level I was making these connections but I was not consciously aware of it until I stood back having written the story.

In much the same way, I was only vaguely aware of my role within the group: the practical and emotional support and enthusiasm I was offering my colleagues. The ongoing communication I encouraged between us all and the partnerships I developed following the South African experience were born out of discussions that started there. It didn't occur to me that this was the difference I was making. I was very focused on developing links with South African professionals, making a difference on a structural, as well as an individual level in that country. I didn't notice that what was happening in the LA might be even more significant until my supervisor planted the idea when we talked about my role as one of the Stage 3 encouragers.

Many of the participants told me they had re-assessed their work-life balance since the South African visit and some were making conscious changes as a result of that re-assessment. This was not about cause and effect but somehow the experience of South Africa was part of the catalyst for change.

Interview with AW Jan 2009

*AW: It's made me .. I do think my worklife balance. I don't think ... I think it's a culmination of things that led me to change .. South Africa's probably one of the things .. which made me ..*

*FD: Better aware*

*AW: Much better ... yeah much better ... I leave early .. I don't come in so early. You know that .. I'm a bit of a late riser anyway.. but it's more like the evenings .. I was staying .. I would always take work with me. Whether I did it or not .. but that would be a weight off my mind. Last night ... I didn't ... I left the laptop and everything here .. just thought I'm not doing anything .. so I'm much better like that .. and then that's just in the last while and I think South Africa is part of that.*

Others reported greater tolerance (Rose), patience (Tina), acceptance of ambiguity (Rachel), greater environmental (Olive), global (May) and political (Dinah, Fiona, Diane, Ann, Hannah) awareness. In some cases we took action or changed our behaviour as a result (eg consciously stepping back and looking at both sides of an argument). In others it was simply that we tune into these issues, notice when they are raised and participate with more confidence and knowledge in debate and discussion if the subject arises.

#### 6.15 Internalising the audit culture

Of the many subjects I discussed with the other research participants three themes recurred. These were the development of confidence, the re-appraisal of work-life balance and a sense of guilt. The guilt took many forms: embarrassment at not realising how little had changed since apartheid; feeling ill prepared for the visit with no appropriate gifts for the schools; being well resourced when others had so little; and, in particular, the mismatch between what we hoped to do, the expectations and pressure we placed on ourselves following the visit and what we felt we actually achieved.

The quotations in Section 6.12 (pp189-190) are indicative of this unease but almost all of us referred to it at some point.

Interview with Rachel in November 2008

*RH: Yeah. I've really found that ..really struggled to .. and I think it's as well ...dealing with feeling guilty. I think I've felt guilty a lot ....thinking I haven't done anything and then I think but I should .. it's not my responsibility to do anything but then I think it is .. of course it is*

The South African experience had been, for me, almost a rite of passage – a physical and emotional journey. Given the short time (a week) that we were

actually in South Africa, its influence has been longer term and more powerful than might have been expected. I am aware that this may partly be because I chose to focus on the experience for my thesis and I have spent many hours thinking and writing about it.

Somehow I felt that something which had had such an emotional impact should have an equally dramatic output and I came back to England ready to seek a new role or dimension to my role. I spent the next 12 months coming to terms with the fact that whilst my axis had shifted, no one else's had. I was expected to assimilate or absorb the experience in my normal working life.

Dinah's story '*Waste*' reflects a similar feeling. She told me that the South African visit was a life changing experience. At the same time she felt she had not done anything with the knowledge and learning and that it had no tangible impact on her life. We played around with words like '*significant*' and '*value*'. Dinah had a sense that somehow this experience had given her a yearning or desire, that it had '*branded*' itself on to her memory and was etched on to her mind and yet, on a daily basis, had made no difference to her at all. She recognised the apparent contradiction between an experience that had on the one hand been so momentous and yet on the other hand had led nowhere. For Dinah, the reconciliation of the two lay in action which was currently frustrated.

To my Western senses, South Africa was full of hyperbole, grand words, great gestures, magnificence and visioning. Everyone we spoke to was inspirational, full of hope and belief in a better future and yet beneath the framework was 40% unemployment, an explosion of AIDS and related illnesses, an epidemic of violent crime, prostitution, child abuse and an unequal education system. It was like the Wizard of Oz – a great powerful voice with no substance. Everything predicated on a philosophy that belief changes behaviours, makes the impossible possible and helps with the digestion of unpalatable medicine necessary to heal the body politic. We too were caught up in and swept along by this belief that we could make a difference, carried away by the hyperbole.

Fiona, extract from Talking Heads DVD October 2007

*And I think that's what .. that's what I will take away with me. And I think we've been handed a moral imperative to do something to help those [children]. This*

*hasn't been a normal TIPD trip. At one level the objectives have been completely unmet but we've been given an opportunity and a privilege to see something that we can take back to the LA and try to make a difference with...*

According to the research participants it was a combination of factors including: difficulty of engagement with the schools in South Africa; lack of time and prioritisation by the home school; and the demands of busy working lives that limited our activity and contributed to a feeling of missed opportunity. This is a particular challenge to organisations to think about how they might harness the energies of employees following experiences they have both authorised and supported. A really good CPD experience is like going into the unknown. We never know exactly what creative energies and ideas might be released. Organisations that risk this kind of open ended reflective learning opportunity need also to consider how to make use of the thinking and energy that results from these, often costly and resource intensive, opportunities in ways that will meet the individual's needs and bring benefit to the organisation.

Whilst we didn't discuss it at the time, it struck me later in reviewing the comments of the research participants that this need to act was also culturally embedded. Western society seems to emphasise 'doing' rather than 'being': particularly in the current period of budget cuts, high profile child protection cases and inspection regimes when expectations of demonstrable impact from any investment are even higher. It is possible to see in my language and that of my colleagues how the expectations we placed upon ourselves were influenced by these culturally and historically-located moral codes and the current insistence on accountability and observable outcomes. Given we had raised the bar to such a height, it is perhaps not surprising that we all felt we had fallen short but, as the quotations in this and the previous section indicate, many of us were left struggling to deal with our failure to meet expectations of self.

In Chapter 2 (p38 and p47) I looked briefly at the work of Power (1997), Strathern (2000) and Schratz (1993) and the idea that our activity and our feelings about ourselves are a response to positivist and behaviourist paradigms that state there is no value in anything that cannot be objectively measured. In short an audit culture. The data from this study would appear to support this theory. It also indicates that we don't simply follow the rules but have



internalised them to such an extent that they shape our thoughts and feelings.  
The guilt we feel may be because we have failed to achieve an ideal self but that ideal is a reflection of the value systems of the dominant culture.

## 7.0 Chapter Seven: Conclusion

My thesis originated from an interest in the nature of learning and this final chapter brings together the findings and ideas generated from my research.

My professional role and my previous doctoral research (Assignments 1 – 3) had given me an interest in the relationship between teachers and teaching assistants and how this partnership might enhance pupil learning. In November 2007 I led a group of teachers and teaching assistants on a study visit to South Africa to look at the deployment of adults within the classroom. This presented a unique opportunity to look at the impact of a significant learning experience on the adult participants. My original research proposal (see Appendix One) sought to investigate the conditions under which the resulting learning might be sustained.

When we arrived in South Africa, we discovered that the presence of adults in the classroom in addition to the teacher was a relatively rare occurrence. This meant that each of the 10 members of the group had no pre-determined focus. For nearly all of us the visit was a completely new experience. We discovered a land of extremes, the juxtaposition of wealth and poverty, an open, democratic and yet still racially segregated state where child protection was a luxury, crime and starvation commonplace.

As a consequence, I revised my research aims to look at the nature and type of learning experienced by the research participants including myself and at how our experiences were translated into learning. This '*progressive focusing*' (Stake (2005)) came over a 2 year period following the TIPD visit. The final thesis has become a response to questions which focus more on the nature and process of learning than its application and sustainability.

The questions that framed my research and analysis were:

1. What kinds of learning are there?
2. What kind of learning comes out of a significant experience?
3. In what ways can the learning resulting from a significant experience change you?
4. How does experience translate into learning?

5. Is learning [especially '*deep*' or '*profound*' (West-Burnham and Coates (2005))] always valued?

The data collected (including learning journals, policy documents, emails, photographs, evaluations and interview transcripts) was analysed in relation to these key lines of enquiry and three related hypotheses emerged. A brief overview is provided below with more detail on each given in the following sections.

The first hypothesis was developed following an analysis of the nature of the research participant learning. This analysis builds on concepts of '*deep*' and '*surface*' learning (Marton and Säljö (1976)) and '*profound*' learning (West-Burnham and Coates (2005)). The research confirms this typology and suggests that all research participants had surface, deep and profound learning experiences. It also suggests the emotional dimension and the potential for personal transformation are specific characteristics of profound learning. The research indicates that profound learning is highly individual and can result from any experience. It is unique to the individual but does not have to be new learning and does not need to build on surface learning. Unlike other writers (eg Houghton (2004)) my research suggests that longevity or retention is not a necessary outcome of profound learning although a profound learning experience may result in learning becoming more embedded because the learner has been engaged personally and has developed a deeper understanding of the subject.

The second hypothesis creates a model (See Chapter 6.4 Fig 4) tracing the process whereby a sensation or experience becomes learning. This is my contribution to the field. The model was created from the experiences of the research participants and argues that for deep or profound learning to occur a stimulus needs to move from the sensory to the cognitive domain. The model shows that there are certain conditions or enabling factors which will encourage this process but that the nature of the learning and the impact will be difficult to predict since they depend upon a mesh of influences including the character and antecedents of the learner and the environmental conditions within which the experience occurs. The model is significant because it has implications for the

way in which we provide continuing professional development opportunities, arguing against any form of didacticism and emphasising process over content.

The third hypothesis suggests there is a tension between government's (pre and post-May 2010) aspiration for autonomous professionals and the emphasis on specific targets and clear causal relationships between input and output. I argue that my professional world is dominated by a culture based on audit and accountability. The underpinning philosophy is one of mistrust and this translates into a need to pre-determine outcomes in advance of learning experiences. My research has indicated that the most valuable learning is often unanticipated and there is a need to trust to a process rather than focus on specific outcomes. If we focus purely on providing experiences where the outcomes are known in advance we lose the opportunity to generate new thinking, creativity and energy. The research also suggests that the messages of audit are embedded in our society. The responses and behaviour of the research participants including myself revealed a sense of anxiety or guilt where we felt we could not demonstrate short term and tangible outcomes.

The thesis has also sought to explore methodology, analysis and presentation. Choices about how to conduct and present research are deeply personal, reflecting epistemological and ontological assumptions that inform our thinking about the purpose of research. My own view, reflected in the criteria by which I have suggested this research should be judged (Chapter 3.2 pp58 - 61) was that the research process should be collaborative and transformative and the presentation of the research should be accessible. I also believe knowledge is partial and reality cannot be experienced directly or represented by a single voice. The discussions in Chapters 3 and 4 and the presentation of experience as first-person stories in Chapter 5 indicate how the choices I made about a strategy of enquiry, data collection techniques, analysis and presentation were influenced by these principles.

7.1 Questions one - three:

What kinds of learning are there?

What kind of learning comes out of a significant experience?

In what ways can the learning from a significant experience change you?

In considering these questions I looked (Chapter Two) at definitions of learning and theories about how we learn (eg cognitive, associationistic, functionalistic and neurophysiological paradigms (Hergenhahn and Olson (2008)). I also looked at theories on motivation (Boyatzis (2002)), on learning processes (Kolb (1984), Lewin (1946)) and at the added value that comes when exploring these subjects at points of transition (West, Nicholson and Arnold (1987)).

I was particularly drawn to the typology of learning offered by Marton and Säljö (1976) later developed by West-Burnham and Coates (2005) which categorised learning as surface, deep and profound. Surface learning is defined as the acquisition of knowledge and its direct application. Deep learning is a process whereby connections are made that result in cognitive, behavioural or attitudinal change and insight based on understanding. Profound learning is an extension of deep learning and involves personal transformation.

I investigated the extent to which this framework was applicable to the learning experienced by the TIPD participants and found that all types of learning (surface, deep and profound) were present. The range and types of learning are illustrated in the analytical studies (Chapter 5.2 to 5.11), through the examples in Chapter 6.2 Table 3 and the quotations from all participants (throughout Chapter 6.).

The data (Chapters 5 and 6) builds on and extends the model of learning offered by West-Burnham and Coates (2005)). It supports the theory that a movement from deep to profound learning can be defined as a movement from cognitive competence to emotional connection where knowing involves empathy as well as understanding. Profound learning suggests an almost instinctive or intuitive understanding of what is needed.

The research suggests that the presence of emotion in learning increases the likelihood of personal transformation. Arguably it is not possible to fully appreciate another perspective without some change in your own. I used literature on identity (eg Sarup (1996), Honess and Yardley (1987)) throughout to help inform my discussions with the research participants and we discovered a number of areas (eg pedagogy, political and environmental awareness) where we felt an increased understanding had resulted in personal transformation (eg greater tolerance, confidence and self belief) (see Chapter 6.2).

The research data indicated that learning which we might categorise as deep (new connections) or profound (transformational) was not necessarily original thinking. However it was new to the individual. It resulted from personal engagement with an experience.

The experiences of the research participants do not support the value judgements made on surface and deep/profound learning (Houghton (2004)). The data (see Chapter 6.2 and Table 3) indicates there is a place for all types of learning and supports West-Burnham and Coates (2005) suggestion that surface and deep learning are not simply steps on the road to a profound learning experience.

West-Burnham and Coates (2005) and Houghton (2004) also suggest that deep or profound learning aids memory and gives learning longevity. However the experience of the participants including myself shows that this may not always be the case. Retention may be an outcome but it is not a part of the definition of deep or profound learning.

## 7.2 Question Four: how does experience translate into learning?

Identifying which aspect of experience an individual will interact with or the outcome of this engagement is difficult to predict without a comprehensive understanding of that individual in their lifespan. The analytical studies (Chapter 5.2 – 5.11) give an indication of the multiplicity of responses to a common experience and, in thinking about the types of learning evidenced, I questioned why the research participants (including myself) responded so differently. I also queried why, 15 months after the South African visit, the research participants could still recall events vividly, articulate ideas and

opinions and make new connections even though they had not revisited those experiences in the interim.

Whilst it was difficult to predict the outcomes of a learning experience the research data indicated there were some similarities in the way that we processed experience. Building on the work of West-Burnham and Coates (2005) on conditions through which profound learning is both supported and sustained, I created a four-stage model (Fig 4 p162) outlining the movement from experience to deep or profound learning. This model distinguishes between learning as process and learning as outcome.

The model suggests that it is the movement from affective to cognitive which takes a reaction to a stimulus to deep or profound learning. It also suggests that even when an experience is not cognitively processed, the experience itself and the emotional reaction to it can leave a memory marker capable of being re-activated at any stage.

The research participants' experiences (Chapter 6.3 – 6.14) indicate that a range of factors may support the translation of stimulus to learning and then foster and sustain that learning. In my model I labelled these factors '*encouragers*'. Their precise nature varies from person to person but includes opportunities to talk, to be heard and encouraged to take action. I looked at the research data in the light of theories of organisational culture and work role (eg Brown (1998), West, Nicholson and Arnold (1987)) and concluded that, for the participants in this research, organisational culture and work role did impact on the quality of both the learning process and outcomes but that the key variable was the personality of the individual (see Chapter 6.9 - 6.13).

The experiences of the research participants (Chapter 6.2) also indicate the dynamic nature of deep/profound learning. Without re-visiting the learning process there is the possibility that the insights gained may become irrelevant or anachronistic. Behaviours not based on cognitive processing become automatic learned responses to specific stimuli.

The development of the model involved continually returning to the literature, the data and to the participants themselves as a new line of enquiry occurred to me.

The final version of the Model (Fig 4 in Chapter 6.4) is itself a metaphor for that collaborative process. It is based on the data but was developed further in response to the suggestions, comments, ideas and challenges from colleagues, friends, theory and my supervisor as well as my own constant reflection and questioning. It fits my own experiences and, from their responses, appears to resonate with those of my fellow travellers. However it is offered in the spirit of a first draft and needs further research and refinement before it could be said to be more widely applicable.

### 7.3 Question Five: Is learning [especially 'deep' or 'profound' (West-Burnham and Coates (2005))] always valued?

Whether the reaction to, and learning from, a significant experience is always of direct benefit to those sponsoring it is less certain. The data (see Chapter 6.14 pp193-198) shows that the South Africa experience had a number of outcomes including the re-assessment of work-life balance. There is no sense that any participant became more career-oriented or professionally driven as a result of this experience. In the 2 years since the TIPD visit, 2 of the 10 participants have had children, one has left her job to restore some personal balance to her life, and one has taken unpaid leave to spend more time with her family. Whilst none of these events are causally related to the time we spent in South Africa the research indicates that many of our conversations and reflections took us beyond our professional lives to re-appraise our personal values. The experience impacted on us both personally and professionally. It is not possible to compartmentalise or direct the outcomes of a deep learning experience. It seeps through crevices and is often not open to immediate analysis but becomes visible over time. The risk of such learning experiences is that we weigh our lives in the balance and make changes that are not, on the face of it, beneficial to our employers.

The work of Strathern (2000) and Power (1997) heightened my awareness of society's current pre-occupation with audit and the desire for a clear and evidence based correlation between input and output. Such a prescriptive approach is potentially limiting because in determining what is to be measured it sends messages about what is valued. It may stifle creativity, suppress innovation and, as Power (1997) suggests, send a message of distrust. The experiences of the participants (Chapter 6.10) indicate that the emphasis on



immediate priorities and outputs within some organisations may have reduced opportunities to capitalise on the energy we returned with. Furthermore the data indicates that most of us have, to some extent, internalised this emphasis on observable outcomes and that we judge ourselves by how much direct and measurable impact we have made.

In Chapters 2.6 and 6.15 I traced how the current preoccupation with input and output may be contrary to the stated expectations of my professional world (DCSF 2008b) which requires people with the imagination and confidence to respond to situations where outcomes are not known. Drawing on an analysis of government policy documents (pre-May 2010) and good practice guides on continuing professional development (CPD) I suggest that there is a tension between the declared aspiration (DCSF (2008b), for autonomous, self directed professionals and the ways in which such behaviours are measured. I suggest the continuing climate of audit, targets, measurable outputs and control is at odds with the development of a professionalism that can deal with change and respond creatively to the unexpected.

Whilst this thesis argues that all three types of learning (surface, deep and profound) are necessary, I suggest that profound learning experiences are especially valuable in developing individuals who can cope with the continually changing demands of the modern world. This is particularly relevant for those working in children's services where professionals need to be able to respond to and work in partnership with the families they are supporting. Arguably the need for flexible professionals able to assess and manage risk, take appropriate action and work independently has never been greater. During this period of unprecedented budget cuts professionals in children's services are increasingly expected to undertake a broader range of roles and responsibilities with less and less direct supervision.

The model I created (Chapter 6.4, Fig 4) becomes particularly significant at this time because it offers a process for developing autonomy and confidence in our practitioners. It is, however, at odds with the existing climate of control, audit and predictability, reflected in the formulation of learning experiences or CPD where there is currently a heavy emphasis on carefully defined learning objectives and measurable outcomes (Ofsted (2009)). I suggest that CPD which

is formulaic and prescribed is unlikely to support deep/profound learning experiences which by their nature are individual and often unpredictable. There is a need to trust to a process the exact outcome of which cannot be predicted in advance.

#### 7.4 Personal Growth and Professional Practice

The thesis has been both an exploration of learning and a personal learning journey. As a researcher it was about increasing my understanding of the complexities of the research process. As one of the research participants it was also an exploration of my own learning in relation to the South African visit. I was keen to make use of my new understanding and busied myself in a whole range of activities, fearful of losing momentum or missing opportunity. What I finally realised and is reflected in my own story '*Blending Time*' is that the South African experience had given me the opportunity to lead a group, to forge relationships and to support others in their personal growth, understanding and use of an experience. Dadds (2008) quoting Belenky (1986) talks about the practitioner researcher becoming a more 'connected knower' and this describes what I became. I cared deeply for those I had been working with, took great interest in their personal happiness and health and looked to support their professional development in whatever way I could.

#### 7.5 Where next?

Perhaps unsurprisingly this thesis has raised more questions than it has answered and there are many directions that future research could take. I am at the end of this particular journey but I have saved the last few sentences to reflect on where, given time and opportunity, I would travel next.

On the subject of deep, profound and surface learning it would be interesting to discover to what extent my 'model' depicting the movement from experience to learning resonates with other professional groups both within the world of children's and young people's services (eg social workers, Connexions workers, youth workers, health visitors) and outside it. To what extent does it apply to men or adolescents or young children or those from other cultures? In what ways (if any) is a readiness to engage in deep and profound learning linked to profession, gender, education, age? If trusting and secure relationships are a necessary condition for deep or profound learning, what implications does this

have for the kind of continuing professional development experiences we provide? Similarly if the movement from deep to profound learning can be characterised as a movement from understanding a situation cognitively to understanding it emotionally, what are the implications for this in terms of training and development?

It would be particularly interesting to do some research with a different group of TIPD participants where the anticipated outcomes were met. Was there a difference in the nature of their learning and how did it subsequently impact on their personal and professional lives? What effect does a clear and pre-determined focus have on the opportunities for profound learning? Where there was deep and profound learning what were the surrounding conditions (eg group dynamics, personal relationships, environment) that enabled this growth to take place?

In this thesis I have suggested that there is an unreconciled tension between the professional world I inhabit which aspires to creativity and innovation and yet operates through a system characterised by inspection, audit and targets. Does this assertion resonate with the experiences of others working within children and young people's services? If a tension does exist then to what extent does it prevent the achievement of a vision that England should be the '*best country in the world for children and young people to grow up in*' (Children's Plan (2007)). And what should we do about it?

Appendix One

**Doctorate in Education (EdD6)**

**Final Thesis**

**Research Proposal**

November 2007

A detailed research proposal of 3,000 – 5,000 words clarifying the research questions you wish to pursue in the final 2 years of the programme and conceptualising the focus of your intended research.

Student: Fiona Denny

Supervisor: Barbara Zamorski

Word Count: 4,886 words

### Focus of Research

To investigate the conditions under which the learning resulting from a significant continuing professional development experience can be sustained.

### Aims of Research

More specifically I want to take a multi-case study approach to examining the initial and subsequent learning of 10 individuals, including myself, following a Teachers International Professional Development (TIPD) trip to Durban, South Africa. The visit is to look at post-apartheid education, particularly the use of additional adults in the classroom.

I will be looking at the immediate effect of this experience and will explore over the following year with those same colleagues the medium term impact: how and whether their learning has changed their own day to day practice and/or what difference it has made to their school .

More specifically I will look at the following questions:

- What has changed between what was regarded as significant learning at the time and now?
- How has the learning manifested itself in classroom practice?
- In what ways (if any) has the learning impacted on others?
- What helped or hindered the translation of learning into action? (This question will need to consider the relationships developed between the TIPD group, subsequent work by the LA and/or other agencies and the actions/support provided by the individual's home school)
- What part does the position of the individual in the organisation play in introducing and sustaining change?

- What part does the leader of the organisation play in helping sustain learning and transform it into action?

Given the nature of this experience it is possible that much learning will not be foreseen or planned for. Much of the current literature on CPD emphasises the importance of preparing and anticipating the learning in order to maximise its effect. One of the dimensions I hope explore is the nature of 'ad hoc' learning? Would its impact have been greater had it been prepared for or was part of the power of the learning the emotional intensity that comes with discovering something new and unexpected?

### Context

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is defined by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (2007) as follows:

*“CPD consists of reflective activity designed to improve an individual’s attributes, knowledge, understanding and skills. It supports individual needs and improves professional practice”*

The value of CPD in developing excellent practice is woven into the fabric of education. Professional Standards for teachers require them to engage in professional development and, as they gain in experience, to take responsibility for supporting the CPD of others. (Teachers Professional Standards, TDA, 2007). Headteacher standards include the development of learning communities and the Performance Management Regulations (2006) now require CPD to be considered as an integral part of the planning meeting with headteachers statutorily required to report annually on CPD needs to their

governing body. Advanced Skills Teachers (ASTs) and Excellent Teachers specifically have a remit to provide out-reach and in-reach support. Initiatives such as the GTC Teacher Learning Academy provide professional recognition for reflective practice. NVQs for most roles and Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) standards expect an ongoing engagement in professional development to maintain and update skills and knowledge base.

It has also become something of a truism but is worth repeating, nevertheless, that CPD takes many forms of which the traditional model of a day's course is one of the most expensive but not necessarily the most effective.

The Reward and Incentive Group (RIG) Joint Evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body in May 2005 reinforced this message when discussing the concept of the 'new teacher professionalism'

*"RIG believes that there is scope for greater emphasis on in-school and cross-school activities such as coaching and mentoring, learning from others' practice through structured, supportive, development classroom observation and other forms of professional collaboration"*

Children and Young People's Services such as that in Suffolk are increasingly encouraging schools to make use of internal expertise or locally delivered training. The AST and Suffolk's Key Practitioner Schemes are two examples of this trend towards the development and use of local capacity.

Whilst the value of effective CPD is not in doubt there has been considerable attention paid on the subject of how to make CPD effective and how to measure

its impact. This latter is felt to be the Achilles heel of the system. Ofsted in “The Logical Chain” (July 2006) noted that schools’ evaluation of the impact of CPD was weak.

The TDA have identified the following dimensions in their paper “What does good CPD look like?” (2007):

- CPD should be planned allowing time for application, reflection and evaluation;
- The desired outcomes of CPD should be clearly specified;
- CPD should enable practitioners to develop skills, knowledge and understanding directly relevant to current role or career aspiration;
- CPD should be delivered by those with the necessary skills and expertise;
- It takes account of the participant’s previous knowledge and experience;
- It is supported by coaching and mentoring;
- It uses lesson observation to help explore CPD focus and assess its impact;
- It should model effective learning and teaching strategies;
- Continuous enquiry and problem solving are part of the fabric of the school;
- The impact of CPD on teaching and learning is evaluated and used as the basis for future planning.

Other frameworks (eg London’s Learning – 7 principles for CPD) also emphasise the importance of leadership, culture, links with performance management, infrastructure and processes.



### Significance of the Research

The nature of effective CPD currently has a high national profile as indicated in the previous section.

Through a detailed consideration of individual cases and a cross case comparison I hope to contribute to the growing body of knowledge about how the learning from CPD is used and sustained in the workplace.

The research will also benefit my professional practice and work with schools. Part of my role is to advise on CPD practice and to commission development opportunities for the schools workforce. A clearer understanding of what works and why will support me in making decisions about expenditure of limited and finite resources.

### Approach, data gathering methods and resources

I will be using a multi-case study approach to explore a phenomenon – namely the conditions under which a significant learning experience can be sustained. Stake (2006) refers to this phenomenon or entity as the ‘quintain’.

There will be 10 people in the group visiting Durban. I, in my capacity as County Adviser for Professional Development, am the group leader. Representing 6 schools are 5 teachers and 3 teaching assistants (TAs) and a Learning Support Unit manager.

Two schools are represented by a teacher/TA and one school by a Teacher/Learning Support Unit manager. The other three schools are represented by a single Teaching Assistant or teacher. The TAs are all

experienced, often with leadership roles in their schools. Three have Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) status. The teachers are classroom and subject teachers and one is a member of the senior leadership team. All participants are women. All except one, who is Nigerian, are white British. Together they are drawn from 2 high schools, 1 middle school and 3 primary schools. Within those schools they collectively work across all phases from Foundation/Early Years to Post 16.

These 9 individuals and myself represent the 10 cases that will be the focus of the multi-case study. The 9 teachers and TAs were originally chosen from some 150 applications to go on the TIPD visit. As such the sample for the purposes of my doctoral thesis is already fixed although fortuitously it represents a good mix of phase (primary, middle and high schools) and locality (urban and rural).

The visit is funded by the British Council and the main focus is to look at how teachers and other adults work together in support of children in the classroom. However each of the participants has other interests. (See Appendix One for a summary of aims submitted to the TIPD organiser, Best Practice Network)

The programme (see Appendix Two) was carefully built around our interests and offered the opportunity to visit a range of primary, secondary and special schools which were formerly white, Indian and township schools. Additional tours, talks and cultural experiences provided further experience of this very different world.

It was agreed at an early planning meeting that, to assist with this evaluation, we would keep reflective journals, hold daily meetings as a group, contribute photos

and produce a 'Talking Heads' DVD to capture our thinking and learning as it occurred throughout the week.

Each of the participants has been given a learning journal. We will type up and audio tape record (for later verbatim transcription) our focus group discussions. Digital cameras will be used for photographs and a camcorder used to produce the 'Talking Heads'. Later interviews will, with the participants' permission, be tape recorded and transcribed. I will also keep a separate researcher and participant notebook.

We are also expected by our host in South Africa to complete individual evaluation sheets and by the British Council to write an anonymised report against specified headings. These will also form part of the data I will use to establish initial impact on group members.

The proposed doctoral research will use this initial data together with any additional documentation such as email exchanges to analyse how the experience has been received by each individual and what their personal learning has been.

I intend to visit and interview each group member in their school setting some months after the TIPD visit to explore their later reflections on the experience, how this has affected their practice, how they have been able to share their experiences with others and whether they have introduced any changes in their school or community as a result. I also want to explore what factors have acted as enablers in translating learning into action.

In the schools where 2 colleagues undertook the visit, I hope to carry out joint interviews. I also plan to interview the headteacher or senior member of staff supporting the initial application, to explore the impact from their perspective.

The initial data from the Durban visit will consequently be used as a baseline that the research participants can use to trigger memories and reflect on changes over time.

I am interested in each individual case but the fact that all 10 of us have shared a common experience and yet have such different roles and work in different contexts should offer some interesting insights into the conditions which support and nurture learning. It will also be interesting to explore whether the impact in school was greater when 2 people from the same school undertook the visit.

The sample will be too small for any statistical generalisation or claims that the individuals are representative of colleagues in similar schools. Nevertheless a multi-case study approach and a variety of data gathering techniques should enable a deep understanding of the individual case whilst allowing for cross-case comparisons. It will also enable me to consider how far these cases support the research outcomes on effective CPD and to consider the limits of these theories when applied to the individual case.

As a participant in this experience I will also be exploring my own impressions and learning and how these affect my subsequent work practices. I will draw heavily on my research journal but I will also ask a colleague to conduct a semi-structured interview with me to see if this draws out other ideas and perspectives of which I was unaware.

As the only group member not working in a school, what effect will this experience have on me?

### Literature Review

*“There is a widespread belief that what leaders want is statistical conclusions, but for problem solving what they need is more experience. Being a leader requires making complex judgements and the securest position is that of reflected experience” Stake (2006) p90*

Whilst my intention is to allow the data to speak rather than to squeeze it into pre-existing theoretical frameworks, a review of the literature will alert me to relevant issues and ideas

*“Preconceived ideas are pernicious in any scientific work, but foreshadowed problems are the main endowment of a scientific thinker, and these problems are first revealed to the observer by his theoretical studies” Malinowski (1922,1961, 1984) quoted in Stake (2006) p30*

Throughout my research I will be reviewing and evaluating the nature and appropriateness of my methodology and method. Consequently I will be exploring the literature on case study literature and particularly views on the conduct of multi-case study approaches. I will also be reviewing literature on the data gathering techniques, data analysis methods and, particularly literature on the presentation of data including Readers Theatre. My intention is that my reading and research will be feed into and inform each other so that, for

example, when I am interviewing in practice I will also be reading about the process and practice of interviewing.

Secondly I will review the literature on what constitutes effective CPD. There is a growing body of material specifically on this area given its high political profile. Although my research is not specifically about international CPD I will also review the literature on the impact of initiatives such as TIPD and how the learning has been used to good effect back in schools. This is an ongoing and necessary part of my daily work and I regularly access research websites and read reports on the latest research findings (eg CUREE, TRIPS, TDA, NSCL, GTC etc) in order to keep up to date with the latest thinking in this area.

Consequently whilst there will be periods over the course of the next two years when I am predominantly undertaking either field work or reading literature, I expect that these will overlap to enrich the development of my conceptual landscape and my practice as a researcher.

### Ethical issues

It was agreed by the group what data we would gather to inform an evaluation for the TIPD funder. I plan to use the same data for my doctoral thesis to provide a 'baseline' of information on each individual's learning and intentions following the experience in order to explore how these change, are implemented and facilitated over the course of the following months.

Although the ways in which I will be using this initial data are more or less the same as my research for the funder, namely the nature of learning, impressions formed, ideas stimulated, enthusiasm generated and its causes, I will be

focusing much more on the individual's than the group's experiences. I will also be using the data as part of a longitudinal study and getting participants to revisit their thoughts and reflections as part of a focus on impact and sustainability.

The group members therefore need to give informed consent for the data to be used for these twin purposes and in particular for me to have access to their individual learning journals.

I asked each participant if they were willing that this data be used for my doctoral thesis at the second TIPD planning meeting. I explained the purpose of my doctoral research and reinforced the fact that anyone could decline to take part in the doctoral research. I was acutely aware that my role in selecting them to take part in this TIPD experience and as leader of the group might make people feel under an obligation and so I follow up this group discussion with individual conversations during the course of the trip to ensure no one felt under any pressure to participate when they would prefer not to. I will also made it clear that even if they agreed initially, they were free to withdraw at any time during the course of the research.

I am particularly aware that whilst having access to the 'Talking Heads' video recordings, photographs and the focus group discussions will be less of an issue, having the opportunity to analyse individual learning journals is more sensitive.

Because my doctoral research will be much more focused on the individual experience, access to these personal learning journals will be very useful. It will give me an insight to each participant's thinking at the time of the experience

and this will enrich the quality and depth of our subsequent discussions and act as a stimulus to reflection. It would still be possible to undertake this research without these journals but I feel it would impact on the richness of material I have access to. Some may be content for me to have access to all their data, others to some elements of it. Some may wish to withdraw completely.

Although my focus will be on the individual's experience, I am also keen to explore whether change, impact and influence on the wider school community has been easier to implement where 2 people from the same school have shared the same experiences. This means that in at least 3 cases I will want to work with pairs rather than individuals. This in turn will mean, where I have had access to individual learning journals, that subsequent discussions are likely to involve sharing, in part, personal thoughts and reflections. Again I will need to check this is acceptable with participants. Whilst I hope it will not be an issue given the close relationship of the participants, I will need to offer the alternative of one to one interviews.

Informed consent and transparency will be very much the cornerstone of my research practice. Individuals will have the opportunity to check transcripts for accuracy and add amendments and clarifications. Interview transcripts will be remain confidential and be used to inform the final report. Direct quotations will not be used without permission. Transcripts will be stored on a home computer system (not networked) and printed copies given to participants for the purposes of checking will be anonymised in case they are lost in transit. Participants will be asked to confirm whether there are any sections of the transcripts or personal journals they would not wish to see directly quoted and no quotation from any participant will be directly attributed.



I do accept that the concept of 'anonymisation' is problematic for those who, as I do, view the primary purpose of case study as a mechanism for feeding reflection and action in the particular instance and not as generalisation. (see Kemmis in Simons (ed) 1980 p57). However case study, in particular, can have consequences that could not have been foreseen since the making of meaning occurs throughout the study and in the partnership between the participant and researcher. Participation in any process of reflection and inquiry can change the status quo and unearth previously hidden meanings or interpretations. In a small community, where good relationships between colleagues are paramount, confidentiality and anonymisation are safeguards against unintended consequences of invasive research. These factors therefore tip the balance in favour of anonymity.

Participants will also be given the opportunity to see and comment on the relevant chapters of my thesis in draft form before the final version is produced. The final responsibility regarding what should be highlighted and how to present ideas and interpretations remain with me as the author. My aim is to produce a thesis that is recognisable and credible to the participants themselves and it is important to me that they have the opportunity to contribute at all stages.

I also have an ethical obligation to consider and make clear my own value-laden beliefs and ideological commitments so that my interpretation and comment does not pass for certainty. I have dual role as both researcher and participant and it is needs to be obvious which voice I am speaking with. I intend to continue to keep both a research journal and a personal learning journal to ensure I continue to reflect on my own position as researched and researcher

and how this impacts on the way in which I work and in my discussions with fellow participants.

#### Interpretation and analysis of the data

I am interested in both the individual case and what can be learned from multiple cases. However I recognise the tension implicit in this. The individual case study provides through thick description and multiple voices a sense of its uniqueness whilst the multi-case approach uses cross-case analysis and interpretation. In many ways the single case encourages a tolerance of ambiguity where the cross-case analysis seeks some form of resolution and agreement between cases. I wish to preserve aspects of both these approaches – to show the possibilities for generalisability and its limits.

Stake also draws attention to the tension between understanding the 'situationality and complex interaction' of the individual case and comparison between cases which he sees as a 'competitor to probing study of a case' that is 'simplistic' Stake (2006) p83. He makes a distinction between comparison between cases and the exploration of a phenomenon or "quintain".

*"The quintain is something that functions, that operates, that has life. The multicase study is the observation of that life in multiple situations"* Stake 2006 (p83)

This is a fine grained distinction which I suspect will be difficult to maintain in practice. In understanding my 'quintain' I will be seeking the answers to the key questions presented in the section of this proposal titled 'Research Aims' and how they play out in different contexts. I will be looking at the individual situation

but I will also be making comparisons between different settings to see where there is agreement and where there is difference.

In the presentation of my data therefore I will be seeking both to support the reader's 'naturalistic' generalisations and development of personal insight whilst at the same time offering my own interpretations based on an analysis of the themes, patterns and concepts emerging from the data.

My intention is that my analysis and my findings should be based on the data itself and that this should be an emic as opposed to etic analysis with any theoretical proposition emerging from this analysis. However whilst I have no specific hypothesis it is important to be aware of the growing interest and research in the area of impact and sustainability of CPD. Frameworks and definitions of effective CPD already exist and are used to assess bids for funding (TDA 2007) and it is important that my analysis looks at how the case studies I have chosen accord with or differ from those.

I do not anticipate that this multi-case study will provide universal truths or overarching theoretical frameworks. Nor do I believe, given the constructed and mediated nature of all analysis and interpretation, that the research will have 'reliability' - defined by Yin as 'replicability of the study'. How then am I proposing that this work be judged?

For me the acid test will be it's credibility, how recognisable it is to the participants and the '*purchase it gives us on the real world of action and experience*' (Kemmis (1980) p 131)

Whilst I am keen to preserve the multiplicity of voices and perspectives that this research will generate, it is also important that I ensure there is enough 'thick description' to enable readers to make their own judgements about the usefulness of the voices they hear and the opinions expressed. Given my dual role as participant and researcher, it is also important that I am clear with which voice I am speaking. My philosophical starting point is that certainty and objectivity are not possible. Where I have interpreted or foregrounded events as significant I need to make the reader aware that mine is another perspective and to provide sufficient information (including the evidence that undermines the perspective) to enable them to judge whether my assertion is credible.

#### Presentation and Publication

In a multi-case approach the issue of how to present the data raises specific challenges. How do I keep the uniqueness and richness of each individual story, allowing the reader space for naturalistic generalisation and personal insight whilst exploring the themes, concepts and patterns that a cross-case analysis may offer?

One possibility is to present each case in turn and let each tell its own story in relation to those key questions. Another is to structure the thesis in terms of the principal assertions of the 'quintain' and to use the case studies to illustrate the issues raised. These options would have the merit of minimising, although not eliminating, the researcher's role as intermediary between reader and text.

A middle way might be to present each case study or theme as 'thick' description with minimum interpretation and have a completely separate chapter

devoted to analysis and interpretation clearly signposted as the researcher's perspective.

I am keen to paint as full and unmediated a picture of each case as possible to assist the reader's recognition and learning. However every text is a constructed artefact. Meaning is partial, negotiated and mediated through language, memory and discussion with others including the researcher. To present a reader with a 'thick' description without overt comment by the researcher is still to present a text where choices have been made about what to foreground or highlight, what is significant and where meaning lies. To pretend otherwise is a sleight of hand. The case is bound by the quintain and constructed through responses to key questions which are themselves influenced by literature and theory.

If I am to present the multiple voices that give life to the case then I need to do so in a way whereby the artificiality and constructed nature of the text is made explicit. At the same time I think there is value in offering an analysis, an interpretation of the data. Consequently I intend to structure the final thesis to provide the reader with a brief insight into each of the participants – their personal thoughts, feelings and actions - on a school by school basis. This will be followed by a chapter exploring my own learning and its longer term impact on my practice. A more traditional analysis drawing together some of the key strands and issues will be preceded by a presentation of some of the raw data in the form of a Readers Theatre.

I have chosen this medium rather than other forms of narrative presentation because

Readers Theatre draws attention to its artificiality through the use of stylised conventions. There is no 'acting' as such. However the scripts give us "human beings in 3 dimensions" and the medium can represent phenomena without making fixed meanings and allowing ambiguities and contradictions to emerge. (Donmeyer and Donmeyer 1998)

Readers relate to texts in different ways and I want my thesis to provide a range of access points. Some prefer to hear individual, largely unmediated stories, some prefer interpretation and analysis, others to hear a multiplicity of voices. By presenting the findings in a different ways I hope to assist the reader to make sense of what is a highly complex subject.

### Structure

The final thesis will be approximately 60,000 words and will be structured as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction, research purpose, key questions: 5,000 words

Chapter 2: Context including theoretical frameworks and concepts: 5,000 words

Chapter 3: Approach, method and ethical considerations: 5,000 words

Chapters 4 – 9: Individual stories: 18,000 words in total

Chapter 10: The Researcher's story as participant – 4,000 words

Chapter 11: Readers Theatre: 10,000 words

Chapter 12: Cross-case comparison: 8,000 words

Chapter 13: Conclusion: 6,000 words

Appendices:

Research Proposal

Assignments 1 – 3

Index of data collected

Evaluation report for British Council

Bibliography/References

## Timetable

	Event	Data	Timescales
Literature Review	Planning for Trip	Individual Application forms SWOT analysis Group Application form Timetable for trip	Summer 2007 – Autumn 2007
	TIPD Experience	Individual Journals Focus Groups Talking Heads Photographs British Council Evaluation report Powerpoint presentations	October 2007
	Interim communication	Notes from further meetings, emails, notes from telephone calls	ongoing
	Interviews with individuals and pairs from participating schools	Interviews Transcripts Photographs of work undertaken in schools	Summer 2008 - Spring 2009



	Interviews with School Leaders	Interviews Transcripts	Summer 2008 – Spring 2009
	Analysis of data and production of draft report to share with participants	Annotated drafts	Summer 2009
	Readers' Theatre draft to share with participants	Annotated drafts	Autumn 2009
	Finalising Thesis		Spring 2010 – Summer 2010

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## Appendix Two

Information Sheet: School Leaders

Continuing Professional Development – Sustaining the Learning

2007-2010

Dear colleague

My name is Fiona Denny and I am a County Council Education Adviser and a UEA doctoral student.

The purpose of this information sheet is to give you some more information on the doctoral research I am undertaking and in which you have kindly agreed to take part.

The focus of my research is to investigate the conditions under which the learning resulting from a significant continuing professional development experience can be sustained.

More specifically I want to take a multi-case study approach to examining the initial and subsequent learning of the group (including myself) who undertook the TIPD trip to Durban in South Africa in October 2007.

My intention is to look at the following questions:

What has changed between what was regarded as significant learning at the time and now?

How has the learning manifested itself in classroom practice?

In what ways (if any) has the learning impacted on others?

What helped or hindered the translation of learning into action?

What part does the position of the individual in the organisation play in introducing and sustaining change?

What part does the leader of the organisation play in helping sustain learning and transform it into action?

I intend to do this through a detailed consideration of individual experiences and a comparison between those experiences.

This will involve using a range of materials, interview notes and group discussions arising from planning the TIPD trip and during the trip itself. It will also involve further interviews and discussions with the participants and yourself to look at any impact within the school or the wider community since the experience.

I am grateful to you for agreeing to participate in this research but wanted to reassure you that everything you say will remain confidential and I will not be attributing opinions or quotations to any named individual. You are also free to withdraw from the process at any stage and request that the information you have provided is not used in the final report.

I would like to tape record any interviews but will give you the transcriptions to check for accuracy and the transcriptions and tape recordings will not be seen or heard by anyone else without your express permission and will be destroyed no later than 5 years following the end of the research

Relevant chapters of the draft thesis will also be shared with you so that you can comment on them before they are finalised.

Because I am a doctoral student at the UEA the conduct of this project will be overseen by the UEA ethics committee and my UEA supervisor, Barbara Zamorski.

I give below an indication of the timetable for research over the next 2 ½ years although this may change in line with colleagues' availability or the demands of the research itself.

	Event	Data	Timescales
Literature Review	Planning for Trip	Individual Application forms SWOT analysis Group Application form Timetable for trip	Summer 2007 – Autumn 2007
	TIPD Experience	Individual Journals Focus Groups Talking Heads Photographs British Council Evaluation report Powerpoint presentations	October 2007
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	Interviews with School Leaders	Interviews Transcripts	Summer 2008 – Spring 2009
	Analysis of data and production of draft report to share with participants	Annotated drafts	Summer 2009
	Readers' Theatre draft to share with participants	Annotated drafts	Autumn 2009
	Finalising Thesis		Spring 2010 – Summer 2010

If you have any questions during the research process please feel free to contact me direct at Suffolk County Council. My contact details are:

[Fiona.denny@educ.suffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:Fiona.denny@educ.suffolkcc.gov.uk) or telephone 01473 264851.

I attach a consent form to this information sheet and would be grateful if you would sign and return it to confirm that you are content to participate in the research.

I look forward to working with you on what I anticipate will be a very interesting and useful project.

Best wishes

Fiona Denny

UEA Doctoral Thesis

Fiona Denny

CPD – Sustaining the Learning: Consent Form: School Leaders

2007 – 2010

Name:

Role in School:

School/Organisation:

Contact Details:

I confirm that I have received and read a copy of the Information Sheet outlining Fiona Denny's proposed research for her doctoral thesis.

I agree to participate in the research and to Fiona's use of the information I have provided.

I understand that this material will not be shared publicly without my permission and that direct quotations from the data I have provided will not be attributed to me without my permission. I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the process at any time and request my data is not used in the thesis.

I also agree to my name being mentioned in acknowledgement of my contribution to this research.

Signed:

Dated:

Information Sheet: TIPD Participants

Continuing Professional Development – Sustaining the Learning

2007-2010

Dear colleague

My name is Fiona Denny and I am a County Council Education Adviser and a UEA doctoral student.

The purpose of this information sheet is to give you some more information on the doctoral research I am undertaking and in which you have kindly agreed to take part.

The focus of my research is to investigate the conditions under which the learning resulting from a significant continuing professional development experience can be sustained.

More specifically I want to take a multi-case study approach to examining the initial and subsequent learning of the group (including myself) who undertook the TIPD trip to Durban in South Africa in October 2007.

My intention is to look at the following questions:

What has changed between what was regarded as significant learning at the time and now?

How has the learning manifested itself in classroom practice?

In what ways (if any) has the learning impacted on others?

What helped or hindered the translation of learning into action?

What part does the position of the individual in the organisation play in introducing and sustaining change?



What part does the leader of the organisation play in helping sustain learning and transform it into action?

I intend to do this through a detailed consideration of individual experiences and a comparison between those experiences.

This will involve using the original applications for the TIPD trip, the notes from our planning meetings and related emails, the materials generated during our visit (eg focus group notes and transcripts, the Talking Heads DVD, individual evaluations and the group evaluation reports, photographs and the individual learning journals we compiled). It will also involve further interviews and discussions with yourselves and, with their permission, CPD leaders or headteachers in your schools together with emails and other materials sent by group members. Indeed anything you are willing to share with me that has been produced or resulted from the Durban experience.

I am grateful to you for agreeing to participate in this research but wanted to reassure you that everything you say will remain confidential and I will not be attributing opinions or quotations to any named individual. You are also free to withdraw from the process at any stage and request that the information you have provided is not used in the final report.

I would like to tape record any interviews but will give you the transcriptions to check for accuracy and the transcriptions and tape recordings will not be seen or heard by anyone else without your express permission and will be destroyed no later than 5 years following the end of the research. I would also like to use

some of the photographs in my final report but again I would not do so without the express permission of the photographer.

Relevant chapters of the draft thesis will also be shared with you so that you can comment on them before they are finalised.

Because I am a doctoral student at the UEA the conduct of this project will be overseen by the UEA ethics committee and my UEA supervisor, Barbara Zamorski.

I give below an indication of the timetable for research over the next 2 ½ years although this may change in line with colleagues' availability or the demands of the research itself.

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[Fiona.denny@educ.suffolkcc.gov.uk](mailto:Fiona.denny@educ.suffolkcc.gov.uk) or telephone 01473 264851.

I attach a consent form to this information sheet and would be grateful if you would sign and return it to confirm that you are content to participate in the research.

I look forward to continuing to work with you on what I anticipate will be a very interesting and useful project.

Best wishes

Fiona Denny

UEA Doctoral Thesis

Fiona Denny

CPD – Sustaining the Learning: Consent Form: TIPD Participants

2007 – 2010

Name:

Role in School:

School/Organisation:

Contact Details:

I confirm that I have received and read a copy of the Information Sheet outlining Fiona Denny's proposed research for her doctoral thesis.

I agree to participate in the research and to Fiona's use of data I have provided including emails, interviews, group discussions, application forms, my personal learning journal, focus and planning group meetings, the DVD Talking Heads.

I understand that this material will not be shared publicly without my permission and that direct quotations from the data I have provided will not be attributed to me without my permission. I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the process at any time and request my data is not used in the thesis.

I also agree to my name being mentioned in acknowledgement of my contribution to this research.

Signed:

Dated:

## Appendix Three

### Glossary

CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CWDC	Children's Workforce Development Council
CYP	Children and Young People
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DoH	Department of Health
ECM	Every Child Matters
HE	Higher Education
HLTA	Higher Level Teaching Assistant
LA	Local Authority
LAA	Local Area Agreement
LARC	Local Authorities Research Consortium
NCSL	National College for School Leadership
NUT	National Union of Teachers
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
TCRU	Thomas Coram Research Unit
TDA	Training and Development Agency for Schools
TIPD	Teachers International Professional Development
WAMG	Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group

Appendix Four

No	Theme	Categories	Aide Memoire	Feeling	Elements of the Model	Personal, professional or research	Type of outcome Seeing, Hearing differently - Thinking, Feeling, Doing or Being different
1	Action	Desire to make a difference		Need	Stage 4 outcomes	Personal	Doing
	Action	Evangelical - spreading the word		Need to act	Stage 4 outcomes	Personal	Doing
	Action	Fair Trade		Empowerment	Stage 4 outcomes	Personal	Doing
	Action	Fund Raising		Empowerment	Stage 4 outcomes	Personal	Doing
	Action	How best to help		Frustration	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal	Feeling
2	Adjustment	Management of change		Self belief/widening circle	Stage 4 indirect influences	Personal	Doing
	Adjustment	Transitions	Mostly FD transformation not just change - life changing events	Pain	Stage 4 outcomes	Personal	Being
	Adjustment	You don't know how lucky you are		Annoyance	Stage 4 outcomes- indirect influence	Personal	Thinking
3	audit culture	Movement to action		Need to make a difference	Stage 3 encouragers	Personal	Thinking
	audit culture	Need for a focus		Desire to help	Stage 2 reactors	Personal	Feeling
4	Changes over time	Examples	Examples of how we have changed in thinking and feeling overtime		Stage 4 outcomes	Personal	Feeling

No	Theme	Categories	Aide Memoire	Feeling	Elements of the Model	Personal, professional or research	Type of outcome Seeing, Hearing differently - Thinking, Feeling, Doing or Being different
5	Choices	Innovation, PR and the day job	Sustaining links with S Africa, doing what we wanted to do when we came home	Juggling	Stage 3 encouragers	Personal	Feeling
6	Complexity	Exploding stereotypes	about complexity, not fitting moulds, not inviting simple emotional responses	Embarrassment	Stage 4 Outcomes	Personal	Thinking
	Complexity	Materialism	2 refs - one our own materialism but also that of Chelsea Prep school		Stage 4 Outcomes	personal	Thinking
	Complexity	Objects of Pity	limited resources but still plenty to teach us	Admiration	Stage 4 Outcomes	Personal	Thinking
	Complexity	Staged event Making links	Each day something more shocking	Being 'handled'	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Seeing
7	Connections			Recognition	Stage 4 outcome	Personal	Doing

No	Theme	Categories	Aide Memoire	Feeling	Elements of the Model	Personal, professional or research	Type of outcome Seeing, Hearing differently - Thinking, Feeling, Doing or Being different
	Connections	The same and yet different	eg England as it was years ago, eg with us having the same interests but different emphasis)	eureka moments	Stage 4 outcomes	personal	Thinking
8	Context	Fairness	Different forms of inequality	Indignation	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Feeling
	Context	Poverty		Shock	Stage 1 Triggers	Personal	Seeing
9	Contrasts	Contrast in attitudes SA and England		surprise/intrigue	Stage 1 Triggers	Personal	Seeing
	Contrasts	Defeating expectations		Mismatch - shock	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Seeing/hearing/feeling
	Contrasts	Generosity despite poverty		Admiration	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Seeing
	Contrasts	Hope and Coping		Admiration	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Seeing
	Contrasts	Joy and Poverty		Admiration	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Seeing
	Contrasts	Juxtaposition wealth and poverty		Indignation	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Seeing
10	Culture	Examples	Aspects of SA, English, organisational culture - description and comparison		Stage 4 outcomes	Personal	Thinking



No	Theme	Categories	Aide Memoire	Feeling	Elements of the Model	Personal, professional or research	Type of outcome Seeing, Hearing differently - Thinking, Feeling, Doing or Being different
11	Driver	Personality	Reflection on personalities and what this means for change		Stage 2/3 Enabler	Personal	Thinking
12	Emotional Dimension	Examples			Stage 2 Reactors	Personal	Feeling
13	Emotive words and phrases	Examples			Stage 2 reactors	Personal	Thinking
14	Empathy	Identifying with others		Empathy	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Feeling
	Empathy	Touching Others	Back in England - telling stories that struck chords	Need to share	Stage 4 outcome	Personal	Doing
15	Enabler/Barrier	Going alone		Anxiety	Stage 2/3 encouragers	Personal	Feeling
	Enabler/Barrier	Personality of the institution	Support from management and school		Stage 3 encouragers	Personal	Feeling
	Enabler/Barrier	Stopping Momentum	Barriers to action - eg other activity, slowness of SA to respond	Frustration and analysis	Stage 2/3 encouragers	Personal	Feeling
	Enabler/Barrier	Timing of Interviews	Reflection on change in thinking over time	Reflection	Stage 3 encouragers	Personal	Thinking
	Enabler/Barrier	Travelling alone		Anxiety	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Doing

No	Theme	Categories	Aide Memoire	Feeling	Elements of the Model	Personal, professional or research	Type of outcome Seeing, Hearing differently - Thinking, Feeling, Doing or Being different
16	environment	Strange contexts	Didn't know what we were going to - newness	Defensiveness	Stage 1 Triggers	Personal	Seeing
17	Experiential Learning	Examples	Seeing and understanding - making meaning from knowledge		Stage 4 outcomes	Personal	Doing
18	Family	Proprietary Discourse	FD's' language - what I have done 'my HLTAs	Pride/maternal	Stage 2 and 3 encouragers	Personal	Feeling
19	Global Awareness	Making better use of natural resources		Guilt	Stage 4 outcomes	Personal	Doing
20	Global Awareness	Waste and Recycling		Guilt	Stage 4 outcomes	personal	Doing
21	Guilt	Guilt		Guilt	Stage 2 Reactors	personal	Feeling
	Guilt	Guilt as a motivator		Guilt	Stage 2 Reactors	personal	Feeling
	Guilt	Wasted opportunity		Frustration	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Feeling
22	Identity	Confidence levels and self belief		Self esteem	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal	Being
	Identity	Core beliefs and self censorship	links with identity	Guilt	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal	Feeling

No	Theme	Categories	Aide Memoire	Feeling	Elements of the Model	Personal, professional or research	Type of outcome Seeing, Hearing differently - Thinking, Feeling, Doing or Being different
	Identity	Examples	Examples of personal changes	Understanding who I am	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal	Being
23	Immortality	embedding and sustaining change		Desire to make a difference	Stage 4 outcomes	Personal	Feeling
24	Inspiration source	Examples	Examples of inspiration	Admiration	Stage 1 Triggers	Personal/Professional	Feeling
25	Interests	Learning difficulty		Amazement/admiration	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Seeing
	Interests	Physical disability		Amazement/shock/admiration	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Seeing
	Interests	Secondary/Primary Difference	Working with limited resources in SA schools, bringing Africa into lessons in England	curiosity leading to reflection	Stage 1 Triggers	Professional	Seeing
	Interests	TA Career Progression	Opps to progress in England	Reflection	Stage 1 Triggers	Professional	Thinking
26	Key Qs	Thesis question			N/A	Research	Thinking
	Key Qs	What is significant			n/a	Research	Thinking
	Key Qs	What is the learning			n/a	Research	Thinking
27	Learning new skills	Examples	Hannah's drumming (1 ref)		Stage 4 outcomes	Professional	Doing
28	Memory		Freshness of memory		Stage 2 Memory Markers	Personal	Thinking

<b>No</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Aide Memoire</b>	<b>Feeling</b>	<b>Elements of the Model</b>	<b>Personal, professional or research</b>	<b>Type of outcome Seeing, Hearing differently - Thinking, Feeling, Doing or Being different</b>
29	Organisational culture	Access opportunities	Opps to spread the word	Empower/disempowering	Stage 3 encouragers	Professional	Doing
	Organisational culture	Challenges - support staff	Status, limits of role, appreciation of role	Disempowered/Appreciation	Stage 3 encouragers	Personal	Feeling
	Organisational culture	Leadership		Empower/disempowering	Stage 3 encouragers	Professional	Feeling
	Organisational culture	Power	Status feeling able to act	Empowerment/disempowerment	Stage 3 encouragers	Personal	Feeling
	Organisational culture	Pressures for no change		Guilt? Defensiveness?	Stage 3 encouragers	Personal	Feeling
	Organisational culture	Role conflict		Frustration	Stage 3 encouragers	Personal	Feeling
	Organisational culture	Seeking permission		Anxiety	Stage 3 encouragers	Personal	Feeling
	Organisational culture	Value to the school			Stage 3 encouragers	Professional	Thinking
30	Pedagogy	Changing our practice	Examples of change in practice as a result of SA visit	Action based on reflection and comparison	Stage 4 outcomes	Professional	Doing
	Pedagogy	Curriculum leadership		Action based on reflection and comparison	Stage 4 outcomes	Professional	Doing

No	Theme	Categories	Aide Memoire	Feeling	Elements of the Model	Personal, professional or research	Type of outcome Seeing, Hearing differently - Thinking, Feeling, Doing or Being different
	Pedagogy	Good practice inspite of circumstances		Admiration	Stage 4 outcomes	Professional	Thinking
	Pedagogy	Making it real for the children		Action based on reflection and comparison	Stage 4 outcomes	Professional	Doing
	Pedagogy	Nurturing independence	In special school	Admiration	Stage 1 Triggers	Personal	Seeing
	Pedagogy	Teaching Globalisation		Action based on reflection and comparison	Stage 4 outcomes	Professional	Doing
	Pedagogy	Using the experience in teaching		Action based on reflection and comparison	Stage 4 outcomes	Professional	Doing
	Pedagogy	Professional skills		Action based on reflection and comparison	Stage 4 outcomes	Professional	Doing
31	Personal Ambition - Team Durban	Examples			Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal	Thinking
32	Personal change	Appreciating what you have		warmth	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal	Feeling
	Personal change	Empathising with others		understanding	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal	Feeling
	Personal Change	Examples			Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal	Being

<b>No</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Aide Memoire</b>	<b>Feeling</b>	<b>Elements of the Model</b>	<b>Personal, professional or research</b>	<b>Type of outcome Seeing, Hearing differently - Thinking, Feeling, Doing or Being different</b>
	Personal change	Expanding horizons	Our own and the children we work with	ambition	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal/Professional	Being
	Personal change	Putting things in perspective	Getting less stressed by trivia, appreciating what you have	tolerance	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal	Thinking/Feeling
	Personal change	Questioning the status quo	esp FD and AW	challenge	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	personal	Doing
	Personal change	Respecting different skill sets	Olive referral to Ann in school	Appreciation	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Professional	Feeling
	Personal change	Taking Risks - widening circle		Confidence	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal	Doing
	Personal change	Tolerance of others		Understanding diversity	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal	Feeling
	Personal change	Valuing others		Love	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal	Feeling
	Personal change	Willingness to take on new challenges		Confidence	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal	Being
	Personal change	Work-life balance		Reflection	Stage 4 outcomes - indirect influences	Personal	Doing

No	Theme	Categories	Aide Memoire	Feeling	Elements of the Model	Personal, professional or research	Type of outcome Seeing, Hearing differently - Thinking, Feeling, Doing or Being different
33	Political and structural discourse	Examples	On politics, pedagogy, power structures, apartheid	Reflections	Stage 4 outcomes	Personal	Thinking
34	Professional and Personal Journey	Examples		Action based on reflection and comparison	Stage 4 outcomes	Personal/Professional	Doing
35	Professional relationships	Reaction of others		Empowering/disempowering	Stage 3 encouragers	Professional	Feeling
	Professional relationships	Working together TAs and Teachers		Appreciation	Stage 4 outcomes	Professional	Doing
36	Reflection	Reflection	couple of quotes about significance and thinking		N/A	Research	Thinking
37	Relationships	Getting to know the individual	1 reference - Hannah Toby	Admiration	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Doing
	Relationships	Team Durban dynamics		Shared experience	Stage 2 encouragers	Personal	Feeling
38	Researcher role	Ethical tensions	FD's insider outsider role	Tension/guilt	N/A	Research	Thinking
	Researcher role	Insider and Outsider tensions		Understanding who I am	n/a	Research	Thinking
39	S A character	Language setting tone			Stage 1 Triggers	Personal	Hearing
	S A character	Motivation		Admiration	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Hearing
	S A character	Resilience		Admiration	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Seeing

No	Theme	Categories	Aide Memoire	Feeling	Elements of the Model	Personal, professional or research	Type of outcome Seeing, Hearing differently - Thinking, Feeling, Doing or Being different
	S A character	Spontaneity		Admiration	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Seeing
	S A character	Understatement or hyperbole		confusion	Stage 1 Triggers	Personal	Hearing
	SA Character	Clash	1 ref HT at Addington Gold	discomfort	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Hearing
	SA Character	Futile gestures	1 reference school trying to offer us hospitality	Inadequacy	Stage 1 Triggers	personal	Seeing
40	Teaching and Learning	Examples	Examples of inspirational practice		Stage 1 Triggers	Professional	Seeing/Hearing
41	Triggers	Examples			Stage 1 Triggers	Personal	Feeling
42	Types of Impact	Examples			Stage 4 outcome	Personal/Professional	Thinking/doing/being



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