PROBLEMATISING THE CONCEPT OF 'PERSONAL GEOGRAPHY' WITHIN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

The thesis investigates the concept of 'personal geographies' as introduced in the 2007 National Curriculum for England (QCA, 2007), and considers the implications for initial teacher education and for the teaching and learning of geography in secondary schools. The inclusion of personal geographies seemed to offer the potential for a curriculum that values diversity and is relevant to the personal experiences and values of learners. However, it is argued that the concept was never adequately defined or elaborated in curriculum and policy documents, and that the attempt to bring the 'personal' into the classroom can have unintended consequences for teacher education and pupil experience.

Using a case study methodology, the thesis explores different angles upon and responses to the concept of 'personal geography'. It begins by examining the historical and policy background, including the changing relationship over time between school and academic geography, and the 'personalisation' agenda which dominated education policy in England in the mid-2000s. This provides the context for the empirical investigation, which explores the views of student geography teachers at a large teacher education institution in England and of pupils in the schools that worked in partnership with this higher education institution.

Key themes emerging from the study include: the nature of the transition from geography graduate to novice teacher, and the ways in which personal experience complicates this transition; the risk of silencing certain voices and experiences, and under-valuing certain kinds of knowledge; and the significance of classroom space in facilitating or suppressing the expression of personal experiences. The thesis also raises questions about policy-driven interventions, where these operate in advance of adequate curricular, professional or research knowledge.

Although the 2007 geography curriculum was superseded by later versions, the issues identified in the thesis concerning the concept of personal

geography are, it is argued, of continuing significance for those with an interest in the nature and status of geography as a school subject, and the education of student teachers of geography.

Acknowledgements

Glossary

11-16 refers to education for pupils aged 11 to 16 years

11-18 refers to education for pupils aged 11 to 18 years

A4 A paper size in the UK of 210mm by 297 mm

AFL Assessment for Learning, a National Strategy since 2008

APG Action Plan for Geography - a joint plan for the two societies Geographical Association (GA) and the Royal Geographical Society – Institute of British Geographers (RGS-IBG) funded by the government (2006-11)

Avery Hill The name 'Avery Hill' became linked to the curriculum development project Geography for the Young School Leaver (GYSL) in the 1980s, as the project was located in the Avery Hill College of Education (now part of Greenwich University), and the legacy of the 'Avery Hill' project is evident in a GCSE (Specification B) offered by the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC)

BA Bachelor of Arts Degree

Block A or B refers to the placement schools during the PGCE training year, Block A - September to December, and Block B - February to May

BSc Bachelor of Science Degree

CSE Certificate for Secondary Education qualification for 16 year olds available 1965-88

Dearing Review First review of the National Curriculum led by Lord Dearing published in 1994 (Dearing, 1994)

DCSF Department for Children, Schools and Families 2007-10

DFE Department for Education 1992-1995 and 2010 to present

DFEE Department for Education and Employment 1995-2001

DFES Department for Education and Skills 2001- 2007

National Strategy – Introduced in 2002, a series of educational reforms starting with the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) and the National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) and in 2008 the Assessment for Learning Strategy (AFLS)

GA The Geography Association founded in 1893, the association for geography educators

GCSE General Certificate for Secondary Education qualification for 16 year olds since 1986

Geography 16-19 an A level course offered by the EdExcel examination board which has its roots in the Geography 16-19 curriculum project (1976 - 1979)

GIS Geographical Information Systems, a method of interrogating spatial data within digitalised maps

GPS Global Positioning System, uses satellite information to locate data

GSIP Geography, Schools, Industry Project, a curriculum project (1984-91)

GTE Geography Teacher Educator

GTTR Graduate Teacher Training Registry, the online portal for students applying for an Initial Teacher Education course (to 2013), merged in 2014 with the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)

GWG Geography Working Group – the group of experts tasked with drawing up the first geography National Curriculum for England

GYSL Geography for the Young School Leaver, also called the Avery Hill Project, a curriculum project (1970-1975)

IBG Institute of British Geographers, now part of the RGS (Royal Geographical Society)

IOE   Institute of Education, i.e. University of London or Manchester

Metropolitan University

ITE   Initial Teacher Education

ITT   Initial Teacher Training

KS   Key stages of education in English schools for pupils aged 5 to 16

KS1   Age 5-7 years

KS2   Age 7-11 years

KS3   Age 11-14 years

KS4   Age 14-16 years

MA   Master's qualification

M60   The Greater Manchester motorway ring road

NC   National Curriculum (for England) from 1988

OCR   Oxford and Cambridge and the Royal Society of Arts, an examination

company administering GCSE and A level examinations

Ofsted   The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and

Skills are the inspection and regulatory body for England

Paul Hamlyn Foundation A company and registered charity that provides

grants to organisations

PGCE   Post Graduate Certificate of Education refers to the Initial

Teacher Education course (180 days) and the award outcome

Professional mentor An experienced teacher in school, often a senior

teacher, who has responsibility for monitoring all the student teachers within

their school

Programme of study Way of organising subject content to be taught, the knowledge, skills and understandings which all pupils should be taught during a key stage of education

QCA The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority was set up by the Labour Government by The Education Act of 1997 (to 2010)

QTS Qualified Teacher Status, mandatory qualification required in order to teach in state school in England

RE Religious Education - a school subject

RGS The Royal Geographical Society founded in 1830, the learned society and professional body for geography and geographers

RSA Royal Society of Arts

Subject mentor The subject teacher with responsibility for monitoring and guiding a student teacher's progress in school

TA Teaching Assistant

UK United Kingdom

UN United Nations

YPG Young People's Geographies, a curriculum project funded by the Geographical Association (2006-11)

Chapter 1 - Introduction

This thesis investigates the concept of 'personal geographies' as included in the 2007 National Curriculum for England (QCA, 2007). The genesis of the concept and the implications of its inclusion within curricular policy for the training of secondary school geography teachers are considered. The 2007 National Curriculum offered the potential of a school geography curriculum that valued difference as the subject was newly centred on the personal experiences and spaces of the learner and her/his connections to the world. The thesis explores the extent to which this potential was fulfilled.

The thesis also raises questions about education policy-making and implementation, as it explores the potential ramifications of a policy-driven intervention that operated in advance of curriculum, pedagogy and professional understandings. As a teacher educator I was both intrigued and concerned by the implications of a concept within policy that is not only new to experienced practitioners but one that, as I will argue, appears to defy clarification. There appears to be confusion and contestation about the way in which 'personal geography' is defined in the 2007 curriculum in relation to the boundaries of existing curricular aspects such as 'local geography'. Moreover, I will argue that there is a lack of clarity about the way in which 'personal geography' connects with children's life experiences, and where the boundaries could or should be drawn in this regard.

In order to better understand the complexities surrounding the introduction of the 'personal' into the school geography curriculum, the thesis explores its ramifications in several domains: within the academic discipline of geography; within initial teacher education; within the school subject boundaries of geography; within the physical (and public) boundaries of the classroom; and in relation to personal agency on the part of both teachers and children.

Although the 2007 geography curriculum was superseded by later versions, the issues that I identify in this thesis are, I will argue, of continuing significance for those with an interest in the nature and status of geography as a school subject, and the education of student teachers of geography.

Aims of the research

There are two main aims at the heart of this thesis:

- To identify complexities, conflicts and resistances associated with the introduction of the concept 'personal geographies' within curriculum policy, initial teacher education, classroom practice and pupil experience
- To evaluate the positive and negative implications of a personal focus within geography education in secondary schools

In exploring these two main questions, the thesis will consider a range of questions including:

- Is the concept of the 'personal' problematic?
- How does it connect to the notion of experience?
- How does the policy inclusion contribute positively, or alternatively negatively, to the school geography curriculum, pedagogy and pupil experience?
- How can teacher educators prepare student teachers to value pupils' personal geographies?
- How do student geography teachers navigate between the academic discipline, their own personal geographical experiences and the lives of the pupils?
- What is the relationship between the student's prior geographical experiences and the process of becoming a teacher?

- To what extent does educational discourse, and in particular classroom discourse, enable or constrain the sharing of personal geographies?
- Do educational spaces enable or constrain the sharing of personal geographies?
- What are the ethical issues of drawing upon pupils' personal geographical experiences in the public arena of the classroom?

Design of the study

A case study methodology was deemed most appropriate to address the proposed research questions. Data were collected from a variety of sources including: cohorts of students taking an Initial Teacher Education course, geography professionals, classroom observations, and policy documents. From these multiple sources the thesis explores different viewpoints of, and responses to, the concept 'personal geography'.

Key issues that this thesis will address

The thesis is particularly interested in the challenges of this policy intervention (using pupils' personal geographies) for student geography teachers. The thesis focuses on three key issues: transitions, silences, and educational spaces. Additional issues are also discussed in later chapters.

I highlight transitions as a key issue in becoming a geography teacher: for example, the transition from undergraduate scholar of the discipline to teacher of the school subject. Such transitions always have a personal dimension and therefore are relevant to the notion of personal geographies. The relationship between the academic discipline of geography and the school subject is explored, highlighting tensions and complexities for the graduate geographer training to become a teacher.

'Silencing' is explored as a potential empowering strategy used by classroom actors, both pupils and novice teachers, in response to the policy inclusion and expectation that teachers use 'personal geographical experiences' in the timetabled geography lesson within classroom (public) spaces.

The third issue explored in depth throughout the thesis is 'space'. The thesis considers a range of English educational spaces (including spaces used for pupil focus groups) as potential sites for pupils sharing personal experiences with their peers, teachers and self as researcher. I question the impact such spaces might have upon classroom discourse.

Underlying the key issues of 'transitions', 'silences' and 'space' is a concern with power: from the power of policy documents to the power relationships and dynamics within classrooms, and the power inherent in access to educational spaces.

Personal Interest

For a thesis focused upon the concept of 'personal geography', I feel justified in taking some textual space to share my personal interest in exploring this geographical focus.

Attending an International Conference on Urban Education at Manchester Metropolitan University (December 2006), I was intrigued and unsettled by the work of Lisa Mazzei (2006) on 'Silences', which investigated how white student teachers resisted thinking about the impact of their 'whiteness' upon their engagements with learners. The conference provoked me to think deeply about 'place' and its link with personal experience, particularly a geography teacher's engagement with 'place/s', and whether silencing, failing to acknowledge our prior engagements with 'place/s', may influence classroom encounters with pupils learning geography. My reflection upon the issues sparked by the conference

deepened during the following academic year (2007-8) as I held a temporary post of Leader of Partnerships (Secondary Programmes) in my institution and became very concerned with the placing of 600+ student teachers into partnership schools.

I continued to reflect upon my engagement with 'places' within my role as a geography educator: teaching about 'places'; teaching the geography concept of 'place'; and 'placing' student teachers within partnership schools. Beyond my professional role as a teacher educator, I reflected upon my fascination with the concepts of 'sense of place' and 'place attachment', aware that for many people there are powerful emotional links to particular landscapes and places. In comparison to my partner, I do not have a strong personal, emotional connection to particular places. My partner Francis has a very different connection to places: he is fiercely, emotionally connected to the small Pennine town where we live. The ghosts and traces of his past relatives and prior experiences are visible to him and surround him. With some frustration I cannot see or experience the place as he does. I am in many ways disconnected from the town I have chosen to live in, limited to appreciate its present attractions and amenities, and thus have a very different engagement with this place than my partner does. This reflection resonated with my professional role of placing student teachers within schools as I posed the question: do student geography teachers need to appreciate the unseen connections that pupils may have with particular places?

In comparison to my partner, my somewhat detached engagement with places may be the result of experiences during my formative years, from the ages of six to 12, commencing with moving house (at the age of six) from a street where cousins also lived, where my father had previously lived as a child, and where I was surrounded by traces and memories of the past. My parents seized the opportunity of a Greater London Council (GLC) mortgage, as part of a 1960s scheme to encourage families to move out of council-owned houses. My position within the family as the third out of five children buffered for me the direct experience of moving

from London. As a young child of six years, I moved with my family to live on a brand new housing estate approximately 40 miles north of friends and family and past encounters. The muddy building site/developing housing estate was populated with people who, like my family, had no (or were unlikely to have) connections or memories connected to that place, as many were from London. Essentially, we were pioneers within this place.

I was registered at the local school in this new location, which like our house was brand new. My name was first (alphabetically) on the register at this new primary school. No other child or teacher had any prior connections with this place, and the school had no traces of the past, therefore no memory hooks for those sharing these spaces. My older siblings were registered at local existing schools, and did not share my experience of a new home and a new school, and my younger siblings attended the same school as me in later years. My formative experience of place (both school and home) was buffered by a small cohort of other children, each of us having no prior connections to the new buildings. Passing the 11 plus exam, I was allocated to a new comprehensive school, again in a new building, sharing with others also new to the place. My secondary school was two bus journeys away from home, and I joined a class of pupils who, like me, were travelling across the town to this new school.

Obviously no two children experience places or spaces in the same way, and my personal reflections raise questions about prior connections (my own or others') with places. My formative experiences of brand new buildings may have shaped my engagement with places today. These reflections are particularly pertinent as I engage in the final editing of this thesis, as the campus I have worked in (since 2001) closes, and the next cohort of student geography teachers will be joining me as 'pioneers' on our new campus.

My reflections about places, initially stimulated by the work of Lisa Mazzei as noted above, became particularly pertinent as I read with interest within the 2007 programme of study for geography the inclusion of 'personal scale', 'personal experiences of geography', and reference to pupils' 'life experiences' (QCA, 2007). This study has therefore emerged from an intrinsic interest in places, including my personal early experiences of places, and my growing concern as a teacher educator with the question of whether the schools in which I placed student teachers made a difference to their transitions in becoming geography teachers.

My interest in 'places' further shifted whilst working as a Community Geographer (2011-12) on the 'Making My Place in the World' project, exploring strategies to empower pupils to share their views and aspirations for their local area with place managers, to a greater appreciation of the geographical concept 'space'.

Overview of the thesis

Having introduced the research, I will conclude with a brief overview of the remaining chapters of the thesis.   Chapter 2 looks at the emergence of the concept of 'personal geography' within the 2007 UK National Curriculum. This contextual chapter commences with a historic overview of developments in school geography including the relationship between the academic discipline and school curriculum. The chapter attempts to track the genesis of the concept of 'personal geographies' within the 2007 National Curriculum, and documents various notions of 'personal geography', from the academic discipline to training guidance for student teachers. The prevailing educational discourse (around 2007) of personalisation and unquestioned assumptions are problematised.

Chapter 3 draws upon the work of some contemporary theorists to consider concepts of 'power', 'space' and 'silences' in order to problematise the challenges for practitioners in implementing policy. I

have been keen to employ and articulate the two disciplines of geography and education within the thesis. Space is a key geographical concept, part of the geography curriculum to be taught by the novice teacher, and also relates to the sites where pupils learn geography within classroom spaces. Silences and the possibility of fullness of voices (of the pupils and novice teachers) are explored to problematise who benefits from sharing life experiences and personal geographies within classrooms. Within this chapter the concepts 'power', 'space' and 'silence' are critically explored in relation to classroom discourse.

Chapter 4 provides details of the design and conduct of the empirical research, commencing with a rationale for adopting a qualitative approach, followed by an exploration of using a case study as an appropriate qualitative methodology for addressing my research questions. My disillusionment with prior ways of researching is reflected upon, and quantitative approaches are rejected in favour of an entanglement within the data. My reflexive, personal, transformative research journey is shared and adds to an enhanced, at times uncomfortable, understanding of self that accompanies the thesis research on the personal geographies of 'others' (pupils and student teachers).

Chapter 5 is the first of two central analysis chapters. The reader is taken through a linear process of analysis mirroring the sequential approaches taken by the author. The empirical data, particularly data voiced by research participants, is represented in substantial segments to offer a vicarious experience of the interviews for the reader (Stake, 1995). Transitions are highlighted as the student of the academic discipline of geography transforms into a teacher of the school subject geography.

Chapter 6 returns to power, space and silences to problematise the concept of personal geography within the UK geography educational spaces, with a focus on the teaching and learning of geography (as a school subject) facilitated by student teachers for groups of pupils, the

expected beneficiaries of 'personal geographies' within classroom 'spaces'.

In Chapter 7 I draw out some of the implications of the issues and concerns raised within the thesis for education policy, teacher education, research, classroom practice and the geography curriculum. Limitations of the research and lines of flight for further investigation are offered. The thesis will conclude with a brief consideration of the 'new' 2014 curriculum that replaced the 2007 curriculum. The thesis in its written form will have traces and voices of many others; some will be visually evident and others will remain whispers. All have helped shape this thesis.

Chapter 2 - The emergence and status of personal geographies as a curriculum focus

The 2007 National Curriculum for geography, in which the topic of personal geographies first appeared, was the product of a convergence of contemporary and past intellectual, educational and political currents. In this chapter I attempt to unravel some key moments in this 'back story', in order to trace the emergence of the 'turn' to the personal in the geography curriculum. It has been important for my research to comprehend these antecedents in order to develop a critical purchase on the implications of the 2007 innovation for teacher educators, student teachers and children.

I will attempt to provide some insights into the complex history of the emergence and development of geography both as a school and as an academic subject, and the implications for the 2007 curriculum. I do not offer a comprehensive historical account. Rather, I hope to provide some insights into the ways in which the fortunes of school geography have been subject to shifting relationships between schools, academia and the prevailing policy climate. I consider how these relationships have been influenced by the geography associations: notably, the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) and the Geography Association (GA). I discuss the significantly altered relationship of school, academic and professional geography brought about by the establishment of a National Curriculum, which rendered the geography curriculum subject to strong intervention by policy-makers. Turning to the 2007 iteration of the National Curriculum, I locate the turn to the personal in the geography curriculum partly within the 'personalisation' agenda of the then Labour government.

The chapter also outlines the strong mediating role that has been, and continues to be, played by ITE geography educators, who necessarily act as 'brokers' between the university and school subject, as they help their

students negotiate the gap, or clash, between their own 'personal' knowledge of geography, derived from their experience and their university studies, and geography as a school curriculum subject. In later sections of the chapter, I look at the 2007 curriculum itself, and at the ways in which the personal focus was represented in (or, in many cases, absent from) textbooks and guidance. By the end of the chapter, I aim both to have contextualised and to have problematised the emergence of a focus on the personal, as a grounding for the empirical study reported in later chapters.

Relationships between university geography and school geography: a brief historical overview

As with many other disciplines (see Stengel, 1997), the relation between geography as a school subject and as a university discipline has often been somewhat complex. It has also been subject to change over time. Walford, in his historical overview of the emergence of *Geography in British schools* (Walford, 2001), states that geography had its place as a school subject before it gained status as a university discipline. According to Walford, school geography, which first emerged in the late 17th century and 18th century, originally focused on the mathematics behind longitude and latitude and how maps were constructed (2001:16). Schools' curricula were restricted by the statutes and terms set out in their foundation deeds. With the Education Act of 1840, grammar schools were released from earlier constraints and were able to introduce modern subjects such as geography. Geography's status in the 19th century was linked to trade, transport and mapping of territories, and it was considered a utilitarian subject (see Walford, 2001). Its status as a 'worthwhile' academic subject (Goodson, 2013:90) for all pupils at public (fee-paying) schools had to wait until the 1960s (Walford, 2001:17), or later: 'Indeed as late as 1976 the then GA president noted that in some public schools geography was still regarded as "an inferior academic subject"' (Butt, 1997:10).

Walford notes that the Royal Geographical Society (RGS), founded in 1830, had a significant role to play in consolidating the status of geography as a school subject, and also in establishing it as a university subject. The early days of the RGS were concerned with supporting and guiding explorers and travellers. The RGS expanded its focus to include school geography during the 1860s, and introduced a scheme in 1869 awarding medals to pupils who did best in the annual RGS examination papers, thus providing a steer to teachers of geography. Geography gained status as a national school subject in Forster's Education Act (1870) as one of the 'basic' subjects to be taught in the New Codes of Instruction drawn up in 1871 and 1875 (Walford, 2001:42). Therefore, geography existed as a utilitarian school subject (except for pupils at 'public' schools) before the emergence of geography as an academic discipline.

The RGS was instrumental in geography becoming an academic subject at Oxford University. The RGS appointed Dr James Scott Keltie in 1884 as 'an inspector of geographical appliances' tasked to 'collect and arrange in the Society's premises all the best textbooks, maps, models diagrams and appliances published in England or the Continent' (Walford, 2001:57-59). The exhibition at the RGS (1885-6) was attended by thousands, including a recent Oxford graduate who had read natural sciences and history called Halford Mackinder. Mackinder met Keltie at the exhibition and through conversations with Keltie developed a lasting interest in geography. Mackinder started lecturing for the Oxford Extension Movement, providing lectures for teachers travelling throughout England on 'physiography' and the 'new geography'. The RGS invited Mackinder to present a paper in January 1887 on 'the new geography'. His paper argued for geography as a separate academic study; for extracts of this landmark paper, see Walford (2001:64-65).

The RGS proposed and offered finance to secure a geographical appointment at one or both of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge,

and supported the appointment of Mackinder to Oxford University in 1887. According to Walford:

> …Mackinder was lecturing at Oxford University, with the RGS undertaking to contribute half of his annual salary (£300) over a period of five years. Mackinder's early lectures there were attached to no particular degree programme; although distinctive courses were arranged, geography was to remain under the administrative umbrella of geology until 1916. (Walford, 2001:66)

It is interesting to note that geology was valued as an academic subject prior to geography, that the scientific study of rocks in the late 19th century was considered more gentlemanly and thus an appropriate academic discipline, rather than the utilitarian mathematical subject of geography that took decades to throw off its label as a school subject, 'plagued by its image as essentially for school children' (Goodson, 2013:90). Goodson suggests that such a length of time was necessary to overcome deep-seated resistances to geography becoming an academic discipline and drew attention to a plan which Mackinder had proposed in 1903 as 'an explicit statement of a subject aspiring to academic acceptance'. Mackinder's plan included the following proposals:

> Firstly, we should encourage University Schools of Geography, where Geographers can be made … Secondly, we must persuade at any rate some secondary schools to place geographical teaching of the whole school in the hands of one geographically trained teacher …. Thirdly, we must thrash out by discussion and experimentation what is the best progressive method of common acceptation and upon that method we must base our scheme of examination. Lastly, the examination papers must be set by practical geography teachers. (cited in Goodson, 2013:90)

For Goodson, in his historical overview of the development of geography in *School Subjects and Curriculum Change* (1993), the academic

discipline succeeded in its quest to become a fully-fledged academic subject in the 1960s, 'promoted with full aspirations to the scientific or social scientific character which would finally establish its status at a higher level' (2013:90).

The relationship between academic disciplines and school subjects has also been studied by Stengel (1997) among others. Stengel identified several possible types of relationship, which she formulated as follows:

> (1) that academic disciplines and school subjects are *essentially continuous*; (2) that academic disciplines and school subjects are basically *discontinuous*; (3) that academic disciplines and school subjects are *different but related* in one of three ways: (a) academic discipline precedes school subject, (b) school subject precedes academic discipline, or (c) the relation between the two is dialectic. (Stengel, 1997:587 emphasis added)

It is worth examining Stengel's classification as an aid to further exploring the specific case of geography. The first relationship assumes continuity, with shared principles, purpose and substance, from young learners in school through to academics in universities at the frontier of knowledge creation. The second possible relationship highlights difference, suggesting that the concerns of schools and universities may result in discontinuities; for example, schools may deliberately reject perceived privileged academic knowledge, as I discuss further below. Stengel suggests the most prevalent view is that the two are 'different yet related' and that in many cases the academic 'precedes and delimits' the school subject. It is, at least in the UK, a commonly held view that school subjects are 'watered down' versions of the purer academic discipline, or that the school subject is viewed as 'a pedagogical and personal revision of the logical and non-personal knowledge of the' academic discipline (Stengel, 1997:589). Such a relationship suggests the need for teachers to transform academic knowledge into digestible and accessible school subjects for their learners.

Stengel's sub-category of 'school precedes academic' provides another version of the 'different yet related' relationship, suggesting that 'ideas and skills learned in concrete fashion earlier in one's educational career recapitulate the process of the historical development of (more abstract) disciplinary knowledge, as well as the learning experience of the disciplinary expert' (Stengel, 1997:590). The final relationship offered by Stengel within 'different yet related' is termed a 'dialectic' relationship and requires the teacher to actively guide learners towards the expert knowledge of academics by modifying stimuli.

If we consider the relationship between school and university geography in terms of Stengel's classification scheme, it is clear that this relationship has been dynamic and shifting. So, for instance, at its inception, the relationship appears to correspond to the second sub-type of Stengel's category, 'different yet related', in that 'school preceded academic' – at least temporally, in that school geography emerged first. It could be argued that, with the interventions of the RGS (and its younger offspring the GA) in the 19th century, the relationship became somewhat 'discontinuous', with school geography remaining a somewhat 'utilitarian' subject, while the new 'Oxford' academic geography acquired the status of a degree subject, albeit originally under the umbrella of geology. One could, however, also interpret the development of geography in the late 19th century in terms of an attempt to foster a 'dialectic' relationship, with the geography societies also acting as mediators between school and university.

Moreover, perceptions of discontinuities have frequently been aired by academics and critics wishing to remedy this perceived state of affairs and therefore to establish a more 'continuous' relationship. Coming closer to the present, Chorley and Haggett were influential in the 1960s in attempting to bridge the gap between school and university geographies by convening national residential teacher conferences at Madingley, Cambridge. At the first conference in July 1963, teachers experienced 'a

week being alerted to the developments at the "frontiers of geographical teaching"' (Hall, 1991:10). The course lectures were later published in *Frontiers in Geography Teaching* (Chorley and Haggett, 1965), followed by *Models in Geography: the second Madingley Lectures* (Chorley and Haggett, 1967). Rather than establishing a continuous relationship, however, such conferences highlighted discontinuities, and a view that academic preceded school geographies. The aim, however, was to remedy such discontinuities.

Hall, an initial teacher educator, reflected fondly upon the first Madingley conference that he attended 27 years earlier. He recalled

> lectures rich in metaphor and in paradox, ranging from chirping crickets and stopwatches to blind men making inferences about the morphology of trees based solely on the hands-on experience of the front leg of an elephant. (Hall, 1991:10)

Most of the speakers at the first Madingley conference were young members of the Cambridge Department of Geography, or recent graduates and, as part of the 1960s context, all males. They could be considered as zealous young university academics sharing their work with teachers. Enthused participants, referred to as 'marines' by Hall, formed groups to promote the new geographical ideas. For instance, the London Schools Geographical Group was formed in 1966. Walford absolves Chorley and Haggett of charges of paternalism:

> … it was not because they thought university academics should tell schoolteachers what and how to teach but because they were excited about the new work which they were doing and wanted to share it with a wider audience. (Walford, 2001:158)

It seems evident with hindsight that the university academics wished to share, to hand down 'new' knowledge to teachers. Such endeavour, whilst undoubtedly inspiring some individuals such as Hall, provoked

resistance from many practitioners, according to commentators such as Butt (1997) and Hall (1991).

The Geographical Association (GA) rather than mediating was, according to Hall, 'ambivalent in its attitude to these new trends' (Hall, 1991:11). However, over half a decade later, the GA did devote an entire issue of its journal *Geography* (1969) to the 'new geographies' with guest editor Richard Chorley.

Reflecting upon my own teaching experience (over three decades), I have held onto the view of a continuous relationship between school and university geography. For a detailed consideration of other scholars' views of the relationship see Butt and Collins (2013). For teacher educators and classroom practitioners, extreme effort has often been needed to keep abreast of new developments at university level, while satisfying the demands of school curriculum policy at the same time (see next section). For instance, from the school 'side' of the boundary, concerns have frequently coalesced around language and accessibility. Butt (1997), for instance, amusingly refers to a review of Chorley and Haggett's (1967) published lectures from the second Madingley conference as being written by the authors 'for one another' and containing 'barbarous and repulsive jargon' (Butt, 1997:15). Walford offers a more sympathetic review: 'The books, like the conferences, contained ideas of baffling abstruseness and exciting novelty in about equal parts' (Walford, 2001:159).

Resistance at school level to the influence of academic subject knowledge continued to be voiced during the 1970s and 1980s. Butt cites Hore's (1973) investigation of the so-called 'new geography' and its effects on schools, stating that Hore

> found that the conservatism of geography teachers provided a major barrier to the acceptance of these innovations…. Geography teachers were increasingly 'suspicious of persons in ivory towered

universities and colleges of education, who throw out wonderful suggestions, without testing them in the white heat of a classroom composed of, say, thirty aggressive youths from a twilight urban areas. (Hore 1973, cited in Butt, 1997:18)

Hore in the extract above offered his view of the prevailing educational landscape highlighting a gulf between the 'ivory towers' (university academics) with their 'wonderful', innovative 'suggestions' and the practitioners' classroom reality teaching geography to 30 'aggressive youths'. Suspicion of others who lack practical experience in the white heat of the classroom acted as a barrier to new ideas and resulted in resistance to changes in practice.

It seems therefore that the relationship between school and university geographies could also be described as troubled by perceptions of 'discontinuity' over recent decades, in terms of Stengel's classification. Indeed, the quotations above from Butt's work clearly testify to the presence of a discourse of binary oppositions (MacLure, 2003) in which academic geography is constructed as the 'bad other' – as irrelevant and inappropriate with respect to the demands of the 'real world' of life in schools. As MacLure notes, this is a familiar trope in antagonisms towards academia by those who claim to speak more directly for the world of practice and 'real life' experiences.

Those voices who criticized the 'ivory towers' of academia could be understood, however, to be arguing strongly for a 'different yet related' model, with school knowledge and pedagogy taking precedence over the academic subject. It seems therefore that Stengel's categories do not necessarily correspond to discrete temporal moments in the development of subjects, but may be discerned, in different strengths and mixes, at any given time.

Looking back over the issues discussed in this section, it is clear that, as noted, the relationship between school and academic geography has

shifted over time, and has frequently been somewhat fraught. Moreover, as I have briefly described above, geography has itself occupied a somewhat ambivalent and shifting status with respect to other subjects. In the 19th century it was seen at school level as a practical or utilitarian subject, tied to industrial and imperialist concerns of trade and travel, and at university level as an adjunct to the major discipline of geology. In the mid-20th century, as discussed in the next section, it became associated with the 'new' statistical processes and systems theory. It could be argued that geography has continued to enjoy a hybrid status, 'belonging' both to the humanities and to scientific domains such as environmental studies. As I will argue in a later section, academic geography in the 21st century has split and proliferated even more, into a range of sub-specialisms.

It has not been my aim here to provide a detailed historical overview of the relationship between geographies at school and in the Academy, but rather to prepare the ground for an exploration of how the emergence of 'personal' geography in the mid-2000s was caught up in developments both in the academic discipline and in shifts in school curriculum policy.

Many critics of successive versions of the National Curriculum over the past two decades have argued these have amounted to a 'watering down' of curriculum content – not just with respect to academic subject knowledge, but to prior iterations of the curriculum. I will argue in later chapters that the student teachers in my study, who were grappling with the concept of personal geography during their Initial Teacher Education course, experienced conflicts and challenges (and in some cases personal stress) as a result of having to negotiate the relationship between their geographical knowledge acquired during their university courses and the content and pedagogy required of them as student geography teachers in schools on placements. As I will argue, the introduction of the 'personal' into the geography curriculum was caught up in these discontinuities between academic and school geographies.

Developments in school geography from the second half of the 20th century to the present

The section above considered the shifting, complex relationship between school geography and the academic discipline and touched upon a pivotal moment in the 1960s when university geographers such as Chorley and Haggett embraced and promoted the new techniques. This led to a paradigm shift in the academic discipline and resulted in (using Stengel's classification) a 'different but related' relationship with school geography. Within this section I continue to explore the shifting nature of school geography, taking us forwards in time from the 1960s to the mid-2000s, prior to the inclusion of 'personal geography' in the National Curriculum for England in 2007.

Let us pause for a moment and look back at Mackinder's 1903 plan for geography. As noted in the previous section, Mackinder can be considered the founding father of academic geography. I am arguing that his four point plan for geography (see page 13) assumed a trickling down of ideas from the academic departments 'where geographers can be made' (Point 1). However, in Point 3 of the plan, Mackinder also highlighted the value of the social construction of school geography for pupils: 'we must thrash out by discussion and experimentation what is the best progressive method of common acceptation' (quoted in Goodson, 2013:90). His use of 'we', 'discussion' and 'common' act as textual signals for a social construction of the school curriculum. Mackinder's influential legacy, I suggest, continues through the work of the Geographical Association (GA), the offspring of the RGS founded by Mackinder with Freshfield in 1893 (see Walford, 2001).

I would argue therefore that mediating between academic geographers and geography teachers are two significant groups: professional associations (RGS and GA) and initial (and continuing) teacher educators. As expressed above, I believe there has been a persistently held ideal of a continuous relationship between school and academic

geographies, particularly on the part of teacher educators and classroom practitioners. These groups, existing at the intersection between school and academic geographies - the initial teacher educators and the professional associations of classroom practitioners - have been active in attempting to dispel perceived and actual boundaries. Below I explore some of the mediating activities.

The 'new' ideas and approaches generated within some university Geography departments, such as Cambridge University, had advocates within the geographical educators community: for instance, amongst Initial Teacher Education (ITE) tutors, including Boden (1976), who enthused about these ideas to their student geography teachers, including myself, in the 1970s and 1980s. ITE tutors, I suggest, played their part in dispelling 'suspicion of ideas from ivory towers' as they mediated the boundary between the academic discipline and the school contexts that student teachers would encounter.

As a student teacher myself I was caught up in the new geographies as an undergraduate, and then as a student teacher whose lecturers and tutors were enthusiastic about the new geographies. My ITE Geography Tutor, Philip Boden, wrote with enthusiasm about the introduction of the new conceptual based geography: 'Mathematics allows you to show relationships much more precisely than words'. Furthermore, Boden argued that it was better 'to start with a simple idea, which is understood, rather than the complexity of reality, which is not' (Boden, 1976:5).

Below are two extracts from popular school textbooks I used as a student teacher in the early 1980s. These illustrate the prevailing concerns of school geography at that time. The first extract values the mathematic, quantitative approach to geography, taking a scientific approach to mapping by finding patterns. This geographical approach draws upon the work of Chorley and Haggett presented to the Madingley Conferences.

EXTRACT 1 If the area were a perfectly uniform surface, and the settlements evenly distributed over it, each central place would serve the six settlements of next smaller size surrounding it. .. You will note that small settlement X is shared by three larger settlements A, B, and C. Thus centre A acts as a service centre for one third of X. … This gives a total service size for centre A of $2(6 \times 1/3) + 6 + 1$ (its own) = 9.

Figure 1: Extract from school textbook (Walker and Wilson, 1973:69)

Such teaching resources and ideas shown in the extract above repackaged the messiness and complexity of the 'real' world into models, and controlled mathematic equations for learners of geography.

The second extract below, a decade later, shares with the pupil the limitations of models, whilst still valuing the use of mathematically based solutions to study the 'real' world. The advance is in the level of complexity: 'systems' was the new frontier approach of the early 1980s geography classroom.

EXTRACT 2 Figure 1.9 shows an attempt to draw an input-output system diagram for a mechanised wheat farm of the kind to be found in such places as eastern England, northern France or central Canada. A diagram like this one provides us with a 'conceptual model'. This enables us to fit our observations into a mental framework in order to understand what is happening more accurately.

If of course what we see doesn't fit the 'model' then we are forced to check our observations more closely, review our model, or ask why an unexpected exception to the general rule has turned up.

Figure 2: Extract from school textbook (Warn, 1984:9)

Morgan and Lambert (2005) argue that the conceptual model approach to school geography, exemplified in the textbook extracts above, reflects the positivist, scientific approach to academic geography prevalent in the 1970s and 1980s. I would argue that such a strong affiliation with science was considered necessary for the academic discipline to gain acceptance as a university discipline, and to shed its popular image as a school subject. Furthermore, the mediating influence of ITE tutors and the GA worked to minimise the boundary between school and academic geographies by disseminating ideas and resources.

A second significant school geography paradigm shift occurred after the conceptual, model-infused developments mentioned above. During the 1970s four geography curriculum projects were funded by the Schools Council, a body set up by the Conservative government in 1964, seconding teachers and lecturers to design curricular teaching materials. These projects were: the Geography Bristol Project 14-18 and Geography for the Young School Leaver (GYSL), 1970-75; Place, Time and Society 8-13, 1971-75; and Geography 16-19, 1976-79 (see Walford, 2001; Rawling, 1991). Each project was physically located within a university or college of education department (University of Bristol; Avery Hill College of Education; University of Liverpool; and the London Institute of Education), and focused upon pedagogy and the learners' experiences and views of the world. The pioneering work of these projects led to a significant shift in school geographies, amounting to a paradigm shift to a more student-centred, empathy-rich school geography. This resulted in a potential discontinuous departure from academic geography.

However, public examination syllabuses that directly developed from the School Council projects, for instance, the Avery Hill General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), embraced aspects of behavioural geographies that were present in some academic geography departments. Therefore, the relationship between school and academic geographies continued to be dynamic, shifting and messy, complicated further by considering the levels of autonomy at the school and

department scale and the choice of differing geography public examination syllabi.

The more recent thinking skills development during the 1990s in North East England follows a similar pattern to the School Council funded projects decades earlier. The Thinking Through Geography approaches were developed with groups of geography teachers, stimulated and facilitated by David Leat, a Geography ITE tutor at Newcastle University. This resulted in an array of 'Thinking Skills' publications edited by Leat (A'Echevarria and Leat, 2008; Leat, 1998; Leat and Nicholls, 1999). The GA has continued to assist in the dissemination of ideas and resources created by geography 'projects' through their journal for classroom practitioners, 'Teaching Geography', and through lectures and seminars at their annual conference. The GA also 'steers' practitioners with activities such as annual geographical competitions for pupils, and since 2006 with the departmental evidenced Geography Quality Mark, assessed by the GA. Schools are invited to apply for these 'awards which recognise quality and progress in geography leadership, curriculum development, learning and teaching in school' (Geographical Association, 2014). The awards last for three academic years and are presented at the annual GA conference.

Many developments within either or both school and academic geographies, I would argue, follow Layton's tentative three stage model for the evolution of school subjects (Goodson, 2013:90), commencing with 'the missionary enthusiasm of pioneers to their task, where the dominant criterion is relevance to the needs and interests of the learners'. The pioneers in the case of geography include Mackinder, 'a persuasive and charismatic lecturer' (Walford, 2001:64), and Chorley and Haggett, who 'delivered with charisma and intellectual vigour' (Hall, 1991:10). The Project members that I met as a younger teacher would also qualify as pioneers: all oozed enthusiasm. In the second stage suggested by Layton, 'a tradition of scholarly work in the subject is emerging along with a corps of trained specialists' (Goodson, 2013:90). Thus the ideas from

pioneers are incorporated widely by others. The 1980s provided such an example with the ideas from the Schools Council-funded projects being accepted by many practitioners. In Layton's final stage, practitioners have established rules and procedures, and others including 'Students are initiated into a tradition, their attitudes approaching passivity and resignation, a prelude to disenchantment' (2013). Arguably, diffusion models such as Layton's provide reasoned reassurance for regular shifts and developments within school geography.

Using models such as those of Stengel and Layton to explain changes in school geography comes with a warning. Geographers like myself who studied during the late 1970s and early 1980s were trained within the 'new' geography to find patterns in data, to model (i.e., simplify, control) the real world. However, many contemporary academics rejected 'not only the implicit positivism but also the emphasis on technical rigour in data analysis' (Johnston and Sidaway, 2004:397). The 1960s–1970s geographical models may have assisted students' understanding of geographical phenomena by controlling and simplifying aspects of the 'real' world. However, such modelling added distance between the learner and the complexity of the geographical phenomena studied. An emerging exception is the technical work of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and spatial statistics that have recently gained a revival with the work of geographers such as Danny Dorling; for example, Worldmapper (Dorling et al., 2014). At the time of writing, Dorling has the position of Halford Mackinder Professor of Geography (since 2013) at Oxford University, a title which testifies to the continuity of geographical heritage.

Looking back over this section, I have suggested that the relationship between school and university geographies has certainly shifted. ITE tutors and the professional associations continue to keep alive the dialogue between academic and school geographies and act as mediators.

Charismatic pioneers have spurred developments within school geography; some (like Chorley and Haggett, and Dorling) have been on the academic side of the boundary; others (like Boden, Leat and Walford) have mediated across the boundary as ITE tutors; and all have been associated with professional associations (RGS and GA), using these networks to disseminate ideas and resources to practitioners.

I have focused in this section on developments in two domains which have influenced school geography: one with its origins in the academic discipline; and the other espoused by groups of teachers working with ITE tutors. In the following section the discussion focuses upon a third and highly significant influence upon school geography in English classrooms: the introduction of the National Curriculum for England.

The introduction of the Geography National Curriculum for England and the emergence of a discourse of 'personalisation'

The National Curriculum for England has a relatively short history: the idea of a core curriculum was proposed during the period of my teacher training, by the then Conservative government of 1979-1983 (see Butt, 1997:24). I commenced my teaching career in the early 1980s, a decade Butt highlights as one 'of increasing government involvement in curriculum matters, reflected by the numerous publications emerging from the DES' (Butt, 1997:31). In December 1986 the new Education Secretary Kenneth Baker announced the 'desire of a future Conservative Government to introduce a National Core Curriculum' (Butt, 1997:51). This led to a period of debate over the position of the school subject geography and whether it would be included in the National Curriculum (see Bailey and Binns, 1987). The Education Reform Act in 1988 paved the way for the establishment of the Geography Working Group (see Butt, 1987). Their Interim Report was published in 1989 (DES and WO), and was followed two years later by the first Geography National Curriculum (DES, 1991). Since its introduction the Geography National Curriculum has been reviewed (see for instance Dearing, 1994) and revised (DFE,

1995; DFEE/QCA, 1999; QCA, 2007) more than once during my professional career. Members of the National Curriculum working group for Geography have written in depth about the introduction of the first National Curriculum in 1991 (see Walford, 2001; Rawlings, 2001). As a committee member of the Brighton branch of the Geographical Association (GA) during the 1980s, and as the West Sussex Co-ordinator for the Geography, Schools and Industry Project (GSIP), a GA-funded project between 1983 and 1991 (Rawlings, 2001:25), I facilitated and contributed to many meetings, discussing and responding to the early drafts of the Geography National Curriculum from the Geography Working Group (GWG). The Geographical Association was firmly represented in the GWG, making up over 60% of the group. According to Butt, 'Eight of the thirteen people eventually selected to join the GWG were members of the Geographical Association (three being past or future presidents) with Sir Leslie Fielding, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Sussex and an historian, as the Chair' (Butt, 1997:112).

As a local (Brighton) and regional (West Sussex) geographical voice, I was consulted as a classroom 'expert'. I became acquainted with geographers who were on the National Curriculum Working Group, and was invited by Eleanor Rawlings to the newly established National Curriculum Council (1988-1993) meetings in York. I was also invited by Rex Walford to contribute at Charney Manor conferences (Walford, 1991). This later experience resulted in my first published text (Bermingham, 1991).

The first UK Geography National Curriculum in 1991 (DES, 1991) was content rich, filled with an exhausting list of knowledge and skills to be developed in limited curriculum time. The resulting programme of study for geography led to a tick box approach to curriculum design due to the 'the impossibility of covering all the content….' (Rawlings, 2001:67). The accountability and strait-jacket nature of the first National Curriculum with its focus on a particular list of items of knowledge caused internal tensions for myself, as well as within the forward-thinking Geography

department that I worked in from 1984 to 1992: first, as a teacher of geography; then Head of Geography leading a team of geography teachers; and finally as Head of Humanities, leading teachers to implement the National Curriculum across a range of humanities subjects.

The Dearing Review (Dearing, 1994), a few years later, took some of the strain from teachers with a slimmer list of content to be covered. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority was set up by the Labour Government Education Act of 1997 (later to be dismantled by the Conservative/Liberal Government 2010-11), and from 1997 provided curriculum guidance to teachers, including schemes of work (SOW) exemplars. (I was contracted to design two.) By providing ready-made exemplars to schools, practitioners were steered, resulting in a normalising National Curriculum. The dynamic, shifting relationship between school and academic geographies, I suggest, was ruptured by policymakers with the implementation of the first, mandatory 1991 National Curriculum for England.

Moreover, after a series of National Curriculum 'rewrites that have seen progressively more emphasis put on pedagogy, learning skills and personalisation' (see Major, unknown:6), we can see a shift towards 'experiences of pupils' replacing the first National Curriculum focus on obtaining knowledge. The 1999 National Curriculum rewrite made reference to the 'different experiences pupils bring to the classroom', highlighted in the section on Inclusion (DFEE and QCA, 1999). I suggest that this reference to pupil experience could be seen as a precursor to the inclusion of personal geographies in the 2007 iteration of the National Curriculum. It was stated that: 'Teachers need to be aware that pupils bring to school different experiences, interests and strengths which will influence the way in which they learn' (1999:33).

Furthermore, teachers were tasked to:

> create effective learning environments in which:
> - the contribution of all pupils is valued
> - all pupils can feel secure and are able to contribute appropriately
> - stereotypical views are challenged and pupils learn to appreciate and view positively differences in others, whether arising from race, gender, ability or disability
>
> secure pupils' motivation and concentration by: planning work building on interests and cultural experiences;… (and) using materials which reflect social and cultural diversity. (1999:33-34)

The inclusion of attention to pupils' experiences and cultural contexts opened up a space, I would suggest, for the emergence of a focus on the personal.

The slightly later 2004 Assessment for Learning (AFL) national strategy (DFES, 2004a) introduced the national expectation that teachers would develop the ability of learners to engage in 'self-reflection' as well as 'peer assessment'. I suggest that the Assessment for Learning national strategy was a further contributor to the 'personalisation' agenda, arguably a major educational focus for the first decade of this millennium. Scholars such as Claxton (Claxton, 2007) wrote persuasive arguments around the importance of pupils 'learning to learn', drawing upon developments in the discipline of experimental psychology. Claxton referenced research that suggested a link between developing learners' tolerance for uncertainty and confusion and an enhanced capacity to learn. Claxton's argument resonated within the school geography community, with teachers seeking strategies that would assist pupils in grappling with complexity and unknown futures (see A'Echevarria and Leat, 2008).

Personalised learning was rolled out as a new 'teaching and learning' style within the Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners (DFES, 2004b). The title 'A National Conversation about Personalised Learning' demonstrated a policy shift, an indication that all involved in education needed to engage within this conversation. Personalised learning became the 'Big Idea' (Pollard and James, 2004) for education in England. A worthy aim of personalised learning was to contribute to the principle of 'equity and social justice' (DFES, 2004b). Pupils were to be considered as individuals regardless of 'distinction' caused by gender bias, social economic status or ethnicity. The prevailing Labour government rhetoric of "Education, Education, Education" placed the role of schools firmly in the public arena with the then Prime Minister stating in 2001 'Our top priority was, is and always will be education, education, education' (Blair, 2001). The idea of 'personalised learning' was strongly promoted and had considerable popular appeal, yet there was a lack of guidance and clarity for practitioners. For instance, Hartley (2007:629) notes that, while the personalisation agenda appealed to 'child-centredness, to democracy, and to consumerism', the notion of personalised learning was 'incoherent and inchoate'.

Personalised learning was a somewhat contested term from its inception. Barnard argued that a precise definition of 'personalised learning' was not needed in order to make it work (Barnard, 2005). Others such as Courcier (2007) argued that it was difficult to clearly identify the differences among various approaches that included personalised learning without concise operational definitions. Moreover, the then Education Secretary of State for Education and Skills, Ruth Kelly, questioned whether or not the term 'personalised learning' was just 'jargon' (Slater, 2005 cited in Courcier, 2007:62). The clarity (or not) of concepts utilised within education policy, in particular that of 'personal geographies', will be discussed later in this chapter.

Courcier problematises the issue of whether personalisation is the same as individualised learning. She further argues that although they may share the same aims, they are not interchangeable, with the main difference appearing to rest with who holds the responsibility. With 'personalisation' there is a shared expectation of responsibility between pupil and teacher; whereas with 'individualised' learning the responsibility resides solely with the teacher who provides learning experiences tailored to the perceived needs of each individual (Courcier, 2007:70). Therefore, personalised learning according to Courcier involves a shared responsibility between the pupil and teacher, with the teacher being aware of the child's interests, experiences and strengths, and creating a learning environment that fosters learning from each other. Moreover, such a view of personalised learning as defined by Courcier values difference. However defined, the personalisation agenda paved the way for the 2007 inclusion of the 'personal' within the Geography National Curriculum programme of study.

It is important to critically question the diffusion of the discourse of personalisation into the geography classroom. Could this be a case of contemporary discourse where according to Derrida a word 'suddenly becomes fashionably attractive for a decade or so … and during its vogue tends to be applied indiscriminately because of the pleasurable connotations of its sounds' (Derrida, 1978:379)? Was this the case in 2007 for the personalisation of the curriculum, in particular the relationship between 'personal' and 'geography'?

The emergence of a personal focus in school and academic geography

The contemporary educational climate during the first decade of the 21st century promoted the concept of relevance in relation to the learner's experience – a concept which clearly implicates personal issues, interests and experiences. The national 'Every Child Matters' framework stipulated that learning should connect with the child's social, community and

physical environment (2003). This was followed, as noted, by the personalisation 'conversation' of 2004. In 2007, the Geography National Curriculum emphasised its relevance to the learner: 'The relevance of geography to pupils' lives, personal experiences and futures gives them the motivation to succeed and to enjoy learning' (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2007). The focus on personalisation was reflected in the professional Standards for Qualified Teacher Status (2007-11), the standards that PGCE courses need to ensure their students have opportunities to meet (Training and Development Agency for Schools, 2007).

Within the personalisation educational context, the boundaries of school geography were expanded by policy-makers to include learners' 'personal geographies'. This therefore required geography teachers to make the school geography curriculum of direct personal relevance to each child. And as noted, 'Every Child Matters' had already stipulated that learning should connect with the environment (2003). There appeared to be an assumption in these policy initiatives that such explorations in the classroom would be beneficial to pupils. The research presented in later chapters aims to offer some new insights, and dialogic space to question whether pupils benefit from a focus on the 'personal' in the geography classroom. I argue that there may be some unanticipated adverse consequences, in terms of equity and control over knowledge.

In summary, although it is problematic to pin down the precise origins of a policy initiative, it appears that the rewritten National Curriculum for 2007 emerged from the personalisation agenda of New Labour. Within the geography programme of study, the subject was clearly focused upon the child, and newly centred on the 'personal' experiences and spaces of the learner and her/his connections to the world, as shown in Figure 3 below.

Importance of geography
It builds on pupils' own experiences to investigate places at all scales, from the personal to the global.

Range and content

The study of geography should include: a variety of scales, from personal, local, regional, national, international and continental, to global.

Curriculum opportunities

The curriculum should provide opportunities for pupils to: build on and expand their personal experiences of geography. (QCA, 2007)

Figure 3: Extracts from the 2007 Geography programme of study

From this point onwards, teachers were expected to 'build on and expand' pupils' personal experiences of geography. As I show in subsequent chapters, this presented challenges for teacher educators and student teachers as they attempted to flesh out the curriculum guidance in practice.

The 1991 National Curriculum, I have argued, was the most significant 20th-century influence on the shifting relationship between school and academic geographies. The interventions by government, constructed as 'the bad other', were often seen by educationalists as irrelevant and inappropriate with respect to the demands of the 'real world life' in schools. By 2007, 16 years later, the relationship was still fraught. However, as I suggest below, there appeared to be a more continuous relationship potential emerging between personal geographies for school pupils and children's geographies for academic scholars.

In my attempt to trace the genesis of 'personal geography' as included within the 2007 National Curriculum for England policy documents, I interviewed three key actors representing the Royal Geographical Society (RGS), Geographical Association (GA) and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). All had attended a meeting chaired by the QCA in which key stakeholders including these representatives from the

Geographical Association and the Royal Geographical Society shared views from their members. The Chief Executive of the GA represented over 6,750 members and the RGS-IBG (Institute of British Geographers) had over 13,000 members by 2007. The two societies had been working closely together and were in the second year of their Action Plan for Geography (APG). This was funded between 2006 and 2008 by the government Department for Education and Skills (DFES), later to be extended by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) between 2008 and 2011 (Geographical Association and Royal Geographical Society with IBG, 2011). For the three interviewees, recollections of how the personal was added to the policy documents appeared somewhat hazy, with the memories of these key actors tempered by time and subsequent knowledge. The interviews (face to face and telephone) took place between October 2010 and March 2011. The following quotes are taken from my notes of the conversations.

'Personal wasn't there earlier on in the process, I seem to recollect it was added post consultation.'

'Two areas missing prior to consultation – Personal Geography and Futures. Futures came out of a Key Note at GA conference. Personal Geography pretty much came out of a meeting after consultation. Summarising opportunity for RGS and GA to talk through from their findings. GA, lot of work on Personal Geography.'

'Children's Geographies as a research field. Personal Geographies emerged.'

'Developments in geography rather than politics.'

Figure 4. Quotes from stakeholders GA/RGS/QCA

The above quotes offer different views and opinions as to how 'personal geography' became part of the curriculum. These actors remind us that curricula develop, through processes involving more than one person (consultation), that school curricula are never static. With reference to personal geography, the key actors have different recollections; for example, one highlighted the work of the GA on personal geographies, whilst another highlighted the academic field of children's geographies. The comment 'developments in geography rather than politics' positions the concept 'personal geography' as an insider concept, one that came from within school or academic geographies rather than an outside concept added by 'others'. There may be an undercurrent of pride in this concept, as a new concept, emerging from 'a research field' in academic geography and/or from a 'lot of work' within the GA. There appears to be a suggestion that it was necessary to include: 'it was missing', 'wasn't there'.

These stakeholder interviews indicated a strong, continuing presence and involvement of these professional bodies in the development of the geography curriculum. They also indicate, in their vagueness as to dates and decisions, that policy initiatives are never the sole result of linear processes of cause and effect.

The discussion so far has focussed upon the relationship between school and academic geographies. I have argued that the focus on 'personal' and 'personal experiences of geography' within the 2007 curricular policy documents links with the personalising educational rhetoric of the government of the time. In the section below I explore the influence of the academic discipline of geography in the 21st century, noting that it has proliferated into a range of sub-specialisms, including the research field of children's geographies. I trace some implications for the emergence of personal geographies in the school curriculum.

Employing the analogy of the geography academic discipline as a tree - supported by the trunk (the discipline) with its long reaching roots that

enable the many branches to be nurtured and to grow - was personal geography part of a new shoot? The roots anchoring the school subject and discipline of geography are the key concepts that geographers touch base with and these key concepts, or social constructions - such as space and place (see Chapter 3) are contested and kept alive, fertilised by academic questionings and deliberations (Morgan, 2011). I would argue that these geographical concepts, such as space and place, help to unify the geographies of school and academia to a certain extent. Perhaps future geographers will be considering 'personal geography' as a conceptual root.

'Personal geography' was appearing on university websites from around 2010; Durham University on their Geography department website in 2010 utilised the phrase 'personal geography' as a marketing strategy to attract applicants, highlighting the potential agency of geography undergraduates,

> The key attribute about geography is its sheer diversity. Just as there are many Geographies, so the Department in Durham embodies many approaches to Geography. We hope that by the end of your third year you will have developed your own unique and personal Geography which draws on this diversity - but which is not dictated by it. (Durham University, 2010)

Such 'sheer diversity' of geography and the contemporary interests of what 'geographers do', in particular, undergraduates of the discipline who would later commence Initial Teacher Education (ITE) courses as student geography teachers, are worth considering in more detail, as I problematise the concept of personal geography. Introducing readers to the diversity and wealth of what geographers do seemed at the outset to be a fairly straight-forward aspect of this thesis. In practice, what to include has been somewhat problematic, as other researchers have also reported:

> I have frequently asked myself, especially in the closing months of this book's completion, why I ever started the damn thing. It was a fairly casual commitment originally, to write a short work on contemporary thought in geography, but it grew larger as the years rolled by (seven to be exact) until the book reached its present gargantuan size (even this has been cut by a third). (Peet, 1998:vii)

Durham University utilised the concept of 'personal geography' to highlight the proliferation of geographical expertise available for an undergraduate to personalise their own geographical degree, with opportunities to navigate their own geographical journey through the sub-fields available.

As I have outlined in this chapter, the geographical community – virtually since its inception – has had the on-going challenge of defining its field of study, of simplifying its focus to a sentence or two. This can reduce geography to the level of everyday 'common sense', or create confusion as to what is actually studied. 'Geography is what Geographers do' is an often-quoted phrase. Its simplicity cloaks a cornucopia of geographies, as Peet effectively indicated: 'What is this thing called geography? … Geography has a permanent identity crisis because what geographers do is complex' (Peet, 1998:1).

Within a degree course the majority of undergraduates specialise in their final year by writing a dissertation of 'their choice'. It is not the place of this thesis to explore the agency of geography undergraduate students, or potential departmental/institutional limits placed on individual dissertation foci. What is significant is that each cohort of PGCE student teachers arrive with their own geographical expertise developed through their engagement in a research dissertation. Figure 5 below highlights the range of expertise from one cohort of student teachers in my study.

Youth Crime; Paleo-ecology of East Yorkshire; Elevator Geography; Geographies of Violence; Climate change in schools – how much did pupils know?; Perceptions of crime in Newcastle; Emergence of men's lifestyle magazines; Effects of humans on Parrots; Colonialism and influences abroad; Rural tourism in North Yorkshire; Effect of university on local economy; Higher Education influences - parents & teachers; Exposure to pollution – individual exposure; Effects of regenerations in meadows and forests; Taste culture; Forest gaps; Paleoclimate; Sustainability and pupil opinion in Rochdale; Meltwater relationship between sediment and discharge; Water and sediment in River Medlock; Sporting events in the city.

Figure 5: Geography degree dissertation titles, 2010-11 PGCE cohort

The above selection of dissertation titles offers us an insight into the diversity of what contemporary academic geographers do via the undergraduates under their supervision. On first glance at the dissertation titles, there appears a rich heritage of geographical interests including 'Paleoclimate' and 'Meltwater relationship between sediment and discharge' through to more recent sub-specialisms such as 'Elevator Geography', 'Taste Culture' and 'Emergence of men's Lifestyle Magazines'. Within the selection above are three that focus upon pupils: 'Climate change in schools – how much did pupils know?'; 'Higher Education influences – parents & teachers'; and 'Sustainability and pupil opinion'. This further complicates the relationship between academic and school geographies; such school geography and pupils have now become the focus of academics, albeit via their undergraduates.

New sub-specialisms that may have fertilised the possible emergence of the concept 'personal geography' include: children's, cool, emotional and embodied geographies (Holloway and Valentine, 2000; Skelton and Valentine, 1998; Teather, 1999). These sub-specialisms all adopt a multi-disciplinary approach. In the following paragraphs I briefly highlight the

emerging academic focus upon children and their engagements with places and spaces in the decade prior to the 2007 policy inclusion of the concept 'personal geography'.

According to Chadderton (1999) in his review of *Cool Places* (Skelton and Valentine, 1998), 'the book contains a number of proactive agendas and has the potential to generate further research, debate and action concerning youth and space'. The collection of 'cool' case studies to which Chadderton was referring considers and challenges discourses on youth, analysing how young people are represented and are able to represent themselves in a range of media, including the increasingly influential internet, and within the complexity of space.

The editors of the 2000 text *Children's Geographies* (Holloway and Valentine) 'hope that it will become part of the process by which children's geographies as an issue, though not necessary as a sub-disciplinary theme, gain a firmer footing within mainstream geographical research agenda' (2000:17). One chapter focused upon the 'most personal of all annual celebrations', the birthday party, noting that it is for 'many cultures the event that is most closely associated with the celebration of the individual child'. The authors highlight geo-social drifts towards the convenience for adults of commercial play settings for some children, whilst others were excluded or marginalised for reasons including cost and accessibility. McKendrick et al. (2000:98) argue that the shift from 'homespace to commercial space represents an extension of children's environments in society' in spaces previously out of bounds for children and in changing adult-child relations.

'Embodiment' and 'identity' were, according to Blunt (2009), important 'themes' within academic geography during the 1990s, with geographical studies focused upon the 'spatiality of performance' (2009:79). Relatedly, emotional geographies gained status as an emerging sub-discipline, marked by the launch of the journal *Emotion, Space and Society* in 2008, a year after the 2007 inclusion of 'personal geographies', an indication of

the flurry of work within some university departments prior to 2008. The editors of the 2005 text *Emotional Geographies* referred to 'Geography's "Emotional Turn"' (Davidson et al.). 'Emotional', 'sensual', and 'affective' geographies problematise affect and space: for instance, entanglements within everyday home and institutionalised spaces.

My aim is not to offer a full account of developments within the academic discipline during the 1990s and 2000s, but to suggest that the 'personal' was implicated in the work by academics in the multi-disciplinary areas of 'cool', 'children's', 'emotional' and 'embodied' geographies, problematising 'personal' engagements and entanglements within places and spaces. Whether these new growths, themes or sub-specialisms are the result of research grants and policy interests or the result of the researchers' own interests is an interesting question, but not the focus of this study. It is clear from the list of undergraduate dissertation topics, however, that geography continues to span the humanities and the natural sciences, and to be open to diversity and proliferation of sub-specialisms.

At the heart of this thesis lies the question, what does 'personal geography' mean? What does this field of work include? I originally naïvely assumed when tracking the emergence of 'personal geography' within the academic discipline a linear or dendritic (tree with branches) development of geography over time. This assumption was in tension with the work of scholars such as Massey (2005) who strongly warn against a linear approach to time. I also initially assumed that all developments within academic geography would be representative of all perspectives. I was unaware that many voices were silenced. As I documented the historical development of geography (both academic and school), I became progressively more aware of the access I had to white, middle-class, Anglo/American male voices, at least until the 1990s. David Livingstone's *The Geographical Tradition*, published in 1992, was according to Spedding 'widely regarded by English–speaking geographers as the most important history of the discipline' (Spedding,

2008:153), yet this landmark text omitted the contributions of both women and non-European/American writers to developments within the academic body of geographical knowledge.

I became increasingly aware of how contemporary 21st century female and male geographers (Whatmore, 2002; Amin and Thrift, 2002; Massey, 2005; Sibley, 2007) are keen to dismantle the dualisms (binary geographies) that have dominated the subject over the last 50+ years such as: human/physical; urban/rural; human/non-human; and time/space. Such dualisms have compartmentalised the academic discipline, highlighting differences through boundaries. Contemporary geographers dismantle 'taken-for-granted' boundaries (Atkinson et al., 2007:153) and embrace approaches that appreciate the complexity, transitional nature and fuzziness of our world within their 'Earth description'.[1] The concept 'personal geography' might on the one hand encourage a consideration of boundaries: for example, personal/public; child/parent; personal/local; and personal/non-personal geography. On the other hand, perhaps 'personal geography' has the capacity to blur or transcend boundaries, since personal experience incorporates, for instance, the physical, social, private and public domains.

By the time of the 2007 National Curriculum, an academic area of study called Children's Geographies had become established with its own journal publishing work in this field since 2003 (Matthews, 2003). The sub-specialism had gained further recognition within the Academy with the formation of an RGS-IBG (Royal Geographical Society – Institute of British Geographers) working group titled Geographies of Children, Youth and Families. Key individuals actively researching children's geographies included Valentine and Holloway (Valentine, 1996; Valentine et al., 2005; Holloway and Valentine, 2003; Holloway and Valentine, 2000), who were (in 2007) both Professors of Geography. By 2007, children's geographies

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[1] Greek *geographia* "description of the earth's surface," from *geo-* "earth" + -*graphia* "description" HARPER, D. Online Etymology Dictionary

had gained status as an academic sub-specialism alongside other more traditional areas of geography.

Research in children's geographies problematises the diversity of children's experiences within society. 'Children' is itself a contested concept, and for this study includes all young people up to the age of 18 years old, a group that is increasing as a percentage of the world's population. Academics are interested in the everyday experiences of children within differing spaces including the home, school and, as noted earlier, play spaces (McKendrick et al., 2000). I am arguing that research on children's geographies provided a significant backdrop during the rewriting of the National Curriculum, resulting in the introduction of a focus on the personal.

The question arises of whether and how children's geographies studied by an adult academic geographer link to the personal geographies of individual pupils in the classroom. Are these two separate aspects of geography? How can a student geography teacher navigate between the academic discipline and the lives of his or her pupils? I suggest in this thesis that a knowledge gap has emerged within the field between the academic study of children's geographies and curriculum constructions of the 'personal geographies' that children bring to the school geography classroom.

The academic background of student geography teachers: What kind of geography do they bring with them?

The relationship between geography as a school subject and geography the academic discipline has been explored earlier within this chapter. In the current UK education system to train as a secondary school geography teacher, applicants need to have studied a minimum of 50% geography modules within their degree course. To apply for an academic geography lecturing post applicants also need a postgraduate degree or equivalent level qualification. Geography teaching is, in other words, now

a graduate profession. It is important, therefore, to consider the nature of the 'academic geographies' that student teachers bring with them onto ITE courses and onwards into schools, as these will inevitably influence their perspective on the 'personal'.

The inclusion of the stipulation of 50% geography in undergraduate study for applicants to many PGCE geography courses, for example MMU, Newcastle University and Cambridge University, (see Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, 2015), is in part a response to the array of geography degrees that exist in the UK. The degrees of PGCE students at the institution where I am employed (the second largest UK provider training geography teachers) offers a glimpse of the breadth and diversity of academic geography qualifications that student teachers bring with them.

> BA Geography; BSc Physical Geography; BSc Geography; BA/M Geography & Irish; BSc Land Management; BA Human Geography; BSc Environmental Geography; MA Town & Country Planning; BSc Aquatic Studies, etc.

Figure 6: Degree titles

The diversity of academic qualifications reflected above indicates that some students have specialised in Physical Geography, some have studied modules focusing upon Human Geography, and others have focused upon the interrelations between Human and Physical Geography. The award of BA or BSc in Geography reflects the unique status of geography as a hybrid discipline already noted, as 'belonging' both to the humanities and to scientific domains. I suggest that student teachers with a BA in Geography are more likely to have come into contact with researchers studying 'cool', 'emotional', 'embodied' or 'children's geographies' than those studying a BSc in Physical Geography. Employing Durham University's use of the concept 'personal geography', I am arguing that each student teacher has 'their own unique

and personal geography which draws on' their undergraduate studies (Durham University, 2010).

The UK PGCE route to teaching geography in secondary schools also builds upon the student teacher's experience of geography at preceding educational phases: Early Years; Key Stages 1 – 3 of the national curricula; GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) Geography; AS (Advanced Subsidiary) Geography; A (Advanced) Geography. Thus, student teachers (during the period of this research 2008-12) commenced their PGCE course having accumulated 16+ years of geography as a learner within school and university.

By 2010-11, the PGCE cohort at the case study institution were more aware of the phrase 'personal geography' at the start of their PGCE training year than the two earlier cohorts. 10 (out of 23) students said they had already come across the phrase, with seven referring to modules during their undergraduate courses.

From the data collected from questionnaires (see Chapter 4 for details) completed by student teachers during the five years of research (2008-12), it appears that there was familiarity with an academic geographical area of study about children's and adults' 'personal geographies'. This thesis assumes that this is different to the relevant 'personal geographical experiences' that pupils bring to the classroom and needs further investigation.

Personal geography and the role of geography educators in Initial Teacher Education

Geography educators have an important role in mediating and bridging the academic discipline and school subject geography. As noted above, I myself have been enthused and inspired to adapt my own practice by inspirational initial teacher geography educators such as Phil Boden (1970s) and David Leat (1990s). Initial teacher education (ITE)

geography tutors recruit onto their courses student teachers who bring diverse 'personal geographical' experiences, and within a condensed 180-day PGCE course train student teachers for a life-long career in teaching geography. If a typical geography career is over 40 years (for a full pension), geography teachers will experience both the dynamic nature of the education profession with frequent policy interventions, and the shifting relationship of school and academic geographies, as outlined in preceding sections. Geography ITE tutors play a significant mediating role, therefore, between school and universities. In my experience they are generally welcomed guests in schools, and viewed as sources of useful, new geographical information. Experienced geography teachers often value the new ideas student teachers and their tutors bring to their departments. As I will argue in later chapters, the capacity of schools to embrace and work with the contributions of student teachers is also constrained by the structures of a National Curriculum assessment and inspection machinery that cannot fully accommodate the diversity of pupil experiences.

As a full time geography educator with over 14 years' experience, I have long been interested in the everyday lives of children and the ways in which initial training courses can help equip student teachers to be aware of the experiences children bring to the classroom. I designed and co-taught a unit titled 'Children's Worlds' as a specialism on a four-year BA Primary School Education degree course from 2003-6. Some of the course material was disseminated via the GA website (Bermingham, 2004). I had therefore, along with other scholars such as Catling, been exploring children's worlds with student teachers prior to the policy inclusion of the concept 'personal geography', problematising the question of how children perceive their world. I was aware, like other scholars, of the challenge for an adult to see the world through contemporary children's eyes (Bellamy, 2004). Children develop their ideas about the world from a variety of sources in our information-rich society, which raises further questions. Do they have the skills to critically analyse the messages they receive? Do the media portray a balanced

view? Can children participate to improve their world? 'Education for sustainable development' and 'global citizenship' were two areas of the 1999 National Curriculum that highlighted the role of teachers in helping children to become active citizens and responsible custodians of our planet.

> Education for sustainable development enables pupils to develop the knowledge, skills, understanding and values to participate in decisions about the way we do things individually and collectively, both locally and globally, that will improve the quality of life now without damaging the planet for the future. (DFEE and QCA, 1999:25)

UN world leaders pledged to change the world not only for children but with their participation. The UN General Assembly Special Session on Children in May 2002 pledged to make education for all children an essential part of building a 'World Fit for Children' (Bellamy, 2004:5). Gabriel questioned how difficult it is as adults to understand children's worlds: 'How can we begin to understand the experiences of children throughout the world? Children are 40% of the world's population, which is the largest generation of children in history' (Gabriel, 2004:24-25).

This move towards citizenship, global responsibility and concern for children's rights and experiences all consolidate a view that personal experience and decision-making is crucial to active, critical engagement in the world.

Geography teacher educators during the 1990s and 2000s were thus actively developing student teachers' awareness of the lives of the children they would be teaching. Moreover, I suggest, ITE tutors' enthusiasms influenced school practitioners via student teachers on placements and the dissemination of ideas and resources via Geographical Association publications and conferences. Again, therefore, teacher educators operated as mediators, between global policy, the professional associations and school contexts.

Catling had already done significant work relating to children's lives in the 1990s. As President of the Geographical Association at the time, he identified 10 worlds of geographical significance in children's lives, namely their:

> action world
> perceived world
> people world
> information world
> competence world
> valued world
> imaginary world
> source world
> future world
> commitment world (Catling, 1993:344-345)

Catling continued to share his research concerning children's worlds, including, 10 years later, articles within a special edition of 'Children's Geographies' of the GA Journal *Geography* (Catling, 2003). As noted, geography teacher educators such as Catling and myself were actively raising awareness of children's lives for student teachers training to teach primary or secondary school geography: therefore, prior to the 2007 policy inclusion of 'personal geography'.

During the first decade of the 21st century, there was an increasing focus therefore on children's lives and experiences by geography teacher educators as well as some academics, and internationally, as the focus was a UN concern, in light of the increased population of children.

The GA was an important mediator as noted between school and academic geographies. The association funded a five-year curriculum development project, the Young People's Geographies Project (YPG), in 2006. The aim, according to the project leaders Firth and Biddulph, was

to investigate 'how school students and teachers working together can effectively develop the school geography curriculum and students' geographical learning' (Firth and Biddulph, 2006).

The research of Biddulph and Firth (Biddulph and Adey, 2004; Firth and Biddulph, 2006) - two teacher educators actively working with pupils, academics, teachers and PGCE students to co-construct geography curricula - was, I believe, a further influence on the policy decision to include 'personal geography' in the 2007 programme of study for geography. Earlier within this chapter I stated that the Action Plan for Geography, with a special mention of the YPG (Young People's Geographies), had been shared at QCA meetings, and that post-consultation, 'personal geographies' was added to the 2007 policy documents.

Let us pause for a summary overview of the argument so far. Throughout this chapter I have problematised the emergence of the concept 'personal geography', commencing with a discussion about the shifting and complicated relationship between school and academic geographies. The discussion was further complicated by considering three key developments within school geography. I argued that the National Curriculum was the most influential shift to the school and academic geography relationship, and was often perceived to be generated by 'outsiders'. Opening up the discussion to include the first National Curriculum and its many rewrites, I argued that the 'outsider' view of the National Curriculum for geography did not hold. As Butt (1997) noted 8 of the 13 Geography Working Group were members from the Geographical Association, and therefore 'insiders' representing thousands of practitioners. The mediating role of the professional associations and geography teacher educators are part of this thesis back story as we consider the emergence of the concept 'personal geography'. Broader educational shifts, including the personalisation agenda of the Labour government with Every Child Matters, were argued to have played a role prior to the 2007 policy inclusion of 'personal geography'. The global,

socio-historical and spatial context has been woven into the discussion, with reference to the UN 2002 focus upon the largest ever generation of children. The emergence of an academic sub-specialism of Children's Geographies was identified as significant. The bringing together of academics, geography educators and pupils by a GA-funded project in 2006 to co-construct school geography in the months leading up to meetings between the professional associations and the QCA was, I have argued, pivotal.

Each part of this discussion has played its part, and together assembled a view of conditions that led to the policy expectation that teachers would build upon pupil's personal geographies. However, this complex movement towards a focus on the personal was not universally welcomed. Against this slowly building set of contextual conditions for the emergence of the concept 'personal geographies' was the scholar Standish (2004), who expressed concern about the growing focus upon children's geographies. Standish questioned the treatment of children as adults, and the assumption that children are able to understand and take responsibility for complex issues. He argued:

> Students will learn little from a curriculum of children's geography. They might develop a better awareness of how their lives relate to those around them, including the lives of other children. It might also make them 'feel valued' because somebody is listening to them. But it will teach them nothing about the changing geography of the world - because this is a world shaped by adults. (Standish, 2004)

Standish critiqued a 'children's geography (that) is invented by adults' and motivated by adult concerns; he argued: 'Children's geography is the logical end point of a curriculum that sees no value in subject knowledge. It is devoid of any content that could take children beyond their limited experiences' (2004).

Standish's critique failed to disrupt and unsettle the personalisation agenda current at the time, which gained further energy when added to the movements already identified: i.e., the children's geographies developments within the academic discipline; the children's lives concern of geography teacher educators; and the co-construction of geography curricula with pupils as part of the YPG.

A 'vague concept'? Problems and issues in actualising 'personal geographies' in practice

I was also interested in how practitioners were guided via official advice to incorporate 'personal geography' into their practice. An analysis of both policy documents and training manuals employing aspects of content and discourse analysis was carried out (see Chapter 4 for further details). The QCA 2007 geography programme of study at Key Stage 3 stated that the geography 'curriculum should provide opportunities for pupils to: build on and expand their personal experiences of geography' (QCA, 2007).

For educators looking for a definition for personal geography and/or personal experiences of geography on the QCA website, however, they would find only a vague paragraph defining

> personal experiences of geography; This involves using pupils' practical and life experiences to extend and deepen their awareness and understanding of a range of geographical ideas, such as the significance of location, the nature of environments and sustainable development. (QCA, 2007)

As Butt (2009:7) reminds us, and as I will demonstrate later in this thesis:

> The term 'personal geography' is one that is rather loosely defined within geography education. Although it is often used, even within official documentation, its meaning and implications for teaching and learning geography have largely been assumed.

The assumption seems to be that Key Stage 3 teachers would understand what is involved in 'using pupils' practical and life experiences', etc. However, I will argue in the thesis that there has been a lack of clarity of curriculum expectation, and that this has left a gap for unintended consequences.

The power of curricular policy is expressed and transmitted in its printed and on-line curriculum documents by using terms such as 'must' (QCA 2007:9) and 'should' (QCA 2007:102-107). These modal verbs provide clear, forceful directives to the educational practitioner. I will argue in later chapters that this power becomes amplified when there is a lack of definition of what is expected. 'You must/should' without a clear exemplification and guidance creates anxiety, as highlighted by Courcier (2007) above. This anxiety, I suggest, is heightened within the public arena of the classroom in which the individual teacher operates under surveillance of the perceived and actual inspection gaze. Without a culturally and educationally shared understanding, how can teachers know that what they plan for their pupils will be considered worthy for the Ofsted inspectors' scrutiny? Confusion in the public space of the classroom creates fear and anxiety. By resisting this, or ignoring it, teachers can remain in the safer position of a knowledgeable professional, always at the ready for the impending inspection by Ofsted and the inspectors' gaze.

The educational terms 'personal', 'relevant', and 'Every Child Matters' invoke, in my view, an empathetic classroom discourse in which the actors (pupils and teachers) can open up and share. This thesis questions how far this is feasible within the current UK educational system and classroom spaces. The concept of 'personal geography' at first acquaintance seems educationally sound and appropriate. So why might practitioners resist building upon pupils' personal geographies?

The concept 'personal geographies', it is suggested, was included within curricular documents to empower classroom actors. I noted above that the GA representatives at the pivotal QCA meeting shared their YPG project highlighting the agency of pupils co-constructing a geography curriculum with academics and teachers, to engage pupils with content that is relevant to their lives. This seems unquestionable. However, what has been created could also be viewed as another way of classifying and judging teachers, according to whether they are good at including and building upon pupils' personal geographies. Teachers strive to be responsible and effective, yet how can they be effective if there is no clarity about what they are to do? In the thesis I raise questions about the fit, or gap, between curricular policy and classroom practice, and the implications for teachers, student teachers, teacher educators and children.

The concept 'personal geography' as written within government curricular policy documents is, I argue, a vague concept, defined by Baggini and Fosi as 'out of focus in the sense that one can't be sure what it is at all, even what the alternatives are' (2010:75-76). It is not merely an ambiguous concept, which Baggini and Fosi define as one where 'the alternatives can be made very clear, though it may remain difficult to decide which to select' (ibid.).

By including 'personal' and/or 'personal geography' in the curriculum documents, the rhetoric implies that the individual - the personal - is valued and given a high status. However, with a lack of clarity and guidance about what this concept means, power remains within the hierarchical educational structure, and individuality, the personal, is given a lower status. By highlighting a focus on the personal within geography, the reality may result in the opposite, a lack of focus on the personal.

'Personal' seems a worthy, almost innocent concept within 21st century education. But it may be revealed as a repellent concept:

> If we were to examine throughout history the motives, purposes and struggles that determined the origin and development of apparently innocent and even widely admired concepts, institutions and practices, would we find repellent devices for control, manipulation and oppression? (Baggini and Fosi, 2010:233)

Furthermore, the process of normalisation (cf. Kritzman, 1988), I would argue, offers a potential explanation as to why pupils and teachers might silence, and resist sharing, their own personal geographies and experiences, as I discovered in my study. The fear and anxiety of others' views and interpretations of us, I argue, contribute to and help to minimise our voiced and shared individualities (see Chapter 3). Moreover, teachers and pupils temporarily co-habit classroom spaces within an educational system that promotes normalisation. Other researchers have highlighted how the UK educational system assumes an ideal student, and that pupils are constantly compared against this ideal. Within such a system sameness, often under the guise of empathy (see Lather, 2009), is promoted.

Guidance from training manuals: interpretations of curriculum policy

Personal geographies was, as noted, a new concept, written into policy in 2007. By 2010 there had been enough publishing, and proofreading time for training manuals to include advice on this new aspect of school geography for their readers. For a student teacher, at the start of their teaching career, training manuals offer a plethora of tried and tested strategies from experienced educationalists. Training manuals targeted at Geography PGCE students contain guidance and advice on many aspects of teaching and learning including lesson planning, resources and differentiation. A sample of three training manuals (all published in 2010), targeted at Geography PGCE students, were analysed for content concerning the concept of personal geography. The three texts were: *Studying PGCE Geography at M Level*, edited by Clare Brooks; *Teaching*

Geography 11-18, A Conceptual Approach by David Lambert and John Morgan; and *Learning to teach geography in the secondary school - A companion to school experience* by David Lambert and David Balderstone. The selected texts had esteem indicators on the back covers justifying and highlighting the contents to potential readers with quotes from journal editors, a professor and the publisher.

Adjectives proliferate on the back covers of these three training textbooks: 'essential', 'authoritative', 'powerful', and 'invaluable'; each adjective carefully chosen by the publishers to heighten the importance of the internal content. I have argued above that the curriculum documents had left the concept of personal geography vague and that without clarity, confusion and resistance can occur. The three training manuals were analysed for content relating to personal geography. Would a student teacher find clarity and guidance about this concept in the published world of contemporary training manuals? The concept of personal geography was not listed in the index or contents pages of the three sample texts, therefore maintaining the concept's elusive nature. It was necessary to look more closely into the three texts to identify advice on personal geography.

Brooks (2010) within her chapter 'Developing and reflecting on subject expertise' identifies three strategies used by 'expert' geography teachers to bring the personal into the classroom:

- making connections with other geographical knowledge or experiences
- tuning into the students' personal geographies
- using the teacher's own geographical experiences to help students make links with similar or related phenomena (2010:70)

Moreover, Brooks states that 'Teachers, as subject experts, need to reconsider and re-view their subject knowledge through the lens of their students and their experience.' (2010:73). However, how to 'tune into'

students' personal geographies is left unclear. The implication is that expert teachers have valuable academic geographic knowledge and that the teachers' role is to link the pupil to this knowledge.

In the preface to Lambert and Morgan (2010:x) is a reference to the teacher's own geography: 'we are in effect saying to geography teachers, "use your geography"; use it to help you engage and excite interest in young people to understand the world; use it to help you design and plan your teaching.' This brings in the question - Whose personal geography should be used in the classroom, that of the teacher or the pupils? And how? The assumption here is that it is a good thing to use the teacher's own geography. Moreover, 'the young people themselves bring curiosities, ingenuity and often individual interests that the teacher may choose to find out about and use' (Lambert and Morgan, 2010:50). The 'may choose' is interesting. Is there a particular type of geography teacher who would choose? Is this dependent on the topic of geography? What factors influence the use or silencing of the personal geographies/experiences the pupils bring to the classroom?

Lambert and Balderstone remind their readers of curriculum policy: 'KS3 courses and schemes of work must provide opportunities for students to build on their personal experiences of geography' (Lambert and Balderstone, 2010:15). Personal geographies are hinted at with reference to planning for progression: 'try to ensure that your teaching builds upon pupils' existing knowledge and previous experience' (Lambert and Balderstone, 2010:208).

It is interesting that the powerful directive of 'should', employed 26 times in the geography programme of study curriculum document, became tempered in the texts from nationally recognised geography educators as 'try to' or 'may', diluted to a recommendation, a possibility. Lambert and Morgan (2010) take the reader from a tentative, suggestive choice of 'you may' to a requirement, a 'need to', if the highest accolade of the authors - that of Critical Media Geography teaching and learning is to be achieved.

This

> …sees all geographical knowledge as socially constructed and
> therefore requires that students and teachers are able to examine
> the nature of that knowledge. In order for this to happen, teachers
> need to find ways to both engage with the geographical
> imaginations and experiences of the students they teach. (Lambert
> and Morgan, 2010:160)

Here the term 'personal geographies' is not a concept directly referred to,
but the need to use the pupils' geographical imaginations and
experiences is mentioned. This raises another potential boundary to
explore further: namely, the boundary between imagination and
experience. Lambert and Morgan (2010) leave the reader pondering the
challenges for teachers cited in the Geographical Association's
'manifesto', 'A Different View' (Geographical Association, 2009): 'to
examine the potential of school geography, to engage with young
people's geographical experiences' (Lambert and Morgan, 2010:165). For
a student teacher, or experienced teacher, the guidance on 'how to'
remains elusive.

When discussing and providing guidance for using aims and creating
schemes of work, Lambert and Balderstone suggest that geography
could address one of the overall aims of the KS3 curriculum, stating that
'Geography gives pupils a disciplined framework through which to share
and develop their personal experiences and sense of place' (Lambert and
Balderstone, 2010:221).

Questions continue to proliferate. Is personal geography about sharing,
voicing prior experiences? How do pupils benefit from hearing others
share their experiences, as Lambert and Balderstone recommend?

> Clearly teachers and learners can themselves be valuable
> resources for learning in geography. Often the knowledge and

experiences that they bring into the geography classroom are rarely used or exploited. (Lambert and Balderstone, 2010:230)

Might the sharing of knowledge and experiences also lead in certain circumstances to reinforcing social inequalities? Who decides what is permissible to share, whose voices to silence? We will return to these questions in the pupil response section in a later chapter (Chapter 6).

If, as Lambert and Balderstone (2010) state, pupils' experiences are rarely used or exploited, what are the barriers to their effective use? It must be confusing for student teachers who are told 'you should', but find that experienced teachers rarely do. With a lack of clarity in the curriculum policy documents and training manuals to inform practitioners, how do practitioners enact and add meaning in practice? We return to these concerns in later chapters (Chapters 5 and 7).

Concluding remarks

Within this chapter I have documented various notions of 'personal geography', from the academic discipline through to the training manuals for student geography teachers. I have started to identify complexities, conflicts and resistances with the introduction of 'personal geographies' within curriculum policy, and questioned the positive and negative implications of a personal focus within the geography curriculum.

The focus on personal geographies and whether student teachers can/should build upon the pupils' personal geographies within their geography lessons has led to a case study approach (Stark and Torrance, 2005:33), investigating the concept 'personal geography' through a study located in an initial teacher training university PGCE setting. This in-depth study of the curriculum topic 'personal geographies' considers how student teachers during their training year gained awareness of, and built upon, pupil's personal geographies. It also takes account of views of pupils within the student teachers' placement schools.

Student teachers arrive at the start of PGCE courses with a wealth of knowledge about contemporary academic geography, yet there is a tension that quickly emerges, as I show in Chapter 5, as they are obliged or inclined to leave behind their academic geographical knowledge to teach school geography, a geography that is partly familiar since they themselves received it as a pupil.

What role is there for 'personal geography' – if this refers to the lived experiences, reality and hopes for the future, which each pupil brings to the classroom - within personalised learning? The GA's Young People's Geographies project (Geographical Association, 2006-11) considered pupils' interests, and how these were linked to the pupils 'personal geography'. However, questions remain. What interests are valued in the classroom? Which are silenced? How can they be drawn out from the pupil and how can they be used in the public arena of the classroom?

Turning to student teachers, further questions emerge. How do student teachers decide what geography to teach in the classroom? How are student teachers influenced by: policy documents; their ITE tutor; the two geographical communities; training manuals; placement schools; and the pupils they create the learning experiences for? For student teachers their geographical knowledge is not fixed upon graduation, as the classroom experience of teaching according to Brooks 'can change teachers' subject knowledge as they encounter different perspectives on text through working on it with their children'. This is also the case for student teachers (Brooks, cited in Butt, 2011:168).

The empirical study at the heart of this thesis investigates the links and tensions between the personal geographies that children bring to the classroom, the personal geographies that the student teacher brings, the academic study of children's geographies, and the training of student geography teachers to bridge the school and university boundary in order to build upon the pupils' prior personal experiences of geography. It

challenges the policy assumption that introducing the personal into the geography classroom is unproblematic and uncomplicatedly beneficial.

Chapter 3 – Sharing or silencing personal experiences within educational spaces

This chapter considers issues of power and silence in relation to the teaching and learning of personal geography in the classroom. It interrogates the notion of 'personal experience' – a notion that is treated as unproblematic, if not self-evident, in the policy and curriculum documentation. I suggest that introducing personal experience in the classroom may raise issues of power and voice, which can lead to the silencing of some pupils. I also consider the ways in which space, a fundamental, yet often taken for granted, concept in geography, is entangled with power and silence. As Foucault observed, 'Space is fundamental in any form of communal life; space is fundamental in any exercise of power' (cited in Huxley, 2007:190).

Silence, and its intimate association with power, is, however, the central focus of the chapter. I consider how I was myself silenced; how power silences children in the classroom, and how the very concept of space is often silenced in geographical work and writing because it is so taken for granted. Silences and the possibility of fullness of voice are explored to problematise who benefits from sharing life experiences, personal geographies in the classroom. Do silences, power and space combine to normalise classroom discourse?

The chapter is informed by the work of Foucault. It assumes, after Foucault, that power and knowledge are inextricably linked, as 'it is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge [and] it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power' (cited in Mills, 2003:69). In Foucault's work, the inextricable links between power and knowledge are often indicated by yoking the two words together in the single term, 'power-knowledge'. Ball (2013:5) describes power-knowledge as 'the single, inseparable configuration of ideas and practices that form a

discourse'. From a Foucauldian perspective, the introduction of personal geography needs to be considered in terms of the institutional discourses that regulate classroom life. Discourses, such as education, profoundly shape what counts as knowledge, truth and value. Moreover, subjects themselves are constituted in and through discourse. Discourses, wrote Foucault, are 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak' (Foucault, 1972:49). Britzman (2000) elaborates on the ways in which subjects are formed by discourse:

> Discourses authorize what can and cannot be said; they produce relations of power and communities of consent and dissent, and thus discursive boundaries are always being redrawn around what constitutes the desirable and the undesirable and around what it is that makes possible particular structures of intelligibility and unintelligibility. (cited in MacLure, 2003:175)

As Britzman indicates, discourses are not only processes of formation, but also of exclusion of those who are on the 'other' side of the 'discursive' boundaries. Ball makes explicit the association of such exclusion with *silencing*. Discourses, he writes, 'are about what can be said and thought, but also about who can speak, and when, and with what authority' (Ball, 2013:5).

In Chapter 2 I focused on the voices of stakeholders contributing towards the 2007 policy and the subsequent curriculum guidance (Subject associations, QCA and ITE tutors). I argued that the educational system heightened the power of curricular policy through its printed and online curriculum documents by using terms such as 'must' and 'should', providing clear, forceful directives to the educational practitioner. Such power I argued becomes amplified when there is a lack of definition of what is expected. With a lack of clarity and guidance about the concept 'personal geographies', power (and therefore knowledge) remained, I suggested, within the hierarchical educational structure, and individuality, the personal, was given a lower status. There is a paradox here: the

inclusion of personal geographies at the policy level demanded a focus on the personal, and such personal knowledge was therefore given a higher status. Yet the individual (the teacher in the classroom and their class of pupils) was given a lower status through the lack of clarity as to what is meant by 'personal geographies'.

However, it should be noted that, within authoritative discourses, lack of clarity may also, depending on context and circumstances, provide openings for resistance and creativity on the part of those who are allocated subordinate positions. I will suggest below that the lack of clarity of the concept of 'personal geography' opens many lines of questioning. Is personal geography about sharing, voicing prior experiences? How do pupils benefit from hearing others share their experiences? Can this lead to reinforcing social inequalities? Who decides what is permissible to share, whose voices to silence? What interests are valued in the classroom? Which are silenced? How can they be drawn out from the pupil and how can they be used in the public arena of the classroom? It can be seen from these questions that the notion of experience is a key concept in conceptualising personal geography/ies. However, definitions and assumptions about the nature of personal experience are seldom explicitly formulated in the policy documents.

What is meant by experience?

Reference to experience is frequently made in the curriculum documents in relation to personal geography/ies, yet this is never adequately defined. For instance, the English 2007 National Curriculum expects teachers to use 'pupils' own experiences', to use their 'practical and life experiences', and to use their 'personal experiences of geography' (QCA, 2007) within the public space of the classroom. I have concerns about such a policy expectation that appears to reduce pupils to their prior experience/s. I am arguing that the notion of experience becomes static when it is treated merely as brute data. Moreover, in common with Foucault, I am 'suspicious of the notion that the self is a transparent entity that can be

accurately or usefully written about, or wholly divulged to – or by – the other' (cited in Downing, 2008:2). Within the classroom, are pupils expected to be 'transparent entities', their prior experiences, including personal geographies, available to others in the room? I have serious concerns about such use of pupils' experiences. The risk is that the individual pupil's prior experiences become just another piece of data for the class teacher and others to use. Ideally, the curriculum policy expectation of 'using and building upon personal geographical experiences' could have the potential 'to desist from stilling life, to become sensitive to the vivacity of space, and to create new spaces for life and new ways of being' (Doel and Clarke, 2006:106). However, more needs to be known, I suggest, about how to mobilise personal experience productively in the power-infused spaces of teaching and learning.

The concept of experience is troubled by Foucault. Downing states that: 'A paradoxical suspicion of, and fascination with, the subject of experience runs through Foucault's corpus' (Downing, 2008:ix). Experience, according to Foucault, should be transformative:

> An experience is something that one comes out of transformed…I write a book only because I still don't exactly know what to think about this thing I want so much to think about, so that the book transforms me and transforms what I think…I'm an experimenter in the sense that I write in order to change myself and in order not to think the same thing as before. (cited in Faubion, 1994:239-240)

This characterisation of experience as open-ended and transformative resonates with me. However, it seems rather different from that envisaged in the 2007 geography curriculum documents where, as I have noted, experience seems predominantly to function as a kind of raw material for pedagogy.

The notion of the personal can be further explored by considering my own personal experiences. The only experiences I have the confidence to

write about with any authority are those that I have personally experienced during the writing of this thesis, yet the very act of writing the thesis has transformed the way I think. This thesis problematises the sharing of personal experiences of geography within the geography classroom, and considers whether and how such sharing might provide a transformative experience for pupils, and thus a new way of being.

I need to be aware of the possibility that by writing about empirical data, this thesis could become 'a frozen world of penetrating glances and frozen gestures', a criticism levelled at Foucault by Megill (Megill, 1979:475). The change in how I now think of data, as data flowing through me rather than captured and fossilized into text, has assisted in shaping the thesis differently. In writing this thesis I am becoming a different researcher. The flows (including data) transform me. I am always becoming, as Foucault suggested: 'We write to become other than what we are' (quoted by Downing, 2008:53).

Communicating personal experiences

As a researcher I lean upon post-structural theorists yet I am constantly pulled back into prior ways of thinking, restricted within the humanist language of 'you' and 'I' (pronouns). I am guilty of falling back into humanist ways of thinking that if I dig deep enough I can get to authentic reality, a criticism that I would now level at my early analysis of interview transcripts (see Chapter 5).

Language is the researcher's primary tool for communicating. I need language to communicate the lines of thought within this thesis. However, the research of post-structuralist theorists, such as Derrida (1978), for example, has highlighted how language privileges certain views or voices and is always limited in representing the world. This is pertinent to the issue of pupils' and student teachers' personal experiences. Individuals cannot escape the language they are born into and that comes with all

sorts of distinctions of power. As Spivak suggests we are 'bound by the Derridian insight of the mother tongue, having been inserted into a history created before we were born' (Spivak, 1997:160 quoted in Mazzei, 2007:5). Personal geographies, the prior experiences that individuals are prepared to share (voice) to others are filtered through access to language. The structures, rules and words known and available to individuals place a limit upon what each can express verbally. Mazzei prompts us to consider the limitations of language and to be attentive to 'the silent threads woven into our participant's tapestry of speech' (Mazzei, 2007:39).

Language paradoxically enables and constrains. The limitations of language, and the lack of clarity of particular words, might paradoxically offer spaces and opportunities for creativity, liberating new ways of thinking. The lack of clarity in the notion of personal geography may therefore silence or liberate. Language, I suggest, constrains yet encourages our desire for clarity. I have personally worked against this quest for clarity, deliberately resisting defining the concept of 'personal geographies'. Furthermore, as St Pierre suggested, I need to 'be suspicious of desire for clarity' (2013). Moreover, by struggling I can be open to the opportunity for moving in my thinking. Thus, my resistance to defining the concept of 'personal geography' throughout this thesis has enabled new lines of thought to develop.

Knowledge is always provisional and subject to change, as is this thesis. The thesis has traces of many 'others', recognising that the words and ideas are not unique to the author. I am entangled within the thesis, and appreciate there are 'others' whose traces and voices are explicit and others who are faint whispers within this thesis, The authors to whom I owe a debt have themselves transformed over their corpus of texts in journals, conferences and books.

Normalised, uniform experience/s

According to many scholars, the contemporary dominant forms of educational discourse within the UK promote the culture, values and competence of children from white middle-class backgrounds (Reay et al., 2007; Rollock et al., 2012; Gee, 1996; and in the USA Kobayashi and Peake, 2008).

Furthermore, within textbooks and educational classroom discourse, language assumes a unity of shared experiences uttered in a shared middle-class, supposedly neutral dialect, and this raises serious problems about equality of access to prevailing meanings (see Edwards and Westgate, 2005). Consequently, pupils may mis-recognise themselves in order to fit into the one-size-fits-all notion of experience. Therefore, language has the power to silence. Moreover, the assumption of one hegemonic notion of experience - as if it was a simple thing that everyone 'has' and could simply regurgitate - is at odds within multi-cultural classrooms and real contexts, in which there may be massive disparities of experience, life circumstances and opportunities. This raises issues concerning language, power and silences, and as I shall show shortly the issue of space is also bound up with constraints upon what can be said in the classroom.

There is an additional challenge inherent in an educational system that values evidence and impact, valorising data that is observable and heard - rather than silences and non-visible traces within educational experiences and spaces. I will argue that there is a need to open up our discussion concerning silence.

The contemporary dominant forms of educational discourse within the UK, I am arguing, promote the white middle class. From her research with UK and North American higher education geography lecturers, Browne argued that 'using student experiences to reinforce a point or to illustrate

a concept does not necessarily engage them in the process of contesting hegemonic norms' (2005:346), and contends: 'White hegemonic masculinity could be reinforced and further legitimized through the celebration of particular "personals"' (2005:352). As I will show in later chapters, the pupils who participated in my research study were aware of what is safe to publically speak about and share within the classroom – this seemed to correspond to middle-class norms of experiences. The pupils emphasized their desire to minimise the potential to highlight inequalities (see Chapter 6).

So far, the discussion has focused upon the limitations of language and an educational system that values observable and heard data. Additionally, it is necessary to consider the significance of 'space': the three-dimensional sites occupied by pupils and teachers within English schools. I will show within this thesis that 'spaces' can also silence an individual.

Space can limit what is possible or not within a location. As Massey (2005) argues, space really matters in the formation of identity, community and capacity for action (see also Crampton and Elden, 2007). On entering into an educational space, such as a classroom, the visual images and sounds provide clues to expected behaviours. I offer here a brief vignette from a funded project to demonstrate the power of space to silence. As part of 'The Making My Place in The World' project (Bermingham and Lyon, 2012) I accompanied pupils to the local Town Hall to meet the Leader of the Council and the Mayor. The pupils had carried out their own research, and had practised their presentations and were all ready to voice their views about the local area – however, as soon as they entered the council chambers they struggled to speak. The power of that space resulted in boisterous pupils sitting meekly, quashed and reminded of their lowly position.

My position as researcher

As a qualitative researcher problematising the concept of 'personal geographies', I also need to question my own practices. My involvement within the data requires careful attention, including my physical presence and my questions, silences, gestures and movements within educational spaces as I interact with research participants. These all unavoidably impacted upon the dialogue and performance of the student teachers and pupil focus groups.

During the analysis of data, it was necessary to consider whether I was valorising speech, the voices heard and digitally recorded then transcribed and coded. Lisa Mazzei's work intrigued me. In her study of silence she wrote: 'Were there things that I could hear, but had previously not considered because I had not bothered?' (Mazzei, 2007:3). As a geography educator I became bothered and reflected upon the impact of educational spaces upon teaching and learning. This thesis offered me the opportunity to problematise *space*, and un-voiced silences of our engagements within space/s and place/s.

Mazzei (2007:29) provides a deconstructive methodology for qualitative research that considers silence as data, as part of the wholeness of our conversations with research participants. This involves '"[m]aking the familiar strange" … [attending to] the unnoticed, the unheard, embodied in a deconstructive analysis of silence as part of the whole in discourse-based research' (Mazzei, 2007:31). This research study has therefore attempted to 'make the familiar strange', listening, observing, pondering words spoken, non-verbal gestures/movements, and silences.

Mazzei (2007) suggests a range of reasons why individuals may be silent. These might include having nothing to say, being unable to find the right words or choosing to be silent to protect others from thoughts that may be unacceptable to them. Moreover, Mazzei noted that a wall of

silence may offer a form of protection for the individual. During this thesis I became acutely aware that my presence impacted upon others. I strived to 'hear' the small narratives rather than re-present 'grand narratives', the hegemonic discourse. Research over a six-year period has been a time of personal transformation, and has heightened awareness of the power that my position as an 'expert' can have. I have had to recognise that my physical presence can silence others, and that the educational discourse I work and research within 'refuses – is unable – to hear "the voices of unreason"' (Downing, 2008:27). Within this thesis I need to tread sensitively, and carefully. I do not wish to fall guilty of ethical violence to my research participants, as a consequence of adapting my practice to be permeable to silences.

Language and educational spaces are therefore both enabling and constraining. The link between silence and space lies in the fact that they are both necessary constraints. They make it possible for certain things to happen, indeed they make it possible for children to have an education – but that very education constrains them. In other words, silence and space are both intimately connected with *power*, which in Foucault's analysis is always both repressive and productive.

Silence as an empowering strategy

Sharing personal experiences and studying geography at the personal scale has become a curriculum expectation (QCA, 2007), within educational spaces that this study proposes, promote and value uniformity. A paradox thus exists, as I have argued above, within a normative education system that values sameness, yet promises to acknowledge the importance of difference, in terms of individual experience. As Jones (2013) notes, feeling 'normal' requires both difference and similarity. We engage in 'the practice of comparing ourselves to others while at the same time *distancing* our-selves from them. By evoking *distance* and *difference* one's own normalcy is

reconfirmed' (Jones, 2013:5). Comparing self to others, and/or playing down one's own transgressions from the 'norm', can assist pupils to cope with the day-to-day pressures within school (Mazzei, 2007:33). Yoshiro described such processes, in which one downplays one's sense of difference, as 'covering' (quoted in Mazzei, 2013:33).

Foucault (1994) gives the example of the power of the silent accused person who refuses to provide 'confessions, memories, intimate disclosures'. He notes that '[o]thers can't play their role if the accused is silent' (Faubion, 1994:177). Relating this to the situation of the pupil in the classroom, there is a tension here. Pupils may choose to be silent about aspects of themselves and their personal geographical experiences, playing down 'outsider identities' to fit in with the classroom norm. Yet they cannot be so silent that others cannot play their roles. Furthermore, research participants cannot be so silent that researchers cannot play their role. Within this research silencing and the desire for the researcher to hear the views of participants is problematised and linked to Foucault's notion of 'ethical violence' (see Chapter 6).

Foucault raises our awareness of institutions, designed structurally and architecturally to be economically efficient in carrying out the policies of the central, national policy-makers. Governmentality, for Foucault (see Huxley, 2007), concerns the way that individuals adopt and internalise the rules, regulations and expectations of those in authority. Such individualised governmentality can be highly efficient, requiring minimal resources to manage and control the population. Governmentality ensures that people take seriously 'the relationship that one ought to have with one's status, one's functions, one's activities, and one's obligations' (Foucault, 1986 quoted in Philo, 2006:127).

Governmentality, I suggest, can be considered as a form of silencing, because it forces the individual to render themselves legitimate within the affordances of a particular discourse. For a pupil, if they wish to be recognised as a good pupil, governmentality forces them to share the

right sort of experiences. Therefore, they may well have to suppress or silence aspects of themselves, and their prior experiences. Similar acts are required of student teachers striving to achieve the recognition of 'good' or 'outstanding'. Educational discourse imposes a sanitised, limited view of a 'good' or 'outstanding' teacher, obliging student teachers to silence aspects of their lives.

Governmentality works so that the pupil sits nicely, wanting to be viewed as a good pupil fitting within the norm. Furthermore, if a teacher asks the pupil to share, they are likely to share things they have learned to know are safe and appropriate. Additionally, in geography classrooms (since 2007), with the inclusion of personal geographies, the curriculum content throws the focus 'inside' the pupil, requiring them to render themselves transparent. Yet as I have noted, pupils may need to resist sharing 'outsider identities', and silence aspects of themselves, in order to survive in the classroom.

Exploring the concept of space

Language, including the visual textual presence in curricular policy of this concept, personal geography, provides a textual space, '….the space that language opens' (MacLure, 2003:3). Within this thesis both the concepts of 'personal geography' and 'space' have been opened up for scrutiny. Just as the language that constructs personal geographies of pupils involves power and silences, so does the very notion of space. I wish to explore further the concept of *space* to assist understandings of the public classroom space within which student teachers are expected to 'build upon the pupils' personal geographical experiences'. I begin by reflecting on how space operated in my own professional experience. This is followed by a discussion of the conceptualisation of space in the work of Thrift (see Thrift, 2003). I have found Thrift's work to be helpful in opening up questions around space in the classroom.

During 2011-12 I accepted a secondment as a 'community geographer' on a UK project funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, entitled 'Making My Place in the World'. Working in collaboration with the Programme Director of the Geographical Association and four schools, the project aimed to develop better understanding of the space and place young people inhabit and how they might become agents of change within their own 'local' place. As two professional geography educators, we felt we were well aware of the distinctive contribution that the discipline of geography brings in terms of an understanding of *place* and *space*. However, it quickly became clear to us during the project that these concepts, space and place, concepts we imagined were mutually understood, were neither easy to define nor, when we tried to come to agreement, had similar shared meanings for us. This set us on a journey to explore what we both understood by the term 'space' and the impact space and time has had on our collaboration. Such collaboration proved timely for this thesis, enhancing my motivation to attempt to fully explore the classroom spaces of interaction, in addition to spaces inhabited within this research.

As an experienced geography educator, I stepped into unknown situations in my new roles of community geographer/PhD researcher, even though these were often within familiar educational institutions. The educational settings I entered included ones where I had prior professional experience. I reflected upon the influence of space, and strived to ensure I used my geographical training and understandings to fully explore space as a geography education researcher, rather than merely 'utilising the language and vocabulary of geography … to fetishize space' (Robertson, 2009 quoted in Taylor, 2009:652).

Working on the Paul Hamlyn project exposed my lack of confidence in sharing my understanding of fundamental concepts with other 'experts', finding it easier to assume common understandings rather than potentially expose myself to public embarrassment. This lack of

confidence led me, I would suggest, to silence my own voice, as this extract from a journal entry indicates.

> XX [my co-researcher] came with an aura of the GA, a reputation and status of one promoting quality geography. At the start of the project I was excited, flattered to be invited, yet in awe of the challenge working with an expert in the field, and feared I might be shown publically to be wanting. Developing a new role, whilst in awe of the 'other' co-worker and project leader took me outside my familiar professional worlds, creating an unsettling yet transformative platform to grow in new directions within a collaborative, formative environment.
> **Journal Extract 2011**

The journal entry above provides a reflective insight that may reflect one reason why individuals may choose to be silent, as a strategy to avoid public embarrassment. Again therefore, as discussed at the beginning of this section, a lack of clarity and familiarity seemed to operate to silence personal voice and agency.

However, 'space' is not a new concept, but a core geographical concept. As a professional geography educator, an 'expert' to student teachers, I need to be able to, and have the confidence to, define and explain the concept of space to pupils, and students and readers of this thesis. I fudged an answer to the question 'What is your definition of Space?' at a research conference in 2011, some months prior to my secondment as a community geographer. Such experiences exposed my preference to silence, to avoid sharing my own understandings. Reflections both collaborative and personal provided the platform to question this reluctance and to take action to enhance my capability to share my understandings and views. My silencing strategy to avoid embarrassment resonates with the suggestion by Thrift that 'it would be fairly easy to argue that most of the time most geographers do tend to get rather embarrassed when challenged to come out with ideas about what the

supposed core of their subject is, and yet they continue to assert its importance' (Thrift, 2003:85). Thrift was referring to the concept of space: 'often regarded as the fundamental stuff of geography. Indeed, so fundamental that the well-known anthropologist Edward Hall once compared it to sex: "It is there but we don't talk about it. And if we do, we certainly are not expected to get technical or serious about it"' (Thrift, 2003:85).

As with many of my geographical contemporaries, I have a relational view of space: 'an idea of space as undergoing continual construction as a result of the agency of things encountering each other' (Thrift, 2003:86). Such a view fits with my role as a geography educator. The PGCE training year is one of networks and peer support, surrounded by experienced teachers; and as their tutor my role facilitates 'learning to teach' activities involving others. Learning to teach necessitates encounters with pupils, in educational spaces. Pupils, the expected beneficiaries of the policy inclusion of personal geographies, are confined in a temporal educational space. Furthermore, they share the space with objects that have more permanency in that space than themselves. Moreover, pupils are meant to feel comfortable enough in that educational space to share prior personal geographical experiences. I suggest that, just as language and governmentality constrain pupils, the actual sites of learning, that is, the educational spaces, also have the power to constrain and silence pupils.

In order to explore how educational spaces can constrain pupils I will draw upon Thrift's review of the geographical use of, and interest in, the concept 'space' (Thrift, 2003). Thrift summarised four different kinds of space of interest to human geographers: empirical, flow, image and place. I include a brief description of each category below, followed by some detail, as I use the example of a typical classroom chair to explore the categories. I apply Thrift's four categories of space in Chapter 6 as I investigate the educational spaces temporarily inhabited during this research with research participants.

Empirical space as defined by Thrift refers to space that can be described via measurements, using units that have over time achieved common acceptance - for example, the metric system. Thrift notes the emergence of technologies such as GPS (Global Positioning System) that can track movements through space and time and provide 'precise' location data. *Flow space* refers to movements of people, goods and ideas through space. Thrift suggests that such flows leave behind traces. *Image*, the third kind of space, reminds individuals of the constant exposure to a variety of information stimuli in daily lives. Image space results from the ways in which individuals select, and notice some aspects from the 'snowstorm' of images that surround them. Finally, *place* is linked by Thrift to embodiment and the potential for affective encounters within spaces. For instance, some spaces can energise, whereas others subdue individuals. When considering 'place' as one of the four kinds of space, the complexity of the concept 'place' may be temporally forgotten, as the following quote from Hayden reminds us: 'Place is one of the trickiest words in the English language, a suitcase so overfilled that one can never shut the lid' (Hayden, 1997:112 quoted by Anderson, 2010:37).

The four conceptualisations of space noted by Thrift open up the complexity of the concept of space. Adding to the complexity are Massey's three propositions that:

- Space is the product of interrelations
- Space is the sphere of the possibility of the existence of multiplicity, and
- Space is always under construction (Massey, 2005:9)

Massey's propositions highlight the organic nature of space, which alongside Thrift's four kinds of space offer a timely reminder within this thesis, that space cannot be fossilised and captured.

Understanding educational spaces

An English classroom could be described as a three-dimensional space consisting of four walls, a door, movable tables and chairs, windows along at least one wall, a light switch, florescent light bulbs in the ceiling, a display notice-board, a whiteboard, a computer and projector. However, listing the typical items in such a space, including a group of pupils, a teacher and perhaps a teaching assistant is a limited, supposedly objective view of space. Most contemporary geographers and educationalists would reject such a depiction of the classroom, as simply a container for learning. Thrift's four categories are useful as a way of unfolding the complexity of classroom space.

Empirical space

The many items that make up a typical English classroom are possible because of developments and standardisations in 'the space of measurement' (Thrift, 2003:87), resulting in uniform size of chairs, table height and width and depth, whiteboard dimensions, etc. As I employ Thrift's four types of space to problematise educational space, I will focus upon one particular item: the pupil's classroom chair. In English comprehensive schools this typically consists of a uniform pre-formed plastic chair seat attached to an aluminium frame of four legs. Such chairs were found across the case study schools at the time of the research in 2009. The chair provides an individual pupil with an allocated uniform space to remain seated in for the duration of the timetabled period of learning. The pupil will generally be seated in such a chair adjacent to a table of uniform height with a melamine flat surface fixed to an aluminium frame of four legs. Again, these were found across the case study schools and provided a standardised space within the classroom for each pupil.

Furthermore, the form and function of the classroom chair are not self-evident or accidental. Standardisations of the design and construction of the chair to sit upon and table to lean on for 'work' are the result of many factors, including: school budgets and priorities (involving purchasing freedom/information/finance); manufacturing advances (plastic/aluminium/melamine); the sourcing of raw materials (from oil to bauxite); and cultural and historical influences on the design of mass-produced furniture. Consequently, the classroom chair has developed to be robust, yet light enough to move to change the layout of classroom; as well as hygienic, easy to clean and resistant to infestations.

Flow space

Classroom chairs and their relational distance from tables are not entirely fixed within time and space but are part of a regular pattern of movement both horizontally and vertically within the educational space. Chairs are placed vertically upon table surfaces for ease of cleaning the floors, often as a routine action by pupils at the end of the last period of the school day, or by cleaning personnel at the start of their floor cleaning duties. Chairs are returned to stand upon the floor, and are generally positioned with their seats under the tables prior to the start of the new school day.

Chairs are moved by pupils horizontally away from tables in order for the pupil to move between the chair and table, and then to sit down upon. The pupil then uses their own body to shift the chair into a position to enable a working alignment between the chair and table. A communal period of time of moving chairs and sitting takes place at the start of each period of learning and the reverse action takes place at the end of the allotted period of learning, as individual pupils, whilst still seated, shift the chair away from the table, until a suitable gap has been created, allowing enough space to stand. The pupil will then stand up, moving away from the gap between the chair and table, to stand behind the back of the chair and to replace the chair with its seat under the table. The floor covering either linoleum or carpet provides a textual background to the movement

of chair legs across the floor surface as chairs are moved into the required position. The sound differs if the seat shifted as it is occupied by a pupil or moved whilst empty; the sound also varies from a muffled shuffle if the floor covering is a carpet (soft surface) to a scraping sound if there are linoleum tiles (hard surface).

Employing the notion of 'flow space', and reconsidering the classroom as a temporal meeting together of flows, requires us to think differently of the classroom, as it is no longer a container for learning. The movement of chairs provides a pathway, a link between the pupils and the classroom furniture, in a routine movement that provides an aspect of classroom order. The chair itself is part of a flow: an end product of an assembly production line, part of a flow of goods designed, manufactured, marketed, transported and consumed, and the chair will have a life expectancy of use and will leave the classroom to be recycled, repaired or sent as refuse. During the chair's existence in the classroom it will be transformed over time. Colours will fade in places that receive direct sunlight. Legs will bend and alter from rocking movements, and the occasional moment of holding a pupil in its seat using only one of its legs. Scratches and indents intentional or accidental are part of the life of a classroom chair. Bjorkvall suggests an *intense* relationship is possible between humans, sat with their knees hidden underneath a table, and the table (Bjorkvall, 2009:244). Through the regular movement under a table (designed to fit just two chairs) the legs of the chairs must expect to collide with the legs of the tables on their many encounters of alignment. School bags varying in size, shape, and materials, will be responsible for some of the scratches as they are opened for items at the start of a period of learning and require storage either under the table, between the pupil's body and the back of the chair, or hanging the shoulder strap over the chair back to be left dangling.

The time allocated for emptying items and replacing items in bags at the start and end of each learning period is generally limited and hurried. No time is provided on lesson plans, set aside for careful handling and

respect for personal items or the classroom furniture. The scratches and dents are part of the rush of activity pre- and post-learning. Sticky extras are added to the textured plastic surface or smooth underside of the plastic seat over time from exhausted chewing gum to food remains/bodily fluids on fingers. Mini ecosystems can thrive in unexpected places.

The chairs as well as the pupils and adults all have their individual stories to tell, are all part way along their individualised life cycle, sharing the classroom space for a limited temporal period. Educational spaces can thus be envisioned as 'the dimension of multiple trajectories, a simultaneity of stories-so-far' (Massey, 2005:24).

Image space

The colour and textures of the walls, chairs, table surfaces and floor coverings within an English classroom provide a backdrop to teaching and learning, reminders of expected behaviours within these spaces. Such images are, according to Thrift, 'a key element of space because it is so often through them that we register the spaces around us' (Thrift, 2003:91). A journal extract highlights the disorientation produced by unfamiliar image space.

> I felt out of place, this was someone else's space. Richard offered to show me where XX was, I resisted, felt uneasy I might be intruding. As I waited in a boardroom style room, I started questioning does space control, regulate our behaviour. I had never been one to agree with determinism, believing I do have some elements of agency, that I am not just part of an ecosystem. What was bothering me? I was in a building full of doors hiding hidden spaces, the lack of signage highlighted that what lay beyond was not for me. I felt penned in, in a holding bay. I didn't feel welcome, as the mysteries of this work place were kept hidden. Surrounding me were colourful

images on the walls, I counted 23 adult male images and only 12 females. The colours of blue chairs and grey door helped intensify the feeling I was in a male space.

Journal Entry May 2012

As Lambert suggests:

the ways individuals think about places depend to a large extent on the knowledge and understanding they have at their disposal – but also what they make of the images they see and what they associate with the new or strange. We all carry a great deal of 'geography' in our heads. (Lambert, 2009:2)

A visual scan on entering an educational space provides a quick reassurance to the experienced pupil of the likely activities they will be engaged in whilst in that room. Displays and positioning of objects add to the visual collage of a classroom. In the minutes of entering an educational space, seeking and claiming possession of a location space for oneself, each pupil will have a unique engagement in registering from the array of visual images.

Twenty-first century manufacturing processes enable a vast array of colour options for wall emulsion paint, carpet or linoleum tiles and for plastic and melamine surfaces. However, this was not evident in the educational spaces visited in 2009 in which focus group sessions with pupils took place. Those spaces represented a very limited selection of colours (see photographs in Chapter 6).

The soft velour beige high backed fixed seating in 'faith room'. The seating linked to my prior experience of public houses, social gathering spaces, and gave an immediate reaction that paper based work was unlikely in this space.

Journal Extract July 2009

The extracts from my field notes above highlight aspects of image space, and how the signs, the visual images impacted upon my emotions and expectations.

Place space

Place can be understood and appreciated as the tiny improvisations we make to assert or occupy ourselves within a space, by our embodiment and performance. Furthermore, place can lead to a blurring of self with other objects and people sharing that space at that moment in time. For instance, fidgeting maybe a way to assert oneself as one temporarily occupies a pre-determined learning space, seated upon a uniform plastic chair adjacent to a melamine table, wearing a school uniform, in a room of limited colours and textures. Pupils may have few public opportunities to assert their individuality within educational spaces; therefore, tiny improvisations may comfort and remind us who we are.

In summary, the concept of space is complicated; it can be both constraining and enabling. There is much symbolic work in educational spaces that I will be exploring in relation to the policy expectation concerning the sharing of personal geographies within a later chapter (see Chapter 6).

The educational gaze

The classroom is a key component of the English education system; a space that might be viewed as a neutral learning environment, one in which safe, carefully designed uniform furniture is positioned to facilitate teaching and learning. However, I have argued that educational spaces are certainly not neutral backgrounds to learning. Even the floor coverings and furniture are implicated in controlling pupils within

classrooms. As Jones suggests, quoting Thrift (2006), even the carpet in early years classrooms may exert a

> "violent training" used to subjugate the body so as to render it docile. Working in unison, the carpet and the teacher's chair both creates and sustains a power relation. (Jones, 2013:605)

Jones draws on Foucault, arguing that the spatial relationship effected by the carpet and the teacher consolidates the teacher's power, enabling her to 'see constantly and recognize immediately' (quoted in Jones, 2013:605). The bland, uniform classroom background may have a similar role in assisting the teachers' surveillance of pupils, by removing stimulation and rendering them visible to her gaze.

The empirical research of Zamorski and Haydn (2002) a decade prior to my research study suggested that 'pupils appeared to accept that school environments were not created with comfort or style in mind' and pupil responses included references to 'uncomfortable chairs' (2002:12). Their research problematised territory and power within the classroom:

> A few pupils said that some teachers come too close to them…they did not have any choice about personal territory or the physical distance between themselves and a teacher. That was the teacher's choice and within their control. (Zamorski and Haydn, 2002:19)

The disciplinary power of the educational gaze (see Foucault, 1977) in 2007 was newly focused in school geography upon the individual's prior (life, cultural and personal geographical) experiences. I have argued that the educational gaze was at the same time also controlling and checking every movement, as pupils sat for the allotted learning period upon those hard plastic chairs.

Therefore classroom spaces are implicated within the overall policy expectation, adding an additional constraint to the sharing of personal geographical experiences.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter I have raised some questions that are germane to the empirical study presented in later chapters. In particular, I have interrogated the notion of personal or individual experience as configured in the 2007 policy and curriculum literature, and raised some issues relating to the introduction of the personal into the public space of the classroom. I have argued that, if the interest in personal experience is taken to imply a requirement for children to render their inner lives 'visible' to the educational gaze, or to speak about intimate matters, issues of equity and participation are likely to arise.

I have raised the possibility that some children, in some contexts, may actually find a greater freedom, feel more empowered, by resisting certain forms of invitations to engage in personal geography. Geography may offer a liberating opportunity for pupils to go 'somewhere else', rather than necessarily looking inside oneself. These concerns, possibilities and opportunities are explored further within the analysis chapters (see Chapters 5 and 6).

Chapter 4 Methodology

In this chapter I provide details of the design and conduct of my empirical research, and discuss and justify my theoretical and methodological approach. The chapter commences with a rationale for adopting a qualitative approach. This is followed by an exploration of case study as a methodological approach, details of the design of this study, and an introduction to the analytical methods selected.

Coming to terms with qualitative research

This is a qualitative research study, employing case study methodology. To understand my reasons for adopting this approach I offer some reflections on how my assumptions about methodology shifted in the early stages of planning the research. As an undergraduate I was immersed in the quantitative revolution within the academic discipline Geography (see Chapter 2). However, as an education doctoral student I have embraced, after a hesitant, uncomfortable start, a qualitative orientation. Hammersley (2013:12) defines qualitative research as

> a flexible and data-driven research design, to use relatively unstructured data, to emphasize the essential role of subjectivity in the research process, to study a small number of naturally occurring cases in detail, and to use verbal rather than statistical forms of analysis. (Hammersley, 2013:12)

Denzin and Lincoln emphasise the transformative potential of the approach.

> Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They

turn the world into a series of representations, including fieldnotes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to self. (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008:4)

This resonated with me, and offered some reassurance as I grappled with my transformation from teacher educator to researcher. As a teacher education tutor working in an outcomes-focused, evidenced based profession that values 'hard facts', and with a background in a discipline (geography) that trained me as an undergraduate to value statistics, the shift towards an interpretative, qualitative methodology provided periods of anxiety as I rejected prior ways of working and understanding the world. I came to appreciate Silverman's caution that 'the experience of doing research can lead you to question some of the received wisdom you have been taught' (2013:8). I actively sought methods that offered a richer, deeper appreciation of how the world might be viewed, perceived and understood. Like many novice education researchers: 'I had a vague curiosity about qualitative research but no real understanding of it' (2013:8).

In the early stages of my research my preference was to sort data into patterns. Numbers in many forms (e.g., percentages of responses within categories) provided initial reassurance and 'evidence' to my arguments. However, I came to realise that these numerical operations on my data were fairly crude instruments, which missed much of the complexity, and the cultural significance of participants' views and actions.

Flick states that qualitative researchers are deeply interested in the variety of perspectives of research participants and take 'into account that viewpoints and practices in the field are different because of the different subjective perspectives and social backgrounds related to them' (Flick, 2014:16). Moreover, according to Hammersley (2013:12), qualitative research offers flexibility, both at the research design stage, and in the analysis of data, as researchers

place more emphasis on generating and developing descriptions and explanations than upon testing pre-defined hypotheses … generating categories rather than to place data into pre-determined ones. (Hammersley, 2013:12)

Qualitative researchers are not under pressure therefore 'to engage in formal counting, ranking or measurement' (Hammersley, 2013:12) preferring to observe: 'what is happening ... in the case of interviews … the aim is to invite informants to talk at length' (2013:12).

As noted, it became clear that my initial tendency to sort data, to find patterns by generating categories from numerical data was at odds within the focus of the study: i.e., 'personal geographies'. I also wanted my research to be able to capture individual differences and preferences. Researching this new area of 'personal geographies' was taking me into the unknown, into the hidden geographical life experiences of individuals. I therefore, rejected quantitative (and some qualitative) research methods for this study, as I was concerned that such methods would ignore

the complex, contingent and context-sensitive character of social life, and the extent to which actions and outcomes are produced by people interpreting situations in diverse ways, and acting on the basis of these interpretations, rather than passively responding to external causes. (Hammersley, 2013:11)

At the time of writing the proposal for this study, I envisaged that the research would be an instance of action research, integrating theory into my own practice (Somekh and Lewin, 2005:89). During the first 12 months of data collection, I actively collected information from the 2008-9 group of student teachers and took these insights to pupil focus groups (July 2009) (see later section for details of sampling and cohorts). I then took the revised insights from the pupil focus groups to the next cohort of student teachers (September 2009). An aim was to improve my practice through an action research approach. However, although my professional

practice may well have improved in many ways during the research, I realised that this study did not sustain an action research methodology. I required a methodology that would facilitate a more critical stance to the notion of personal geographies, and allow me to range across diverse data sources and educational contexts. Finally, a case study methodology was adopted to facilitate in-depth reflexive engagement in this research context.

What is a case study?

A case study according to Payne and Payne is 'a very detailed research enquiry into a single example' (2004:31). As an example rather than a sample, every piece of research is unique. A case study approach respects and uses the uniqueness of an example to explore in-depth the case. Depth is always preferred to breadth of study. Case study methods can be employed within qualitative or quantitative research, or a combination of the two. Quantitative research, for instance, may use case studies to test out ideas; qualitative research, as noted above, favours interpreting, searching for meanings within a case, and attempting to gain multiple perspectives from the viewpoint of diverse participants.

Contemporary approaches to case study methodology according to Chadderton and Torrance (2011) have developed from two paradigms: an anthropological/sociological tradition, and an applied research and evaluation tradition. The anthropological/sociological tradition 'emphasizes long term participant observation of, usually, a single setting…. the emphasis in the fieldwork is very much on coming to know the "insider" perspective by observing participants going about their "ordinary" business in their "natural" setting' (2011:55). Such an ethnographic approach within case study methodology employs fieldwork activities that immerse the researcher within the 'field', to learn about and 'access the participants' perspectives' (Stark and Torrance, 2005:34).

According to Wellington and Szcerbinski (2007), a 'good' case study can be 'illuminating and insightful', offering the reader 'a strong sense of reality'. Case study, they state, is 'accessible and engaging for readers', can be used as a valuable example within teaching and learning, and can suggest to readers 'issues requiring further research' (Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007:93).

Stake (1995:xii) states that 'there are many, many ways to do case studies' and that therefore 'Case study methodology' requires choices to be made in selecting approaches for each research study. The literature offers many typologies of case studies (Yin, 2009; Gerring, 2007; Stake, 1995) prompting each researcher to clarify the purpose of their research. This thesis responds to these prompts in the following sections.

Multiple or single case study?

The first decision was whether to use a single or range of cases to address the research focus. A research study may contain more than a single case. Yin (2009:53) offers the example of a study of educational innovations, such as a new educational technology. At the time of writing up this thesis, a hypothetical example of such an innovation could, for instance, be iPads, in which individual schools adopt some innovation. Each school might be the subject of an individual case study, but the study as a whole might cover several schools and would use a multiple case design. Holden's (2013) case study of three inner city schools equipping pupils with iPads would be one such example.

For the present case study it is the concept 'personal geography' itself that is the focus; therefore, a single case study involving multiple contexts and sites is appropriate.

Intrinsic or instrumental case study

Stake prompts us to ask 'is the case study intrinsic or instrumental?' (1995:3). An intrinsic case study according to Stake is one that the researcher *needs* to investigate, as they are deeply interested in that particular case. This certainly holds true for this study. This case study has emerged from my interests and it is definitely of intrinsic interest (see discussion above and Chapter 1). Another researcher might have chosen this case study as an instrumental case study to gain insight into a wider research question for example curriculum change, or policy implementation.

Yin states that a case may be critical, unique, representative or revelatory (2009:47-49). A critical case would be carefully selected to challenge conventional wisdom or test a 'well-formulated theory' (2009:47), and the case study chosen to disrupt current thinking. A unique case represents 'an extreme case', a rare or unusual case. For Yin a representative case study explores a typical, everyday experience, and his fourth category, revelatory, offers new ways of thinking by analysing a phenomenon previously inaccessible to social science research (2009:48).

While the boundaries between different types of case study are less clear in practice than in principle, I present this research as a critical case study, as I adopt an analytical, questioning approach including a resistance to personally defining the concept 'personal geography'. The concept 'personal geography' is therefore the case, within this critical case study and will be explored within a range of English educational contexts. To the extent that it fulfils its aims, the study should disrupt current thinking.

Temporal and spatial considerations

Time and space are important considerations in case study methodology, and as Gerring highlights, it is logically impossible to conduct a single

case study that has no spatial variation or temporal variation: '…the case under study always provides more than one observation' (2007:21).

Single case studies can be conducted over a period of time (diachronically); alternatively subsets of a single case can be observed at the same time (i.e. synchronically); and finally a single case can be both synchronic and diachronic. Gerring proposes that research design incorporating diachronic and synchronic 'is perhaps the most common approach to case study work' (2007:27). The case study presented in this thesis is both diachronic, with data collected over a period of time (2008 to 2012), and has some synchronic aspects including data collected from more than one spatial location within a single time frame.

Holistic versus embedded

A single case study can be studied holistically or the research design may include more than one unit of analysis, identifying and observing subunits embedded within the single case. The study presented here is an embedded, single case study that includes a range of subunits including focus groups of pupils.

A major risk in embedded case study research design, according to Yin, is that 'the case study focuses only on the subunit level and fails to return to the larger unit of analysis' (Yin, 2009:52). This concern is noted and I return to the larger unit of analysis regularly throughout the thesis.

Why a case study for this research?

An in-depth exploration of the concept 'personal geography' as a case study allows for a detailed consideration of the emergence of the concept 'personal geography' within English educational contexts. These contexts include: curriculum policy; curriculum guidance materials; initial teacher training texts; a university-based PGCE programme; and school

educational spaces. The case study methodology allows for the views of a range of stakeholders from the supposed beneficiaries, the pupils, through to policy-makers.

This study, an interest in the concept 'personal geographies', has evolved out of my interests, my desire to learn more about this particular case; I am curious about this case, into which I am woven as a professional, an educator, a geographer and a researcher. I have an intrinsic (Stake, 1995) interest in this critical (Yin, 2009) single case study that I am investigating synchronically and diachronically (Gerring, 2007).

Interpreting, seeking meaning within this intrinsic, critical single case study (personal geographies) requires careful attention to the social, cultural, political context of this study, providing further justification for a qualitative case study approach.

This case study research on 'personal geographies' reflects my social constructionist view of knowledge, in particular the relationship an individual has with the discipline of geography, as never fixed and static; likewise, their view of the world, their reality, is never fixed and static, influenced by socio-cultural contexts, drawing upon ideas from past generations as well as their contemporaries.

The phenomenon at the heart of this case study is the emergence of the concept 'personal geographies' in the English curriculum; this research explores how individuals/groups/stakeholders perceive and respond to this newly included aspect of the National Curriculum. The research investigates different viewpoints from pupils to policy-makers. The case study provides for a rich description - particular, descriptive and interpretive.

The case study employs both macro- and micro-levels of research; at the macro level the research using Stakes (1995) definition is intrinsic: the case itself is of primary, not secondary, interest. At the micro level the

methodology includes a collection of embedded subunits, more akin to instrumental case study research; each micro level sub unit is interesting and provides insights beyond the individual contexts, assisting our understanding of the macro case study.

The core of the case study comprises several different kinds of interviews (including telephone and face-to-face) with a range of stakeholders including policy-makers, subject associations and student teachers supplemented by other research methods, including pupil group discussions stimulated by specially designed tasks and documentary analysis of curriculum policy and training manuals. Details of the research design are provided in a later section.

This case study moves across different occupational and disciplinary domains and across different kinds of data in order to get multiple perspectives on this case study, enhancing the validity of this research.

Issues and limitations of methodology

I draw your attention to an extreme negative viewpoint concerning case studies, one I must stress is not widely held in the literature:

> Case studies have become in many cases a synonym for free-form research where everything goes and the author does not feel compelled to spell out how he or she intends to do the research, why a specific case or set of cases has been selected, which data are used and which are omitted, how data are processed and analyzed, and how inferences were derived from the story presented. (Zeev Maoz quoted in Gerring, 2007:6)

A major weakness (Stark and Torrance, 2005) of case study methodology concerns the uniqueness of each case, 'a case study cannot provide

reliable information about the broader class' (Abercrombie, Hill and Turner, 1984 quoted in Flyvbjerg, 2006:220).

The implication is there is an inability to generalise from the 'case' to the rest of the population; therefore, a unique case study as such cannot prove or make scientific generalisations.

A second issue with case study research lies with defining the boundaries around the case, what is included in the case, and what lies beyond the study. For a thesis based within the field of education, defining the case can be problematic. For example, in an investigation concerning interactions within a classroom, the boundary of the case may at first be considered to be the spatial location. However, the case study boundaries may need to be reconsidered as each classroom agent is only temporarily sharing that space; each will bring to the classroom their unique life histories, and will move into other spaces.

A third issue concerns a potential bias towards verification, 'that is, a tendency to confirm the researcher's preconceived notions' (Flyvbjerg, 2006:221). Furthermore, within education research, with researchers having the power to filter, interpret and represent participants' views, validating participants' contributions is an area of concern. However, these concerns are not unique to case study methodology.

However, it can be argued that the main weakness of a case study is also its strength. Wollcott states that 'each case study is unique, but not so unique that we cannot learn from it and apply its lessons more generally' (Wollcott, 1995:17, quoted in Wellington and Szczerbinski, 2007:94).

All research is interpretative, all qualitative research is unique. I believe our knowledge and understanding of the world continues to be enriched by empirical, unique context dependent case studies. My approach resonates with the view of Eysenck (1976, quoted in Flyvberg, 2006:224):

sometimes we simply have to keep our eyes open and look carefully at individual cases – not in the hope of proving anything, but rather in the hope of learning something!

For this study I have embraced multiple methods of data collection, from documents through to views of pupils and policy-makers, reflecting my desire to explore as fully as possible the phenomenon. The in-depth study of this case, and the 'thick description' (see Geertz, 1973) approach taken in the write-up of the thesis offers opportunities for 'naturalistic generalization' (Stake, 1995) by the reader as they may make links between their experiences and this case study.

Clarifying the 'case' proved to be a major challenge. The literature had highlighted that it may seem easier to clarify what is beyond the case rather than the case itself. The 'case' finally emerged seemingly when I rejected a spatial boundary. The case under consideration for this study became the concept 'personal geographies'. The case study could have followed many lines of enquiry. For instance, it might have focussed upon an institution, a curricular policy, or interactions in the classroom. The identification of the case as the concept 'personal geography' offered possibilities to investigate this phenomenon within documents, educational spaces, and in dialogue with a range of stakeholders.

I have actively resisted defining the concept 'personal geography' in order to be open to the views of respondents, rather than be biased towards verification of my views. I drew upon the applied research and evaluation case study tradition of selecting interviews and focus groups with participants as primary methods. I noted the concern expressed by Chadderton and Torrance (2011) about respondent validation; thus, during this research I sought validation by emailing student teachers my transcriptions of the interviews, providing an opportunity for students to comment. Furthermore, I compared data across embedded multiple subunits during the period (2008-12) of data collection. Moreover, I shared some of the data in university sessions in anonymous formats to

check for wider cohort understandings and my interpretations. For instance, I designed a diagram that considered whose personal geographies to share within the classroom.

The X-axis focused upon the student teacher, from silencing their personal geographical life experiences through to regularly sharing experiences. The Y-axis focused upon the pupils, from pupils' personal experiences always silenced (pupils' choice or teachers') to pupils' experiences regularly shared and encouraged within the classroom. I provided hypothetical scenarios for the student teachers to discuss, for instance, the example of a classroom in which personal geographies of both the teacher and pupils are not encouraged or shared, that the geography curriculum might focus upon the geography 'over there'. The awe and wonder of geography could be highlighted, and the geography classroom considered as a means to escape from one's own life.

An alternative scenario of a geography classroom, in which pupils' prior experiences, interests and views are both welcomed and shared, alongside the shared experiences of the teacher, was discussed. The interrogation of the data presented in these scenarios enabled a deeper understanding of the concerns and thoughts of groups of student teachers to be drawn upon.

Reflexivity and my position as a researcher

This thesis does not aim to be objective, divorced from self. The thesis focus on 'personal geography' offers a textual signifier that encourages reflections about my own experiences as a learner, and teacher of, geography and geographical education. As a geography teacher educator researching a new area of geography, my collaborative, social constructivist views on how we learn (shaped by and through my prior experiences) make it impossible to be separate from this study. I admit I am interwoven into this thesis, and as I lean towards becoming a reflexive

researcher I am increasingly aware of the need to recognise, as Goldbart and Hustler state, that

> we are part of the social worlds we are studying and that the researchers' own interpretative processes and authorial position need to be taken account of. (2005:16)

As Somekh (2005:4) recommends, it is necessary to critically explore the impacts of myself within this research. Furthermore, Hammersley notes that disclosing one's own values and attitudes 'can enable readers to allow for any effects of the researcher's characteristics, or of how the research was carried out, that might obscure or threaten the validity of the analysis' (Hammersley, 2013:13).

Mediating the boundary between my familiar role as teacher educator and my emergent role as researcher, my research journals provide textual space for interpreting 'others' in a reflective and reflexive dialogue with self, as I engage within an narrative approach 'that position(s) the investigator as part of the field, simultaneously mediating and interpreting the "other" in dialogue with the "self"' (Riessman, 2008:17).

I am acutely aware that I am part of the field of this study. As a participant in the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) process, in my role as Geography Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) Subject Co-ordinator, I am certainly not a detached observer of 'others'. My role starts with admissions, when I decide whom to interview for a PGCE Geography place. I prepare student geography teachers for teaching in partnership schools. I 'place' students, allocating individuals to placement schools, and I visit student teachers to observe classroom practice during the two main placements. I assess student teachers' university assignments and have review tutorials with each student during the academic year. Furthermore, I write their references for teaching posts. My role directly influences the experiences of each geography student teacher and the power relation is heavily weighted in favour of my role. Within the

institution where I am employed I have status, the students are aware from first contact (web site, email signature, etc.) that I am an important figure in their training year. As I mediate the boundary between researcher and teacher educator tutor, I need to be aware of how I am perceived (by students) and the actual institutional power that I have over the training experiences of the Geography PGCE students. To silence such power would have ethical implications as well as tainting my analysis. Furthermore, my positionality as a researcher tutor (researcher and tutor), as an 'insider' (within teacher education) researching with other insiders (student teachers) (Herr and Anderson, 2005:36), means there are power relations to consider. As a researcher tutor I can never be an equal collaborative partner with students. The students are aware that I am part of the hierarchical institutional structure, and therefore my teacher educator tutor role acts as a professional barrier within this study.

As a researcher my intellectual roots touch base with 'naturalistic enquiry' (Norris and Walker, 2005) as I observe the student teachers (participant observation) at regular points during their PGCE year in a role they are expecting of me. My 'otherness' is partly minimised, as I am part of the process in a familiar and expected presence. During the PGCE year I am able to spend significant amounts of time collecting data as my tutor role is woven into their training. Ethical issues are paramount and need to be explicit, ensuring that the student teacher participants are aware of when I deviate from my academic role as their PGCE tutor to a dual role as researcher and tutor (researcher tutor) with their 'informed permission'.

The conduct and writing of research can be described as a journey of 'knowing' (Richardson, 2000), as I 'word the world' (Rose, 1992 quoted in Richardson, 2000:923), appreciating that I can never capture the studied world, but I can learn more about how I and my participants 'construct the world, ourselves, and others' (2000:924). I am aware that I can never be neutral and that my methodology privileges a particular view, a way of seeing the world.

My multiple identities as geographer, geography teacher educator and researcher have inevitably been shaped and influenced by my past encounters with others, their ideas and practices. My methodology acknowledges that, in the words of Hubbard et al.

> … a biographical approach reveals how individual thinkers draw on a rich legacy of ideas drawn from past generations (as well as the influence of their contemporaries). …. No theorist develops their view of the world in an intellectual vacuum. (2006:11-12)

Field notes and journal entries were selected as methods to facilitate reflexive practice (see Elliott, 1993). My journal entries track the challenges of researching personal geographies, as I ask how I can tap into what is known, and more importantly how it can be voiced, and how I as a researcher can understand, and portray what is shared. As Somekh and Lewin remark, 'Human beings (can) never reveal all that is in their minds…' (2005:4).

As a researcher I must be reflexive about the fact that I will be the 'filter' for data shared by participants and the data presented within this thesis. Reflexivity is a significant feature of qualitative research. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007:15) note: 'The concept of reflexivity acknowledges that the orientations of researchers will be shaped by their socio-historical locations, including the values and interests that these locations confer upon them'. They stress that 'the production of knowledge by researchers has consequences.' In a later chapter I consider in detail potential and tangible consequences arising from this research, including consequences arising from the focus for all participants, including myself.

As a researcher with poststructuralist leanings I have the on-going dilemma of resisting comfortable labels, to think differently, to trouble what appears to be 'natural'. Lather (1996b) describes this as '"doing it" and "troubling it" simultaneously', quoted by Adams St. Pierre (2000:479).

During the first three years of this longitudinal study, I regularly reacted like 'a rabbit in the headlights' to the question 'What are your theoretical frameworks?' I would like to share a 'light bulb moment' in response to why I have resisted this question from my learning journal entry of 10 October 2011.

> Why do I resist, panic at the question what are your theoretical frameworks?
>
> My university days 1978-82 immersed me in the quantitative approaches to geography full of theories and models. This was followed by my PGCE with a tutor who celebrated this approach to geography. The light bulb moment came today, *all my tutors were male*. I cannot recall a single female tutor during my formative university education. Reflecting earlier, I cannot recall a female geography teacher during my school days. I have been taught geography through a male lens of the world.
>
> My MA studies in the 1980s continued within a male world.
>
> My Directors of Study for my PhD have been female. As I work to untie the quantitative shackles of my geographical roots, breaking away from the quest to find patterns, towards embracing a personal approach to the study of geography, I have resisted vocalizing theoretical frameworks, as I have rejected my theoretical quantitative geographical past, and the phrase theoretical frameworks was reminiscing a discourse I was rejecting.

Journal Entry 10 October 2011

The geographical discourse I have been immersed in as an undergraduate, PGCE and MA student have privileged a male view of the world. As noted in a previous chapter (Chapter 2), access to female

voices within geography has been relatively recent (see Valentine, Holloway, Massey, etc.). My geographical journey has led me to welcome and adopt aspects of feminist research and approaches. Payne and Payne (2004) acknowledge three major themes within a feminist approach. Firstly, they suggest that feminist research breaks away from 'gender blind' sociological research that concentrates upon 'public spheres of work and civic life', positing research that takes account of gender differences including 'private spheres to which many women were restricted'. Secondly, they suggest that feminist research 'stresses equality', that the 'subjects of research should not be treated as external objects'; instead, researchers should build a 'rapport with the people being studied'. Furthermore, Payne and Payne suggest that feminist researchers 'take full account' of their participants' views including their 'feelings' (2004:90-91). Within this research I aim to build a 'rapport with' my participants and to 'take full account' of their views, however this study remains within the public sphere of education, though I do bring to the fore gender concerns.

Adams St Pierre acknowledges: 'Feminism is a highly contested term' (2000:477). Miller et al. recognise 'the breadth and evolution of the term' – feminist. Furthermore, Burns and Walker problematise the concept 'feminist researcher' and discuss a range of claims (see Reinharz, 1992), principles (see Weiner, 1994), and/or positions (see Harding, 1987) concerning feminist research (cited in Burns and Walker, 2005). Despite the challenges surrounding the terms feminist and feminist researcher, Miller et al. describe themselves as 'feminist researchers … conducting research about personal lives, grounded in individual experiences' (Miller et al., 2012:5). Pratt suggests that 'Feminism is an effort to both identify and dismantle systematic gender inequality and the myriad ways that heteronormativity anchors and relays all kinds of social exclusion' (Pratt, 2008:72). I acknowledge that feminism and feminist researcher are further examples of contested concepts within the literature.

In my view, a duty of care permeates a feminist approach to research. In practice this means considering the impact of research on both the researcher and researched. Furthermore, I believe that feminist researchers strive for a more equal and collaborative relationship with their participants, by taking time to develop a rapport rather than focusing upon efficient data collection. Moreover, my understanding of a feminist researcher is one where all voices are encouraged and welcomed. As a novice feminist researcher, I would be content if this thesis helps to, as MacLure suggests, 'interrupt the homosocial citation habits of male academics' (MacLure, 2003:137) whilst taking care to avoid reinforcing, as Browne warns, 'White hegemonic masculinity …further legitimized through the celebration of particular "personals"' (Browne, 2005:352). Furthermore, I hope that this thesis 'ultimately, … unsettles and disturbs' (Racine and Raffestin, 2007:33).

Design of the study

> As Nelson et al. (1992) note, the "choice of research practices depends upon the questions that are asked, and the questions depend on their context", what is available in that context, and what the researcher can do in that setting. (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008:5)

There are three main areas of concern for this study:

1. **The school geography curriculum** - Why was the concept 'personal geography' included within the school geography curriculum in 2007?
2. **The student geography teachers** – How do student teachers gain awareness of the concept 'personal geography'?
3. **The pupils learning geography** - Do pupils benefit from a focus on personal experiences shared within the classroom?

These questions shaped the selection of participants and the methods selected in order to address these.

The curriculum

The emergence of the concept 'personal geographies' in the 2007 curricular policy was explored through: (a) policy and curriculum documentation; and (b) interviews with representatives of three key stakeholders representing the Geographical Association (GA), the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) and the Qualifications, Curriculum and Development Authority (QCDA). Discourse analysis of the prevailing educational agendas and a literature review of changes in the discipline and school subject provide the context of this case study. Furthermore, an analysis of initial teacher training manuals was carried out in order to clarify the concept 'personal geography' (see Chapter 2).

Methods:
- Interviews with policy makers and subject associations (QCDA, GA and RGS)
- Training manual analysis
- Socio-cultural discourse analysis of 'personal' and 'personalisation' within education
- Interviews with Reader in Cultural Geography and Professors of Geography
- Literature review of changes in the academic discipline and developments in school geography and the relationship between the discipline and subject

Student teachers

Student teachers' awareness of the concept 'personal geographies' was explored over a period of four years (2008-12) at the institution where I am employed as the Geography Subject Co-ordinator for the PGCE programme. At the start of each training year, student teachers in my class were provided with brief details of the research and invited to participate. They were assured that their participation would be voluntary and that they could choose whether to participate in activities, and

whether to share their contributions for this study. As the study covered four cohorts of student teachers, a colour system was employed to ease retrieval of data with Gold (2008-9), Green (2009-10), Light Yellow (2010-11) and Pink (2011-12) employed for questionnaires and university-based activities that the student teachers were aware could be voluntarily shared with their tutor for research purposes.

At the start of the training year (September) and after the first four weeks of the training course, questionnaires were administered for each cohort of geography student teachers to allow them to share their pre-course awareness of personal geographies and their observations of the use of personal geographies in school classrooms. Individual life representation maps/diagrams were created by each cohort of student teachers at the start of the training year highlighting events and people that had influenced their career choice as a geography teacher. Group discussions were conducted around topics including whose personal geographies were significant, and whether personal geographies referred to the pupils' or student teacher's prior experiences. These discussions took place towards the end of the course, after the two main teaching placements. Permission was also asked for copies of any university assignments that focused upon personal geographies.

Dialogic 30-minute paired interviews with student teachers took place during the first and last week of their 180-day teacher training course, including prompts such as 'What is geography?'

Methods:
- Interviews with pairs of students in Sept and June over four cohorts (2008-12)
- Questionnaire (Sept) for cohort re: pre-course awareness of personal geography
- Life representation maps/diagrams for cohort - Why are you commencing this course?

- Questionnaire (Oct) for cohort re: observation of the use of personal geographies in schools
- Group discussion (May) after two main placements stimulated by diagram of whose personal geographies, pupils or student teachers?
- Exemplars of university assignments focused upon personal geographies

The pupils involved in learning geography

To gain pupils' views about sharing personal geographical experiences within the geography classroom, pupil focus groups were employed in five schools that work in partnership with the institution where I am employed. To support mutual understanding of the views of student teachers and pupils, visual prompts were designed drawing upon the views and observations of the 2008-9 cohort of student teachers. Photographs were commissioned, taken by a university photographer, to represent the typical interests of a KS3 pupil, collated from lists created by student teachers during the final week of the PGCE course. The list was compiled from responses to an activity to consider what a KS3 pupil is interested in. For example, students were asked if you were able to visit their bedroom what insights would you gain about their interests, hobbies, life? Additionally a 'comfortable scale' (see Figure 9 below) was designed using the views expressed in October 2008 by the cohort of student teachers of personal geographical experiences they had observed being used by teachers in geography classrooms.

Methods:
- Focus group interviews (five schools)
- Visual prompts to bridge student teachers and pupils (Photographs and comfortable scale)

Overview of the case study

Figure 7 below provides a summary of the case study at different scales of enquiry from the 'case' to micro-embedded subunit case studies.

The case	The concept of 'personal geography'	
Umbrella	Analysis of curriculum policy documents Discourse analysis of 'personalisation' and 'personal' agendas in education Interviews with stakeholders Analysis of training manuals Literature review – changes in discipline, developments in school geography and relationship between discipline and subject	
Macro level	PGCE programme within institution where I am employed	
Micro level embedded subunit case studies	Eight paired student interviews	Five groups of pupils interviews

Figure 7: Case study - macro and micro

Details of empirical study – student teachers

Data was collected during 2008-12, a period of time in which some aspects of geography initial teacher education remained more or less stable:

- The Geography National Curriculum introduced in 2007 (replaced in 2014)
- Qualified Teacher Standards (QTS) September 2007 – June 2012

- The PGCE programme at the case study institution September 2008 – June 2013

The PGCE training programme, QTS standards, and the school geography curriculum provided a baseline of comparable experiences for the four cohorts of student geography teachers during the period of research. Other recurrent aspects include their research tutor, whose role remained throughout the period as Geography Subject Co-ordinator.

Student teachers – induction phase

To assist the student geography teacher's reflection upon prior geographical experiences, during the induction phase of the course I developed a range of data collection methods including:

- Life history representations, and
- Sharing 3 objects that offer insights into 'me'

These activities were built into the first two days on the course, as student teachers learned more about themselves and their peers as they commenced the PGCE course together. Early data collected (first two cohorts) was interrogated for patterns. For example, I documented the percentages of artefacts shared that were photographs, gender and age represented within photographs, sports items, etc. Students were asked to produce life history maps recording countries visited, for what purpose, etc. As noted, this desire to find patterns and numbers was a legacy of my undergraduate experience. However, this rather crude numerical data did provide a rough mapping of the 'space' that the qualitative study would investigate.

Each cohort of student teachers was asked to sign a Research Information Sheet at the start of their course, and since 2010, the sheet has included a question asking if they had previously come across the phrase personal geographies, and if so where. As a researcher tutor,

building into teaching sessions opportunities to research the students' personal geographical experiences has limitations as there is much content to cover in the 120 hours of teaching contact time over the 180-day (nine-month) training course. It was decided to interview 'volunteers', outside a teaching session, with the students' permission, for the purpose of research.

Student teacher interviews

30-minute dialogic conversations between pairs of students responding to eleven questions (see Appendix 3) were captured using a digital voice recorder during the induction phase of the PGCE course, and on the last day of the course. In total, eight pairs of interviews were conducted over the period 2008-12.

The selection of students to interview was organic and emergent in terms of creating opportunities to encourage 'volunteers' to be interviewed. Appendix 1 includes reflections from my research journal, which indicates some of the processes whereby students became volunteer interviewees.

Interviewees at the start of the year were encouraged to volunteer on the basis that they had demonstrated the confidence to talk. For instance, they had offered to represent the cohort at programme meetings with course leaders, had chatted at length with me over lunch, had regularly emailed me with questions or had offered to stay behind the session to talk. See Appendix 2 for summary information on the background and qualifications of the student participants. All means of identifying the students have been removed.

The student teacher interviews: techniques employed

I conducted the student teacher interviews (see Appendix 2) over a four-year period. A stimulus followed by a response approach was adopted to

start each semi-structured interview with a pre-prepared list of open questions. Where the dialogue between the two students developed in an unexpected direction, additional probing questions were incorporated to support the continuation of the dialogic conversation between the two students. A 'narrative interviewing' method was adopted. Riesman describes this method thus:

> Although we have particular paths we want to cover related to the substantive and theoretical foci of our studies, narrative interviewing necessitates following participants down *their* trails. (2008:24)

I adopted the role of interviewing facilitator aiming to encourage a conversation between the two student teachers and to provide an environment in which they could generate detailed answers rather than short responses. I strived to minimise my influence, and to remain as neutral as possible in order to investigate their emerging understandings of personal geographies. Qualitative interviewing required a friendly, neutral approach (see Fontana and Frey, 2000:658) in which I took care to avoid expressing my own opinions. I took an active listening pose. Unfortunately, this developed on occasions into a nodding dog approach where I felt I could not stop, as I felt I would be biasing answers if I stopped nodding.

Verbal permission was obtained from the participants prior to audio recording the interviews, and again at the start of the recordings. The decision to record the interviews was taken as I considered writing notes a potential distraction to the participants, and might hinder active listening and probing where appropriate.

The location of the interviews was either in my university office in the administration building, an unfamiliar room to the students, or in one of the geography classrooms on the top floor of a teaching building. The classroom location was selected for ease and minimal time commitment from student teachers if the interview followed on from a taught session.

The first interview in 2008 commenced in my office, but was relocated to the media services corridor following a recording problem.

Transcription procedures

The audio recordings were made on an OLYMPUS digital voice recorder WS-200S. These were uploaded onto an Apple iMac as .wma (Windows Media Audio) files. I listened to the recordings via QuickTime Player, which converted the audio data files into sound.

Taking a slow approach to transcribing, I was able to pause the recordings every few seconds to write the transcript. Crafting transcripts takes laboured time and many decisions were resolved in considering how to represent aspects of the three-dimensional experience. Transcribing poses choices; I needed to suppress an inbuilt desire to try and capture the sound recording into a script format for a play. Transcription conventions were chosen, gleaned from a variety of sources (Riessman, 2008; MacLure, 2003; Conradson, 2005).

dots . short pause

dashes - longer pause

voiced pauses - em e:m or er e:r

where speech is unclear [unclear]

S Interviewer

CC Initials used for Student Teacher

KI Initials used for Student Teacher

CC/KI if unclear who is speaking

bold if word **emphasised**

[laugh] when laughing out loud

[draws breath] when loud inhalation occurs

positioning of speech

to	
represent dialogic turns	

Figure 8: Transcription conventions employed

Each recording was transcribed during the months following the interview. At periodic intervals the transcriptions were re-drafted as techniques of transcription were refined and developed; for example, the September 2008 interview was first transcribed over two dates 23 September 2008 and 2 October 2008 and later redrafted 6 October 2011.

As a researcher and tutor I have additional knowledge about each participant that is not available to readers of the thesis. I met the majority of students face to face during the application stage, as I interviewed applicants for the PGCE course. I have read their application (GTTR) entry forms, their school-based training forms, and, as appropriate, any Personal Learning Plans they join the course with. As noted earlier, I am an 'insider' within ITE, with access to this additional 'public' insider information about each student. Public in that the information has been provided on institutional course forms, or during programme-related situations. The participants have provided the information, selected what to share, and in how much detail in response to requests on institutional forms and during university classroom settings. As their tutor, both academic and pastoral during the PGCE year, I develop a greater understanding of each student than can be gleaned from analysing written texts. I am ever mindful of the comment by Somekh and Lewin that: 'Human beings (can) never reveal all that is in their minds…'(2005:4). Student teachers share and represent aspects of themselves; they will have developed ways of negotiating the personal and public boundary of their lives, of presenting themselves in the formal education setting of a PGCE course.

Analysis of the first student teacher interview

In terms of data analysis a range of techniques were employed over the longitudinal (four year) study. Drawing on the legacy of my undergraduate days immersed in the geographical quantitative movement, with its quest to find patterns, after the first paired interview in 2008 I analysed the transcription as follows.

Interviewing two students together, providing the opportunity for both to respond to each question, I analysed the transcription to find out how often I repeated, or summarised a question after the first student had responded prior to the second student responding. During the first interview I summarised a question on two occasions: after a break in recording for TE to get a drink and when HM queried a question; see extract below.

> *S What do you perceive will be the main challenges for you as a geography teacher you are about to go into your first school on 22nd September and main placement Oct 13th*
>
> *TE Being inside for the entire day. Standing up in front of 30 people instead of 12 people in a circle of that I am part. Separating myself from the group rather than teaching from within it e:m and also wearing shoes*
>
> *HM e:m perceived difficulties?*
>
> *S Challenges?*

Extract from Induction Interview 2008-9

I considered whether the questions I posed facilitated a discussion between the two respondents. More than 50% of the questions generated a minimum of four responses as the students listened to each other's

response and added further to their original response. For instance, there were 14 responses to the question '*So do you think your definition of geography in this 101 definitions of geography makes it easier or harder as a geography teacher?*' I reflected, when interviewing individuals or a pair of students, do I need as a researcher to consider different questions or styles of interviewing? Is it a success of an interview question that 14 responses emerged?

Questions that were planned in advance, were they more 'successful' than questions that emerged during the interview? What makes a question successful? There were 11 planned questions and 7 questions that emerged during the interview. The most detailed, longer individual answers were in response to planned questions. For instance, 'Do you think there will be any particular challenges for you as student geography teachers in the actual school location, at the moment you don't know where your two main placements will be and they could be anywhere in a very large radius?' The questions that emerged during the interview tended to generate a longer discussion between the two students. The students were 'bouncing' off each other's response.

Building in a mix of planned and emerging questions is a skill for each researcher. I was very aware of my own body language and was fully mindful of the moment. The emotional impact of interviewing upon the researcher I had not considered in advance. Interviewing is a very intense experience, as I wanted to create the 'right' environment for the respondents, being mindful of my own body language to minimise my influence on participants' responses, internally thinking is a nod/smile appropriate? Furthermore, I was listening intently for opportunities to extend the discussion with emerging questions, whilst being aware of the time, etc.

The first interview as a researcher tutor was a powerful experience, which has stayed with me. Hallowell (2005) provides vignettes from researchers of interview experiences highlighting the emotional impact of research:

'One particularly important message …. is that our research may continue to have an emotional effect upon us long after we have finished gathering our data' (Hallowell et al., 2005:19).

Within this study I became a research instrument; my methodology includes reflexive practice, and I highlight that I am woven into the data, never separate from my data. All participant voices (including one's own) contain traces of the rules and regulations of a variety of ways of being and belonging within networks. For Jackson's Amelia (2009:173) – the Church, the town, marriage, etc., all buffer, constrain and enable the voice that comes from her body: 'Amelia's spoken and written voice emerged as unstable and contradictory, exposing how power, subjectivity, and desire shaped the way she spoke of her present' (2009:166).

It could be argued that the voices of the research participants are sanitised by many socio-cultural traces, as each participant is entangled within connections to networks and power relationships. As a lone qualitative researcher, my ability to interpret voices (data) is itself constrained. An emerging gap of possibilities is created as I reject and strain away from prior ways of analysing data. I actively search for newer ways of thinking, my reflexive enthusiasm unsettles prior familiar ways of being, and I have become intensely aware of sticky remnants of prior ways of thinking that taunt and wait to trip me up if I become tired, distracted or in a rush to write up an idea.

Jackson, drawing upon the work of Butler, and Deleuze and Guattari, discusses and raises the importance of individuals 'desire for recognizability – produced within social relations of power' (2009:171); the student teacher's desire recognition as a professional, an expert. Their voices, as present truths, are contradictory as they negotiate their transformation from prior life experiences towards professional teacher status.

Researcher–student relationships

The relationship between self as researcher tutor and the student teacher participants is a dynamic one. At the start of the PGCE course, during the induction phase; students appear to want to please their tutor. They want to appear enthusiastic and willing to demonstrate going the extra mile. The tutor is viewed as an expert 'other', with the power to influence their experiences on the course: an expert 'other' that is worth getting onside. Participants' agreement to take part in interviews could be seen as an investment in the tutor-student relationship that might be of benefit at later stages of the year.

On the last day of the course, the majority of the participants have already secured employment, so there is less of a need to please the 'other'. Students are aware that there is only the exam board left, where their known results will be ratified. The relationship has changed, and the power relations have altered. The interview is weighted more in favour of the participant as expert. The students are emerging from the nest of the PGCE course, standing on the transition threshold, ready to launch themselves, transforming from student teacher to professional teacher.

Details of empirical study - pupil focus groups

The supposed beneficiaries of the inclusion of 'personal geographies' within the 2007 National Curriculum were the pupils. In order to include the views and voices of pupils within this case study, pupil focus groups were considered the most appropriate method. I chose to conduct group discussions as I hoped this approach would feel less intimidating for a pupil to be surrounded by school peers than in a one-to-one interview. Furthermore, I hoped a group discussion would provide opportunities for pupils to bounce off others' responses. As Chadderton and Torrance note within a group situation 'an individual may need to explain more fully or defend their views, possibly developing arguments in a way which would not have been produced in a one-to-one situation' (2011:56).

Selecting the pupils

Seven schools were contacted (via email, voicemail and postal letter) to take part in the research. I professionally knew teachers (and a governor) in the schools contacted. These contacts were gatekeepers, facilitating my access as a researcher to pupils. Gaining access to pupils in schools and colleges was an emotional experience. Heath et al. note: 'All researchers have to grapple with the challenges of gaining access, selecting an appropriate sample…' (2009: 4).

Writing direct to head teachers during the summer months of 2008 did not produce any response, and nor did writing direct to professional mentors (those who facilitate ITE within schools). The method that worked for this study was to use a personal contact. The following list identifies the nature of these contacts:

- School governor (female) who was also a Geography PGCE colleague, spoke directly to the head teacher, and shared information about my research
- Geography teacher (male) who attended a subject mentor training session and expressed interest in my research
- Professional mentor (female) who had worked closely with me during the year with a 'failing' student, who offered me a lift to an ITE partnership conference, during the car journey I shared my research interest
- Professional mentor (male) who chatted with me at an ITE partnership conference, and had worked with Geography PGCE student teachers as an associate lecturer and was aware of my research
- Professional mentor (female) who had worked closely with the Geography PGCE cohort including activities with pupil delegates

and was aware of my research

The seven schools originally contacted were geographically spread, offering a 'structural sample' (Kitzinger and Barbour, 1999:7) across the south and east of the Greater Manchester [2]conurbation and Cheshire, the authority that borders Greater Manchester to the south. Five of the seven schools responded and agreed to facilitate pupil focus group sessions. I am aware that school systems take time, and permissions for research activities have to be approved by Senior Management Teams in the schools, and schools need to consider room availability and school events at the end of term, all of which would have impacted on a school's ability to respond to my request.

The structural sample represented the variety of schools (including faith and single sex schools) working in partnership with the initial teacher institution where I work. The table below provides details of the pupil focus groups.

School	Distance from University Campus	Number of Children	Gender	School Year
A	10 miles	7	boys	8
B	9 miles	7	mixed	7 to 10
C	15 miles	7	mixed	7 to 10
D	5 miles	7	mixed	9
E	14 miles	6	mixed	7

Table 1: Details of pupil focus groups

The pupil participants were chosen by the gatekeepers within each school. As a researcher I had very limited control over the pupils selected

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[2] Greater Manchester Urban Area consists of ten local Authorities: Manchester, Salford, Bury, Bolton, Oldham, Tameside, Stockport, Trafford, Wigan and Rochdale.

or the educational spaces selected for the pupil focus groups. This is a familiar issue for educational researchers (Kitzinger and Barbour, 1999:10). The school 'gatekeepers' (the teachers and a governor) with whom I had prior connections supported my request to carry out pupil focus groups, and selected the pupils in advance. I had planned for a group size of six pupils. Interestingly, the majority of the groups contained seven pupils. As a researcher I lack information about how the pupils were encouraged to 'volunteer'; Green and Hart express some concerns about the recruitment of pupil 'volunteers': 'it may have been difficult for pupils to say "no" if asked in schools, particularly if our request for volunteers was made through their class teacher' (1999:31). Pupil and parent/guardian consent forms were provided in advance of the pupil focus groups. The gatekeepers took steps to ensure all forms were collected, or parents phoned, prior to the pupil focus group session commencing. At least two schools took photocopies of the signed consent forms to keep, for their records.

At the outset of this, study space was not a major concern. The educational spaces selected by the gatekeepers resulted in a range of settings that intrigued and at times unsettled me, providing a research opportunity to problematise the spatial contexts of the pupil focus groups. As the research proceeded, I became concerned with space at the scale of the school, the room, the group, zooming to the personal scale of the individual pupil or student teacher. Each participant within the focus groups (and other interviews with stakeholders, and pairs of students) will have their own unique experience of the digitally recorded session. Many questions were generated by problematising educational space; for example: Did we have agency in locating our bodies within the classroom/area space? Did peer or institutional hierarchies influence individuals in their seat choice? Were selections made in order to avoid a particular view of the classroom, or 'others' within the room?

Only the pupil focus groups were videoed; other interviews were aurally recorded. The video camera filming the pupil focus group sessions was

switched on at the start of the group interview. Each pupil focus group provided a unique subunit of the case study, and each educational space occupied within a school was unique. The group of pupils was unique, the time of day and date were unique, and the start of each pupil focus group was unique. The subsets all occurred in July towards the end of the school summer term, offering some elements of a synchronic case study.

Techniques employed – pupil focus groups

A set of A4 laminated photographs taken by a university photographer to represent interests of a lower secondary school aged pupil were produced. As noted above, the 'interests' were generated by the 2008-9 cohort of student teachers on the last day of their PGCE course and re-presented by the photographer. These 17 images were intended to provide a stimulus to generate discussion among the group members.

The questions included the following:
1. Do these images represent the interests of KS3 pupils like YOU? Which one would you choose to describe/represent you?
2. What do these images tell you about what the student teachers think? What other stories are not shown?
3. What objects would you recommend photographing to represent typical KS3 pupil's interests?
4. The National Curriculum for Geography mentions a new area of geography called 'personal geography'. What do you think this means?
5. The National Curriculum says …The study of geography should include a variety of scales from personal, local, national etc. What examples can you think of to demonstrate personal and/or local geography?
6. The National Curriculum also says ... The curriculum should provide opportunities for pupils to: build on and expand their personal experiences of geography using practical and life experiences. What

'personal' experiences have you or your classmates shared in geography? What personal experiences do you feel are OK to share in the classroom?

7. I am looking for ways to equip student geography teachers in teaching this new area of geography. Any advice you can give me? I have created a possible comfortable scale would you mind trialling it for me?

Although the photographs were useful as ice-breakers, and also gave pupils insights into how they were perceived by student teachers, they were not ultimately successful in eliciting pupils' own views, as the pupils felt that the images represented stereotypes of young people's interests and did not relate to their own life. For instance, a pupil at school B commented that the student teachers 'Think we are shallow people'; another added that there were 'No pictures of friends'. Therefore, this data was not used in the analyses presented in Chapter 6.

I had previously approached a Head of Geography from a local school as a potential case study school 12 months before the pupil focus groups. Upon learning that the research was about 'personal geographies', she stated 'we do not do personal geographies; we do not study the local geography'. The boundary between personal and local voiced by this Head of Geography provided a question prompt (Question 5) with the focus groups of pupils interviewed in July 2009.

In exploring further which aspects of 'you' and 'my life' pupils may be comfortable in sharing within the geography classroom, a comfortable scale was designed (Figure 9), based upon aspects of personal geography the 2008-9 geography student teachers had observed being used by experienced geography teachers during the induction phase of their course (Sept/Oct).

Personal experiences?	I am comfortable talking about this in class					I'd rather not talk about this in class
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Where I live						
My neighbourhood						
My hobbies						
My family						
How I spend my school holidays						
Places I'd like to visit						
Places I have visited						
Places I have lived						
My religion						
Places my relatives live						
How I spend my leisure time						
How I get to school						
Where my family shops						
Paid jobs my family do						

Figure 9: Comfortable scale

Analysis choices

The reader is reminded that transcripts, as a set of data, have limitations. I am acutely aware that the student teacher voices are filtered through my choices, skills and analysis. As Fairclough notes, there is 'no such thing as an "objective" analysis of a text, if by that we mean an analysis which simply describes what is "there" in the text without being "biased" by the "subjectivity" of the analyst' (2003:14).

The transcription 'texts' were initially read to gain an overall sense of the data. Each interview transcript provides some insights into the experiences and views of two student teachers during a 30-minute interview, at one moment, during their PGCE course. The specific context of the interviews and the processes of any analysis undertaken require close scrutiny, as recommended by Scott: 'The questions that must be answered in such analysis, then, are in what specific contexts, among which specific communities of people, and by what textual and social processes has meaning been acquired?' (Scott, 1988 quoted in Adams St. Pierre, 2000:484).

Within the discussion in Chapter 2 concerning the policy inclusion of the new concept, personal geographies was an awareness of 'unsaid' assumptions, in particular, that a focus upon the personal would be beneficial to pupils. Within the analysis of my empirical data, I endeavour to identify underlying assumptions, as I follow the advice of other researchers such as Fairclough, who noted: 'What is "said" in a text always rests upon "unsaid" assumptions, so part of the analysis of texts is trying to identify what is assumed' (2003:11).

The *Track Changes* tool within Microsoft Word was employed to note and pose questions to self during the subsequent read through of the transcripts. This technique provided the starting point for thematic analysis of the interview data. The third active engagement with the

transcripts involved the use of the *Insert Comment* tool within Microsoft Word to highlight emerging themes. These included:

- Being a teacher
- Transitions
- Relevance
- Personal goals
- Lifestyle, appearances
- Life history
- Identity
- Pedagogy
- Subject knowledge
- Space

Coffey's comment that 'analysis is not about adhering to any one correct approach or set of right techniques; it is imaginative, artful, flexible, and reflexive. It should also be methodical, scholarly, and intellectually rigorous' (1996:10) provided reassurance to myself as novice researcher, daunted yet excited by the range of possible analysis techniques. After a lengthy period of 'polishing' the interview transcripts, capturing the oral recordings into a common format, placing each word/utterance onto the page, fixing, capturing, taming those 30-minute moments of time, it came as a relief to 'play', open up, release the data.

I have employed discourse analysis to the interview transcripts, paying close attention not only to "what" is shared, but to the ways in which knowledge, identity and value are constructed. Employing techniques used by other researchers (see Coffey and Atkinson, 1996; Riessman, 2008), I began with a primary 'surface level' of engagement with the transcripts to identify themes, followed by an active engagement, moving between the primary data and existing research by others to add depth and enquiry to the emerging themes. The extracts from the transcripts are included to offer the opportunity for the student's views to have a major place within this chapter. However, as I have noted, I am aware of

limitations within this aim. The shared views of the student teachers have been influenced by my presence within the interviews, my question prompts, my transcribing ability, and my choices of which extracts to include and which to omit. Within these constraints, I have strived to provide readers with a vicarious experience to have an empathy with individual students. I acknowledge that many of the quotes within this chapter are long. The quotes offer additional challenges for the reader as I have taken the decision not to impose grammar and punctuation conventions upon the student teachers' speech. I am identified as S in interview extracts.

Early analysis – Pupil Focus Groups

The pupils confidently gave clarity to the boundary between personal and local scales (Figure 22 see Chapter 6), with 'personal' resonating with /relating to 'you', 'me' or 'I'. Many contributions were made by all the focus groups clarifying what the personal scale meant to them. However, the concept 'local' and the local scale generated very few responses across the five pupil focus groups; local just meant 'out there', not necessarily anything to do with 'me'. Figure 22 provides a summary of the pupil contributions and indicates the frequency and richness of pupil references to the personal, and the comparative scarceness of engagements with the local (instances of "you" and related words are highlighted in bold).

The pupils across the case study schools collectively critically engaged with the comfortable scale, offering powerful concerns about its potential as a tool for novice teachers (see Chapter 6).

Discussion relating to ethics

I followed ethical guidelines and checklists from my home institution and the British Education Research Association (BERA, 2011). Qualitative researchers question whether such ethical regulations and standardization ensures ethical practice. As noted by Miller et al., the complexities of researching personal experiences 'and placing accounts in the public arena raised multiple ethical issues for the researcher that could not be solved by the application of abstract rules, principles or guidelines' (2012:1). Although regularly updated, ethical guidelines are static. Furthermore, the requirement for all ethical concerns to be planned for in advance creates tensions for qualitative researchers that start from 'uncertainty' (Alderson and Morrow, 2011:4). Since gaining approval for this research, I have been increasingly concerned about ethics, including 'thinking ethically' (Miller et al., 2012:1) and 'doing ethics' (see Allen, 2005), as ethical dilemmas arose throughout the research.

Participants and informed consent

The three groups of participants within this study include professional and academic geographers, student teachers and pupil focus groups. Ethical concern whilst encouraging participation, and providing information prior to the consent of individuals, was premised on methods acknowledged by Miller et al. 'which do not wilfully exploit, harm or coerce (potential) participants' (2012:2). Consent was obtained from all participants who took part in this study, with particular care taken with student teachers and pupils, obtaining signed consent from individuals and from the parents/guardians of pupils.

'Consent' is problematic within qualitative research, raising questions as to what the consent is for, and where participation begins and ends. The student teachers that had consented to be interviewed might have considered validating an emailed transcription as a burden, an

unwelcomed additional task. As Miller and Bell note 'The precise nature of 'consent' for the participants might only become clear eventually, at the end of a study' (Miller et al., 2012:62). However, while informed consent was an aim and aspiration, my position within the university inevitably influenced the student teachers participants who 'volunteered' to be interviewed; I discuss this ethical dilemma in Chapter 5.

I provided information for pupils and their parents/guardians prior to the focus groups, and to cohorts of student teachers on the first day of each training course. I took care to regularly remind participants that they could withdraw from the activities at any time. Informed consent I believe can only ever be an aspiration, a prompt to ensure an ethical approach is carefully taken. 'Volunteers' can never be fully aware of what they are volunteering for. Furthermore, as Heath et al. note, 'young people are likely to have less informed knowledge of the nature of research involvement than older people, yet at the same time might be more amenable to requests to participate, even though it might not always be in their interests to do so' (2009:8).

I was distant from the internal school processes that selected pupils to take part in the focus groups. My involvement was limited to a letter of information for the pupils and parents/guardians. Heath et al. acknowledge that pupils 'may be coerced into research …. by institutional gatekeepers' (2009:8). In two schools I visited, the institutional gatekeeper remained in the room during the pupil focus group session. This raises ethical issues as noted by Seaman, as I could 'be seen as an ally of this particular adult. Consequently, accounts can be framed in terms of what the children know that particular adult approves of or disapproves of' (quoted in Tisdall, 2009:16). I return to the presence of such gatekeepers in Chapter 6.

Stakeholder interviews with professional and academic geographers were facilitated by prior connections with individuals who knew me professionally. These individuals have national and international

reputations and the context of my research might, as Piper and Simons acknowledge, 'reveal clues to identity' (2005:57); furthermore, Piper and Simons advise 'in such situations, a sound ethical principle is to seek clearance from the individuals concerned for use of the data in a specific context or report' (2005:57). Within this thesis I have chosen to group together quotes from professional and academic geographers rather than directly quoting from individuals.

Confidentiality and anonymity

The voices and views of student teachers shared within interviews are signposted with the use of random initials. Where I provide summary information about the student teacher participants and the schools of the pupil focus groups, care has been taken to remove all means of identifying the students and pupils. However, though I have taken steps to protect the identity of student teachers and pupils within this thesis, I take note of the opportunity raised by Harcourt and Sargent that 'when given a choice, children will often elect to use their own names, initial or identifying symbol … They did not want to pretend to be somebody else or be reduced to a number or letter. They wanted the people who read or heard about the research to know their names' (Harcourt and Sargeant, 2011:430). For this study all pupil participants have a textual and visual presence within this thesis (see images in Chapter 6). However, steps have been taken to blur faces to protect identities following ethical guidelines and data protection legislation (see Spencer, 2011:65-66).

During the pupil focus groups individuals may have self-disclosed information that once voiced in a public space cannot then be erased and forgotten by the other pupils present. As noted by Barbour and Schostak, 'the researcher cannot abdicate responsibility for the impact which taking part in a focus group discussion may have on the continuing relationships within the group' (2005:43). Such an ethical dilemma, enmeshed in a particular context occurred during a pupil focus group session and

highlights that 'ethical concerns arise at all stages of the research process' (Miller et al., 2012:5); I discuss this ethical dilemma in Chapter 6.

Rapport and Power

I was a known teacher educator for the student teachers and professional and academic geographers. For the pupils I was a stranger, and as noted by Sargeant and Harcourt, 'an adult with external and local authorization to study the lives of children … hold a delicate and privileged position as a researcher' (2012:31). I explore the unequal power relationship within the interviews with student teachers (see Chapter 5) and pupil focus groups (see Chapter 6) and discuss an instance in which I disrupted the relationship by my physicality as I knelt on the floor whilst pupils were sat on benches.

Within all sessions with participants I strived to create an environment in which the individuals felt able to contribute their views. As noted within the design of the study section above, the pupil focus sessions included icebreaker activities at the start of the sessions. My desire to encourage pupils' contributions, drawing upon my 30 plus years as an educator, may, I discuss in Chapter 6, have resulted in 'ethical violence'.

Concluding remarks

The analysis in Chapter 5 focuses mainly upon the student teacher data, including: aspects of discourse and narrative analysis highlighting student teachers' transformations from student of the university discipline to teacher of the school subject, and aspects of thematic analysis, discussing the themes of power, transitions and silence. I am 'interested not only in what people say and do, but in how they express themselves' (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996:23).

Chapter 6 focuses upon discourse analysis of the pupil focus groups, and visual analysis of the spatial context of the focus groups. A key theme

discussed within Chapter 6 is silence: considering the impact of the researcher as well as the impact of the educational *space* upon classroom talk.

The use of multiple analytical methods (discourse, narrative, thematic and visual) 'reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013:9), and my attempt to explore and reveal complexities with the concept of 'personal geographies'. As a qualitative researcher I 'deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive practices, hoping always to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand….each practice makes the world visible in a different way ' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008:4). The inclusion of *'*pertinent extracts from the data' (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996:18) (interview) are selected to provide the reader with 'vicarious experiences' (Stake, 1995:63), and are provided within the thesis to give a sense of 'being there' during the data collection. The analysis also attends to the nature of 'space': I take textual opportunities to describe and explore the educational spaces used within the case study, appreciating that 'The physical space is fundamental to meanings for most researchers and most readers' (ibid.).

The next two chapters present the analyses of the data. Chapter 5 focuses upon the student teachers as they transform from scholars of the academic discipline to teachers of the school subject of geography. Chapter 6 focuses upon the pupils, and the typical English education spaces in which pupils might study school geography.

Chapter 5 Student teachers – the transformation to teachers of geography

The previous chapters have explored the emergence of the concept of 'personal geographies' within the 2007 English National Curriculum, considered why individuals may silence their prior experiences, and detailed the case study methodology employed. Within this chapter the focus is upon student teachers and includes analysis of interviews carried out with pairs of student teachers at the start (induction data) and end (exit data) of a nine-month PGCE course during the research period from 2008 to 2012.

I strive to give the reader a 'feel for' my interview data as a vicarious experience (Stake, 1995:63) by providing an opportunity for readers of this thesis to visually touch exemplars of the empirical data. I firstly offer the reader a taster of the interview data by employing a geographical 'quadrat' overview to the interview transcripts. In developing an overview of the empirical data, my early analysis employed Bell's (2011) jigsaw framework as a lens to the data. I subsequently take the reader through further stages of my data analysis, commencing with interesting data nuggets from the interviews with student teachers as they commence their PGCE training. This section is followed by extracts from interviews with student teachers on the last day of the training course, at the threshold of becoming a newly qualified teacher. The extracts discussed during the transition points of commencing and exiting the training year lead into the final section of the chapter, in which I explore emerging themes and questions.

As noted within Chapter 2, the policy, curriculum and textbook guidance for student teachers concerning the use of pupils' personal experiences was limited and hazy, and raised questions concerning whose personal geographies to use within the classroom, the student teacher's own

personal geographies and/or those of pupils in their classrooms. I return to this issue in this chapter.

Learning to teach is undoubtedly complicated (see Day and Gu, 2010), and within this chapter I examine some of the complexities of becoming a geography teacher in England through the 'voices' of cohorts of student teachers enrolled on Geography PGCE courses at the training institution where I have been employed as the Geography PGCE co-ordinator.

Care has been taken to maintain confidentiality of student teachers and pupils, and the identity of their placement schools. Within the thesis I have taken steps to remove all means of identifying participants. The decision to use (random) initials for students, and *italics* for the extracts from student interviews throughout the thesis, provide textual reminders that the data was voiced by actual student teachers.

Overview of the interview data sets

Bell's Jigsaw (2011) provides a useful initial framework for introducing readers to an overview of the empirical data, by offering glimpses of the data through a nine-piece jigsaw lens (see Figure 10 below). Such a framework appealed to me as it modelled a familiar geographical fieldwork approach whereby a quadrat (or small frame) is thrown into a field and the researcher focuses upon the data through the grid that overlays the surface.

Relational Practice	Social Practice	Cultural Practice
Emotion Practice	Caring Practice	Ethical Practice
Embodied Practice	Spatial Practice	Political Practice

Figure 10: The socio-cultural teaching practice jigsaw (Bell, 2011:10)

A drawback of using such a lens for the research data is in the traces of colonial overtones that this approach mimics, by positioning the researcher at a distance, viewing, peering, assessing others. Whilst mindful of this weakness, the device provided useful starting points for the analysis.

Student teachers during the induction phase of their PGCE course focus on the 'social practice of teaching'. Bell acknowledges that teaching 'is not a solo activity. Teaching involves social interaction, that is communication with others, and is not something a teacher does alone, it is done with students in mind' (2011:22). Furthermore, such communication with others 'requires that teachers use multiple knowledges in their communication with students: content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational ends' (Shulman, 1987:8 cited in Bell, 2011:25). Like Bell's beginning teacher Sally (2011: 3), the induction phase student teachers theorised their emerging understanding of the profession focusing on teaching as 'knowledge practice', in particular knowledge of content. This focus was perhaps understandable within the spatial context of the interviews held within educational spaces (tutor's office, PGCE classroom or corridor) and interviews taking place following taught sessions with myself, their tutor.

Bell notes that 'being a teacher means to be in relationships with students, colleagues, parents and care-givers, and with the subject being taught' (Bell, 2011:21) and discusses three ways of making sense of teachers talking about teaching as a relational practice – 'a relational space, a discursive relationship and a spiritual connectedness' (2011) . Talking about teaching as a 'relational practice' was expressed in the data as part of the shared learning journey, within a group of PGCE students, within a network of potential peer support that the group offers now and in the future as HJ shared: *I feel that I know this group of*

students that I am with now inside out and I am quite happy to go to them if I have got any troubles any concerns' (Induction 2011).

Bell acknowledges that 'teachers feel emotions with respect to our students, colleagues, the parents and caregivers of students, and our own professional practices, beliefs and values' (citing Nias, 1996 in Bell, 2011:64). Teaching as 'emotion practice' was voiced as a given, an expectation that at some point they 'will break down'.

> *HJ e:m I thought (names past student) [laughs] I thought the past PGCE student [laughs] coming in e:m has really helped me learn what is expected of you this year and how at some point you will break down and cry but you just need to get past that and get over it and take on the criticisms the constructive criticisms that anyone gives you . and just re-evaluate how you are going to teach your lesson and just know you are, you will break down and cry at some point .*
>
> *LS [laughs]*
>
> *HJ [laughs] I know [laughs]*
> *Extract from Transcription LS and HJ Induction 2011*

Such an affective expectation appears to be passed down through successive cohorts to new novice students. Whether this will become a reality or remain a preconception is unknown at the start of the journey. Students use a range of feelings within the interviews, including negative feelings such as 'so intense' (first few days) and 'struggled' (previous job) and positive feelings – 'it's good', 'happy' (to go to peers for support) (LS and HJ Induction 2011). NJ (2009) reflected upon his limited experience on the training course, and whether it resonated with prior perceptions before commencing:

> *E:m. before starting the course I don't know if it is just scare*
> *mongering but I kind of been told you basically give up your life to*
> *start the course, that's it, off, bang, there you go, and it is quite a*
> *gradual ease in which is, help me relax into it a bit more, cos I know*
> *it is going to be hard work but it is nice to be led in gradually.*

Political, spatial and cultural practices of teaching were referred to during the exit interviews as each pair of students dialogically reflected upon their PGCE experiences. During their PGCE course all of the geography students visit a minimum of three placement schools. Comparing their two major placements (termed Block A and Block B) gave the students opportunities to reflect on and highlight cultural and ethnic differences within these spatial contexts; for example, during the Exit Interview 2010 (see below).

> *OG my school's 70-80% minority ethnic pupils what's yours?*
>
> *OT   mine was something like 90%*
>
> *OG   90%*
> *(OT yeh) so both quite high*

Gender was commented in relation to cultural practice by OT, a student teacher from West Africa (OT Exit Interview 2010) whose main placement had been in an all-girls' school, in which the girls were mainly from a Pakistani Asian heritage with limited knowledge of the local geography of the school. As Bell notes, 'our teaching is informed by the culture of the students in our classrooms' (Bell, 2011:39).

Bell acknowledges that teaching can be viewed as a spatial practice and 'highlights the use in teaching of physical spaces, social spaces and e-spaces' (Bell, 2011:112). The spatial context of learning was linked to experiences during the placements, including assisting with school fieldtrips, and when looking to the future to their 'own' classroom space.

The 'political' aspect of teaching, 'as teachers address the discourses of power in schools, especially those of inequality and injustice' (Bell, 2011:113), was touched upon in relation to reflections concerning their position within placement schools, as well as in relation to the geography subject content. For example, during the Exit Interview 2010 OT says:

> *the downside is when ITT training, even though you didn't have that power and experience and so on, you knew that it doesn't matter because I am leaving in 2 weeks or 4 weeks whatever (OG murmurs agreement).*

In response to the question asking What do you perceive will be challenging geography topics to teach?, TE reflected:

> *e:r yeh e:r the fact that maybe when I was at university probably e:m **Farm**ers were supporting e:m .lorry drivers e:m in their e:m protest about rising in fuel prices the last time fuel prices went up in what 2000 something and farmers were supporting them and other people thought why is that, and I don't know I used to be quite politically active and can see the different groups of people who support different political parties e:m made links with people and ended up getting into some mad discussions about you know left and right wing politics in a geography class and it's like I didn't realise that other people didn't think those things were connected.*

For TE, as she commences the PGCE course, there is a strong connection between politics and geography.

Bell describes 'teaching as a caring practice … as requiring commitment and taking responsibility; caring about and caring for the protection, welfare, nurturance, personal and social growth and development of the students as well as their educational outcomes; attentiveness to the needs of students; responsiveness to the needs of the students' (Bell,

2011:85). Making a difference, caring about pupils, being part of a school community, is a valued outcome of the intense training course. There are traces of teaching as a 'caring practice' in the following extract:

> *VH kids love talking about themselves, they love (HM yeh) talking about their interests, their situation and my Head of Faculty said to me if you get in a lesson and go off on a tangent just go with it because it will keep the pupils (MH murmurs agreement) interested*
> *HM   e:m I'm really lucky because my Head teacher is a geography teacher, and the school is a modern foreign languages college status so e:m every day is like different cultures, different e:m countries and e:m and what is going on around the world and even if you look around the school like there is flags up on the walls everywhere there's flags in the car park. There is countries, names of countries everywhere so e:m that's one thing why I took the job because it is, it has Geography running through and through.*
> *VH I went to meet my new (teacher), in my new school this week e:m and the Head of Faculty actually said to me that a lot of the pupils will think central Manchester ends at Primark that's their definition of the geography of Manchester, Primark (HM murmurs agreement) because they have never been out of their local area so it varies I think depending on which school you are in and where the pupils come from (VH mmmh).*

The use of **my,** as in 'my new school', 'my Head teacher', 'my Head of Faculty' is spoken with optimism about the future.

I have employed Bell's Jigsaw as a lens to the empirical data, providing a quick visual engagement with the data collected. In the next section the interview transcripts are explored in greater depth. I include longer extracts from the interviews to offer the reader a richer access to the context and construction of the interviews, and to give a sense of the issues that were discussed by student participants.

Student teacher insights and concerns as they commence their training

Within this section I discuss insights and concerns from a selection of interviews with pairs of students carried out during the early (induction) phase of their training. The first pair of students (TE and HM), interviewed in September 2008, offered differing, somewhat opposing views about the discipline, and geography as a school subject. During the interview they fluctuated in confidence. At times they were cautious, attempting to articulate and negotiate the boundary of subject knowledge versus pedagogic knowledge (Bell's 'social practice'). At other moments they spoke with enthusiasm and confidence when sharing their personal definition of geographic knowledge.

TE and HM

S How do you define geography, what is your definition of geography?

*TE erm It's everything you see out of the bus window and everything that you erm everything you walk through and the people you meet and the reason erm The people you meet when you walk around and **where** you walk around and how where you walk was formed and made and when it was and the people who smile at you and the reasons why they do or don't.*

HM Geography for me is the subject that helps you understand key processes that occur e:r in both the physical and social domains of our planet that's a real textbook definition I know but . for me it's just all about understanding the linkages that occur between people that occur between e:r natural, physical and artificial features of e:r our societies and [draws breath]geography is er is geosociology for me it's not just . for me it is more socially e:r constructed rather than . I know it has got a physical domain to it but the social side is so wide

> *and so diverse that it can be transferred to so many different*
> *subjects I just see geography as sociology that's why I'm here.*

TE used the pronoun '*you*' - an informal way of indicating inclusiveness, or the assumption that one's point of view is typical of that of others. 'You' acted to place individuals within the subject within everyday movements through spaces, whilst aware that such spaces may also be occupied by other people. TE offers a personal scale of the subject, in that geography surrounds 'you'. TE expressed her definition using everyday language. HM employed '*me*' and '*I* 'as well as '*you*' and '*our*' in his definition, in which the subject geography is referred to as a set of knowledge that helps individuals to understand the processes on our planet. The subject is '*so wide and so diverse*', highlighting the global scale of the subject. HM drew upon academic and subject specific language (e.g. 'geosociology') to define geography.

The personal connection with the subject was a strong thread running through the interview. The verb **relate** was regularly used by TE '*it relates to you*', '*it's easier to relate it to pupils*' (the 'it' refers to Geography). TE's strong connection to the subject was also expressed when she said '*I think geography is something that you do and not something you study*'. Aspects of the subject are part of her identity: they are 'embodied' (Bell, 2011).

Towards the end of the interview TE starts to question whether geography should necessarily be related to pupils' lives, suggesting that geography could act instead as an escape route:

> *TE also it could be some form of escape for some pupils they may*
> *not want you to relate it to their lives their lives might be like well I*
> *don't want you to know about that is my personal live I don't want*
> *you intruding e:m and you know maybe geography could be a form*
> *of escape to escape from a life their lives be able to go somewhere*
> *else in the world and think about someone else and have an idea*

that maybe their lives won't be like that cos they will take
themselves somewhere else [laughs] either mentally or physically.

Teaching is complicated, for the student teachers their relationship with the academic discipline of geography may be silenced as they commence their training in school classrooms, as traces and memories of their own learning of the school subject come to the fore. As Britzman acknowledges, student teachers arrive with 'the personal desire to carve out one's own territory, develop one's own style, and make a difference in the education of students' enthusiasm and desire to make a difference'. However, as they commence their school placements and '…step into the teacher's role they are confronted not only with the traditions associated with those of past teachers and those of past and present classroom lives' (Britzman, 2003:41). Such tensions were surfacing during the induction period. The student teachers commenced the PGCE course with enthusiasm for the discipline, and a wealth of prior experiences that have led them to choose to study to become a teacher. The student teachers during the induction interviews were starting to voice tensions as they grappled with the possibilities and opportunities they arrived with and the constraints and limitations that they perceived or confronted within placements.

HM chose to study a combined honours degree in Geography and Sports Sciences, therefore only 50% of his degree was Geography, whereas TE had studied a BSc in Geography. Having studied both Geography and Sport Sciences, HM looked for opportunities to link the two subjects together during the interview. HM may have felt he needed to justify his passion for both subjects whilst on a PGCE Geography course amongst other postgraduates who had 100% of their degree made up of geography modules. The first mention of sport came early in the interview in response to the question

> *S Is there any particular session? That has really stuck out in your mind any particular activity that has really resonated with you, stuck in your mind?*
>
> *HM E:r for me it was the competition that we did in Ben's lesson sort of e:r running to the table back and forth apparently I think because the sport in me it was a competition it was who ever won came first*

The students talk about what is 'inside' them, and their personal connections to the discipline. Referring to '*the sport in me',* I suggest, links to his (MH) identity. Sport was mentioned 46 times during the interview for a range of reasons:

- To highlight the uniqueness of geography by comparison with another subject
- To highlight generic features of any subject
- To clarify definitions and boundaries of a subject
- Life history/backgrounds and connections with subject matter
- Sport as context, content used to illustrate geographical concepts

The transition to being a student teacher was explored by the two interviewees. For both, their route into the profession from school to university to PGCE course had been enhanced by additional experiences. HM had been in the armed forces and talked about his dream, of being a professional teacher: '*changing into that person is going to be the biggest challenge I want to do it fought so hard to get here'.* TE referred to the personal challenge of '*separating myself from the group rather than e:m teaching from within'* as she reflected upon her prior experiences of teaching outdoor education and highlighted some personal challenges in rethinking how to be a professional in the new-to-her setting of an indoor classroom.

The dialogic space of the paired induction interviews highlighted that all entrants have their own constructions of the subject geography. The pair interviews provided a richer set of data and insights that could have been

possible within one-to-one interviews, as all were confronted with another version of the subject. No two individuals have the same definition of geography, yet the assumption is that having a degree with 50% modules called geography will equip a student teacher for a life-time of teaching geography in schools. Additional experiences working with young learners is viewed as desirable for new entrants and encouraged prior to commencing a PGCE route to teaching. However, more research is required to explore the benefits of such additional experiences, as prior experiences may complicate becoming a teacher. Furthermore, additional experiences may blinker student teachers, limiting their understanding of how children learn and their new role as a teacher.

GT and NJ

GT and NJ were the second pair of students interviewed as they commenced their training course. GT followed the school to university to PGCE route, joining the course with a BSc in Aquatic Science. During the interview she shared her preference for physical geography and reflected on why this allegiance may have developed.

> *GT I found it (*referring to a life representation activity*) useful, I had never thought, even though my grades were good in human, I had never really enjoyed it as much as physical*

> *GT I mean I went about my own experience so what I thought cos I hadn't really thought about what has made me a physical geographer rather than a human geographer before but like looking back on when you were little oh yes I used to do that and maybe that's why even though I have always lived in cities its always been my mum saying get out in that countryside do something rather than wasting your life so I have done quite a lot of things erm that I think that's just eventually made me into a physical geographer and I had just not really noticed*

During the Induction phase of the PGCE course, student geography teachers had completed a life representation activity that invited them to represent significant aspects of their prior experience related to geography.
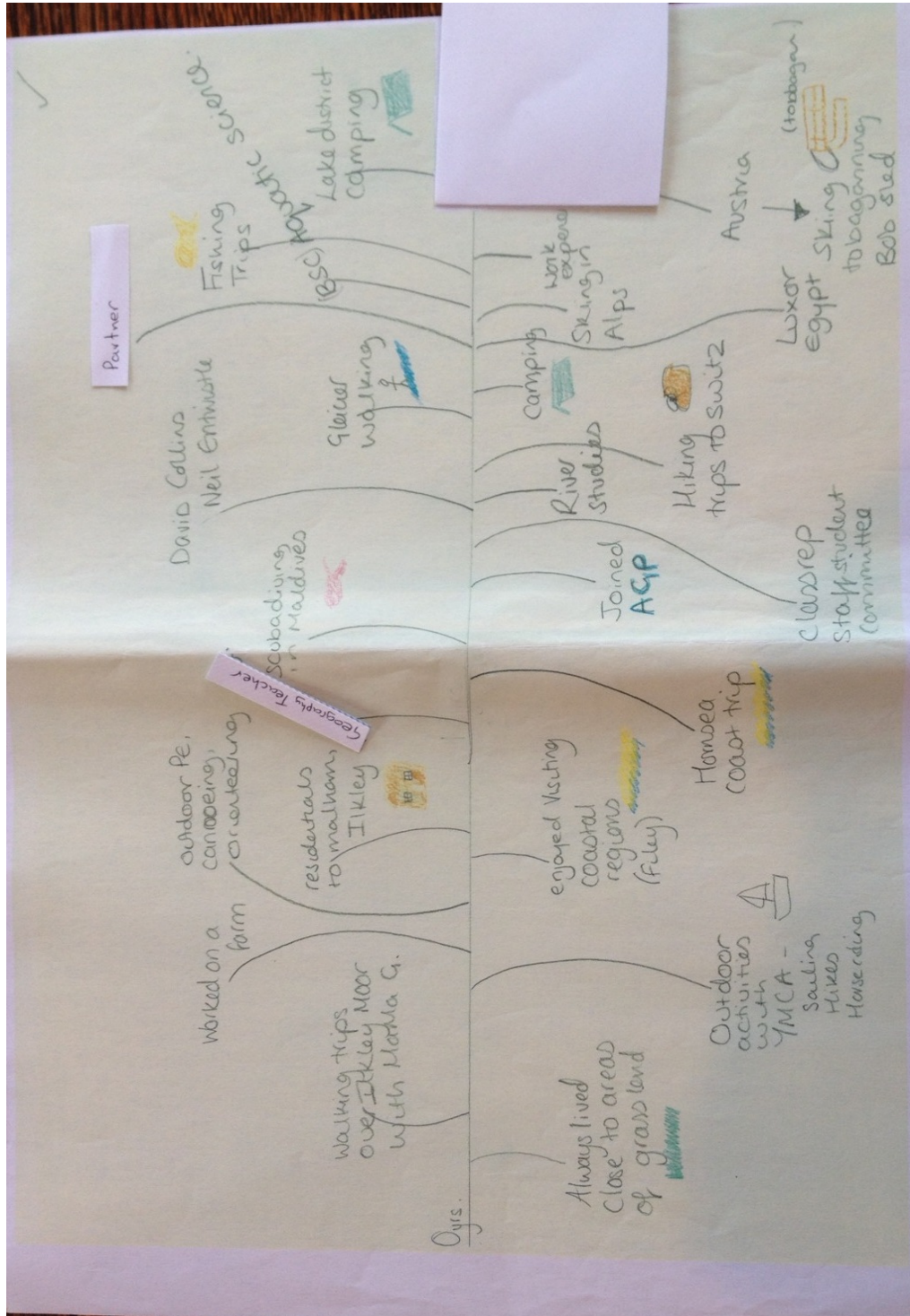
Figure 11: Life representation by GT

Timeline of life history leading to be a Geography PGCE student

Born in coastal town close to the Lake District.

Lively & enthusiastic Geography teacher at secondary School

Taken on many trips to the Lake District & Camping trips around the UK as a child

Chose many wrong subjects at college, Geography being the only 1 I ended up enjoying.

Following Poor A level results, given opportunity to go to study Geography made the most of the opportunity given to me.

Fieldwork study to Kenya gave me the opportunity to learn about a different culture & area of the world

5½ months travelling Bahamas, Australia, Fiji & California gave me time to reflect on what was important to me & learn about different part of the world

Returning to the UK realised that we have some amazing nearby countryside on our doorstep & so become a keen hiker, fell runner & scrambler in the Lake District. Getting to know many areas of the National Park and its geographic features.

Both prior to & after travelling my work in a local special needs school really made me realise how much I enjoy working with children. On top of this, much of my work has taking children on trips out of school & getting them excited about the area around them. Been exiles about the area around them. Residential trips, getting children active in the outdoors is also an area of the work I really enjoyed

Figure 12: Life representation by NJ

NJ (see Figure 12 above) studied for a Geography degree then worked for two years as a teaching assistant (TA) within a special needs school in the North West prior to joining the PGCE course. NJ reflects on his preference for human geography as an academic discipline. However, he also describes an appreciation for physical geography through his leisure pursuits and their influence upon him when he was growing up in a small town in the Lake District.

> *NJ I was quiet when we first started (reference to life representation activity) I thought oh god where do you begin with that, but as I started as I did the first one it was like oh right and then it all, a major one for me was, it's really scary coming out of this course because a lot of people did really well at A level and I actually plummeted when I did my A level, I must admit it was a big worry when I applied for the course they would look at my 2.1 and go well look how badly he did at A level, that was a real kind of turning point in that at that point I thought I was going to be working in [town] for the rest of my life working in a shop job, but then I got given an opportunity to go to [University] and I just kind of seized it with both hands and just went for it and from that point it kind of snowballed the whole experience of going to Kenya as part of that course that opened my eyes up to the world around and cultures and things and I think that made me like human geography a lot I wanted to study cultures and ways of life and things like that, but then also I studied units at uni that were human based yet growing up where I grew up in [town] close to the Lake District I kind of was always dragged places as a kid but now I go crazy if I don't get to go out there running, scrambling and anything like that, so it's kind of my real, youth kind of, sort of helped push me this way and my experiences of actually not getting something right but getting it wrong and then being given an opportunity to, well you messed up but , it's quite interesting writing , I quite enjoyed doing it*

NJ I'd always found it better to take a load of ideas and theories on things and formulate my own opinions on them rather than just oh that's a river it flows but then again I do, what I was saying about growing up in the Lake District and things my focus has been on human but I have a real appreciation for the outdoors and I think at a basic level I haven't gone into river studies at you know degree dissertation level or anything but I know the basic features of a river and describing that at a low level like Key Stage 3 and maybe into Key Stage 4 I think I know the basis of it because of my own personal experience of it, whenever I go out in the Lake District I like to think how did that get there and go and have a quick look somewhere and see what's going on (phone rings) I think I've got a mix of the two

In NJ's account, geography therefore is strongly linked to his biographical experiences and his academic studies. During the interview GT and NJ discussed defining geography, and both argued for the importance of the discipline and school subject.

GT For me geography answers a lot of life's questions like why things happen and how they happen like why Asia [unclear] stuff like that it gives you especially about why? Linking in as to how like the inputs and outputs processes of what happens e:m just things like that but for me geography is everything in the world so cheesy

NJ I think I said this in my personal statement for the course and everything. It's not a core subject yet to me it is everything that is going on in the world what with current affairs you know history as well what with why the world is shaped the way it is why things have developed the way they have based on the physical environment, human influences I kind of don't understand why there is not more emphasis put upon geography in the curriculum because it's so relevant to everyday issues e:m you can do things in maths where it will be you know X and Y you know and everything else when are

they ever going to use that unless they go down the maths route
e:m but geography is you look out of your window so it's everything.
It is everything. So yeh.

The discontinuities and tensions highlighted within Chapter 2 between the academic discipline and school subject did not appear to be a concern for the student teachers as they commenced their training. However, this issue did reappear within the exit interviews, discussed later within this chapter.

HJ and LS

HJ and LS were interviewed at the start of their training year in September 2011. HJ followed a traditional route into teaching of school to university, straight onto a PGCE training course. This is the route noted above of GT (2009-10). I also took this route 30 plus years earlier, a route that is becoming less prevalent on the Geography PGCE course at the institution in which the research took place. LS graduated in 2008 and then had (like TE and HM (2008) and NJ (2009)) a period of employment (2008-11) prior to joining the PGCE training course. The percentage of Geography PGCE students arriving with experiences in other types of employment is a noticeable trend at the case study institution.

HJ was involved with many transitions including: from undergraduate student to post-graduate student; and from student to professional teacher. LS was involved with the transition from one professional role (*'In my previous job I have had to be a strict professional adult'*) to another, that of a professional teacher.

Prior work roles and relationships with colleagues and line managers are used as a benchmark for comparisons by LS. He talks of the transition as a *'big risk'* moving from a known field of employment into a new career,

especially one that from 2011-12 onwards involved training costs[3]. LS's personal goals, his desire to become a teacher, helped him to '*overcome the funding issue*'. In analysing the interview data I am increasingly mindful that 'texts do not stand outside of history or society. Instead, they reference and reflect the contexts in which they are written' (Persaud, 2011:138).

LS says '*the people I think now who are doing it are the ones who want to be doing it rather than doing it as a [HJ Yeh] easy option*'; his view is supported by murmurs of '*yeh*' by HJ. Teaching as a career, both agree, involves changes, a transitional period. HJ states '*I was expecting it to be intense but I don't think I was expecting it to be so intense*'. Her prior work experience between university and the PGCE course during the summer vacation prepared her for the daily time commitment: '*I've been working as a pub, a barmaid over the summer so this is kind of I am getting back into the routine of early mornings, late nights*'.

HJ reflects on the emotional affect of a period of transition. Referring to a visit to the group by a newly qualified teacher, she commented: '*I thought the past PGCE student [laughs] coming in e:m has really helped me learn what is expected of you this year and how at some point you will break down and cry but you just need to get past that and get over it*'. HJ was herself invited back as a newly qualified teacher 12 months later to offer advice to the next cohort of PGCE students, sharing her insights and success strategies to the new cohort on their first day of the course, she passed on the emotional affective nature of the training year with a forcefully expressed '*you will cry*'. The sharing of experiences and passing on of knowledge between cohorts begins prior to application, as current students assist with 'Teaching as a Career' talks to undergraduates.

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[3] The 2011-12 cohort of geography PGCE students had tuition fees to pay. Unlike previous cohorts, this was the first cohort not to receive a training bursary.

Themes emerging within the induction interviews include: transitions from student to teacher of geography; the role of additional experiences prior to commencing training; how individuals conceptualise and construct geography, drawing upon their biographical experiences; and the affective expectations of the training year.

Comments and insights from student teachers on the threshold of taking up posts as teachers of geography

Within this section insights and comments are shared from the interviews with selected pairs of student teachers on the last university day of their PGCE course. The emotional journey of the PGCE training course that the students in the earlier section anticipated as 'intense' in the induction phase (see pages 132 and 146) ended for the students interviewed on the last day of their course with a less intense, individualised enrichment phase. For the final 16 days of school-based training the student teachers had some flexibility in mapping out how they would use their 16 days. This period of time was considered 'relaxing' by HM on the last day of his 2008-9 PGCE course.

HM and VH

> *HM E:m cool It's been a good week. It has been relaxing, but at the same time I've still been doing work completing my enrichment phase, I took it upon myself to take the position of still actually teaching them on near enough a full time table which I thought was good for me it meant I got more practice of doing a full timetable ready for September so it was good [draws breath] but it has been its been a hard year, no messing the PGCE is a hard year. But the last week you know it's been enjoyable to see myself putting into practice the skills that I have learnt and just actually teaching and knowing I can be an effective teacher if you like, it has been good I have enjoyed it yeh (2008-9).*

'Actual' or 'proper' teaching

The phrase 'actually' teaching is interesting. Student teachers appear to hold a view of 'actual', 'proper' teaching. This may be the formal role that attracted them to the profession, one that they had witnessed for many years as a pupil. The public image of the traditional teacher has a strong influence over the student teachers. However, there appears to be a degree of paradox for these geography students, who represented and referred, within their life history drawings and interviews, to highly valued engagements with field trips, travels and non-formal learning situations. Yet during the PGCE course some students expressed concern that they might be taken away from 'actual' teaching, referring to formal classroom situations. This concern was also expressed in the induction phase interview by NJ a year later.

> *NJ the one thing that does worry me a little is the same the other people have been at School X is that we are not actually going to get to teach a formal lesson as everybody else is during the induction phase I know a couple of people I think you are teaching two aren't you? Whereas it's just a little bit it would be a nice kind of settling your nerves having taught a proper lesson that you have done a lesson that you have prepared before going in but the way it has worked out with School X it just hasn't quite fit in erm*

It appears therefore that the perceived demands of classroom teaching eventually take priority over more open-ended or informal learning opportunities.

The relational practice of teaching with the support from peers was noted by VH as she reflected upon the PGCE year (2009).

> *VH what has been really nice and what I have missed is seeing everyone on the course it has been nice to meet back with my*

peers, have discussions about what everyone has been doing, seeing everyone and getting their opinion on what you have been doing as well.

The paperwork and administrative aspect of the teaching role was reflected upon, seen as a necessary chore by those students who had had prior employment.

HM yeh forms to fill in like you've got forms [VH yeh] like the business end of the year, forms and do everything

VH   yeh the volume of paperwork has been crazy this week you [laughs]

HM   nitty gritty stuff [VH yeh] you have just got to do it [VH yeh]

For these two students prior work experience was reflectively viewed as positive preparation for their teaching career, providing knowledge as well as ethical practices.

VH e:m my experience from the job I used to do the amount of policy I knew about and the ins and outs, I knew the structure of a school, I knew what diplomas were about so that helped me with my policy background, everyone was like how do you know this stuff well I did it for a year, I worked with central government for a year so I had to know about it, so it gave me that edge in terms of already knowing what value added was, because I had to assess value added for schools and things like that as part of the programmes I analysed [draws breath] so it was, just having that background policy knowledge I think helped me and I was also a classroom assistant for 6 months e:m during my degree which was a bit of a while ago now but e:m that helped me in terms of again knowing how to deal with pupils and how to have a relationship with pupils

HM e:m like VH I was a TA like for my last year at uni so. That I think it must have been beneficial for me before I started my PGCE year I think it probably was one of the main reason why I got onto the PGCE course as well because you have to have that initial experience otherwise it is really hard to get onto a PGCE course so, yeh knowing the structure of a school e:m how a school works you know e:m even when you are a TA you are observing how a teacher works e:m what she or he might include in their lesson and so just having that knowledge. And in terms of like work ethic because as well like, just being able to cope with the pressure and everything. I did 2 years in army before I came e:m yeh that was something really different for me in you do have, you are deprived of sleep like you are put through your paces sort of thing I'm not saying the PGCE course is like the army and that but [HV yeh] it's a similar vein in terms of like . the amount of pressure you have on you like mental pressure if you like and physical pressure as well it is tiring, a tiring job like, I think that has definitely stood me in good stead before I started the course definitely [whispers definitely]

For the above students, their prior work experiences had equipped them to cope with many of the anticipated challenges of teaching, whether administrative, physical or emotional.

Transitions

The transition to employment is a common theme in the exit interviews held on the last day of the PGCE course. Terms such as 'surreal' are used to describe how they are feeling. Awareness that they are part way on a learning journey, ready to take the next step as a newly qualified teacher was explored during the interview: 'I am ready'; 'I think I am ready'; 'I feel prepared'. However, even though HM had joined the PGCE course with prior valuable experience, he experienced emotional crunch

points during the intense training year, and reflected upon these during the interview.

> *HM you (referring to tutor/researcher) know how I felt like before Xmas, I didn't feel too great, I didn't think I'd get to the end and now that I am here I just feel more relaxed about everything I feel . fairly good*

In response to the question I posed as research tutor, asking 'So can you sum up what you've learnt this year?', both students audibly draw breath indicating the enormity of their answers. Their views seem to come from deep within their bodies.

> *VH what I haven't about teaching this year yeh I think the amount the change that I have gone through in terms of being a teacher has been absolutely immense, if we were to watch those videos back from when we filmed [HM murmurs agreement] at the beginning of year, I think the change would be absolutely astonishing for some people more than others on the course yeh definitely.*

Becoming a teacher via a PGCE route provides students with peers to share their learning journey and to offer bench-marks to compare their own progress against, alongside bench-marks in school contexts with other student teachers, newly qualified teachers and their more experienced mentors and Heads of Geography. As Taylor highlights: '… each individual is situated within a complex set of nested and intersecting relational groups, within and outside the school context' (2011:1037).

IK and BB

IK and BB were interviewed on the last day of their course in 2011. The transition from student teacher to newly qualified teacher was also a theme running through this interview.

S Do you feel ready for your first job?

.

BB yes (whispers) I do

.

IK Terrified but yeh I think I am ready

On the threshold of commencing her first teaching post, IK said she was 'terrified', and BB whispered her answer. The enormity of the transition into the unknown is very evident. The discussion continued and they shared and considered their knowledge of the contexts they would be working in. Before reading extracts from the interview transcript, I have included their life representations, which they created at the start of the PGCE year.
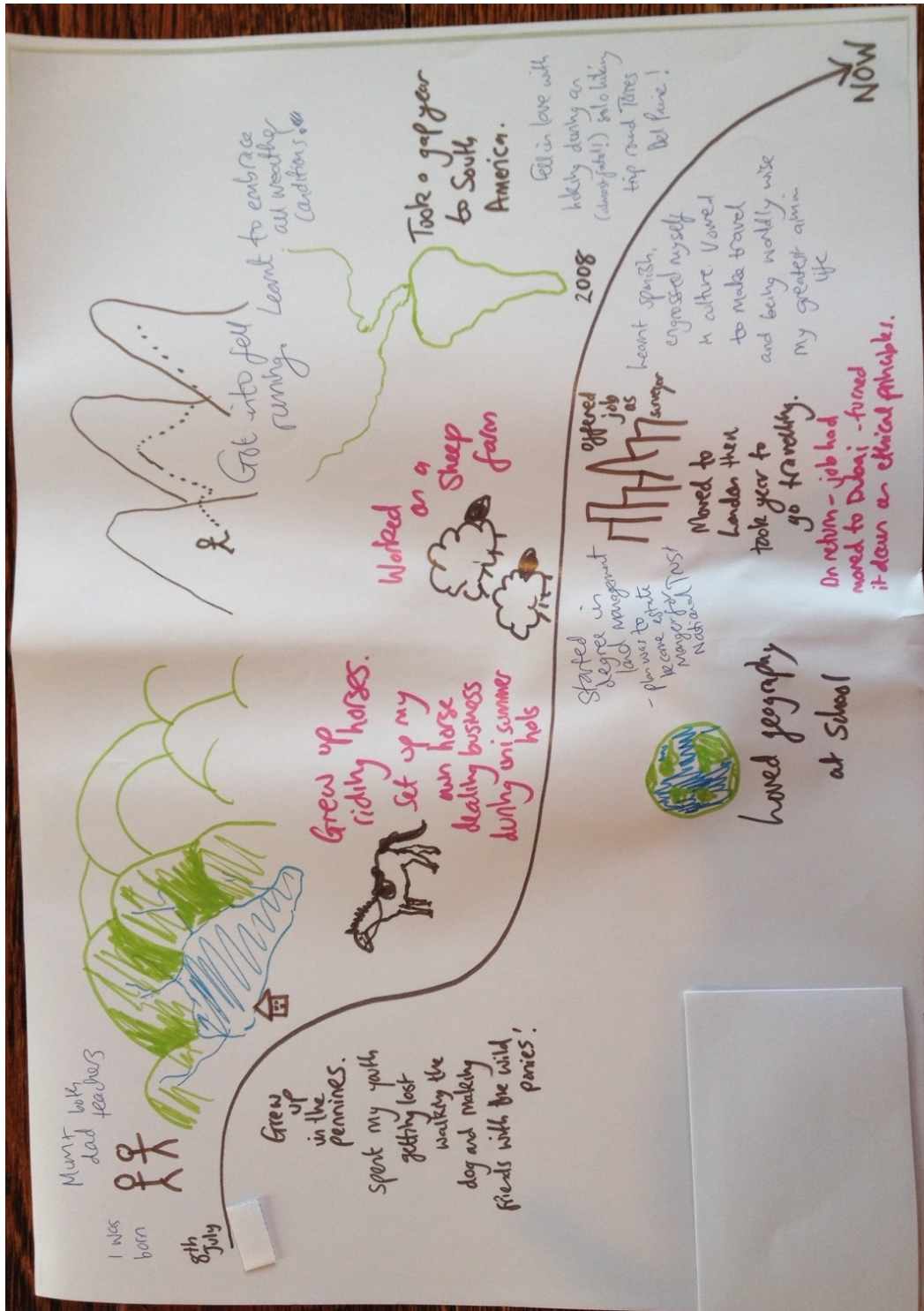
Figure 13: Life representation IK
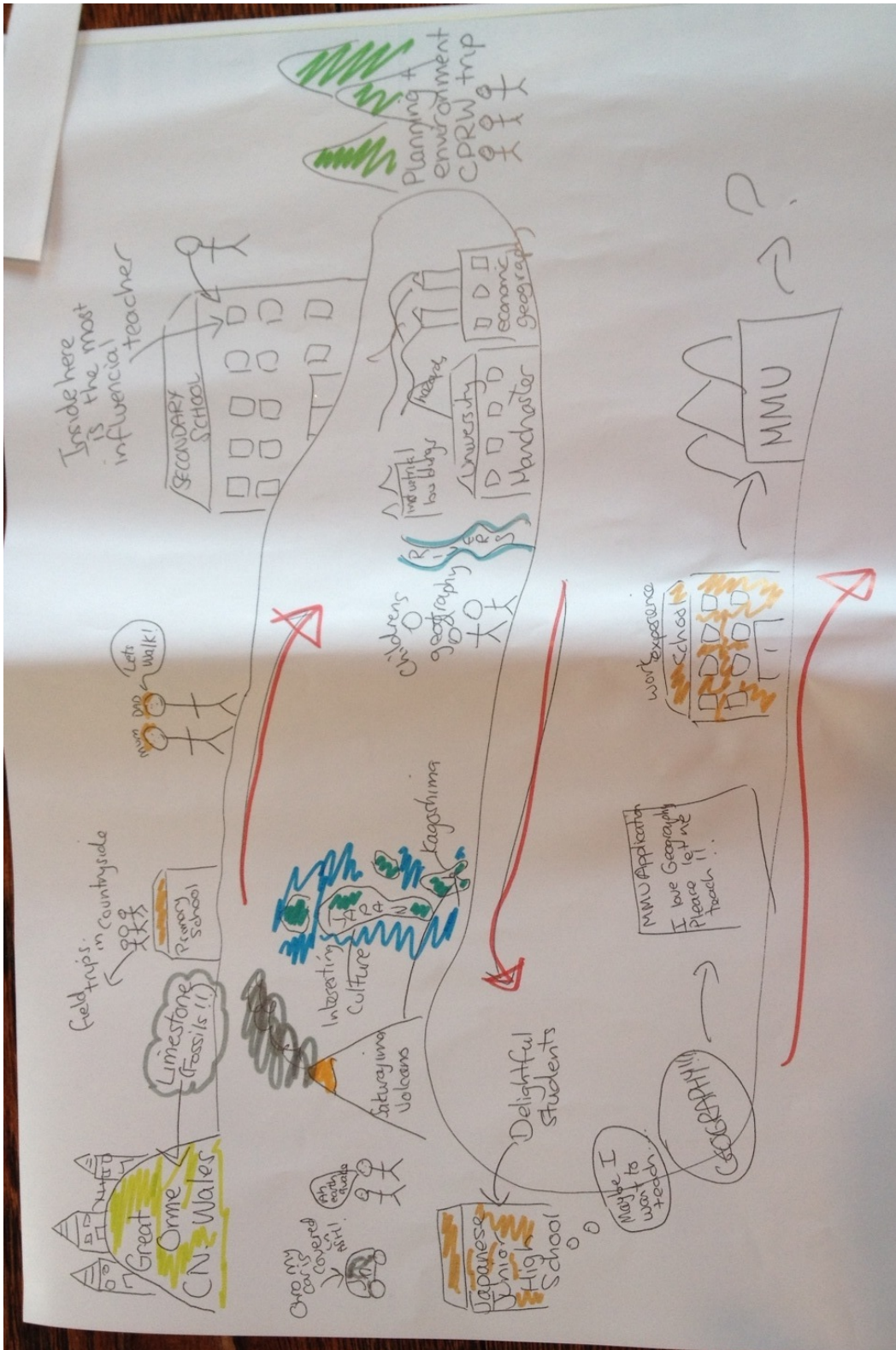
Figure 14: Life representation BB

For both BB and IK, the perceived ease or difficulty of the transition was related to their own familiarity with the locality in which they would be teaching, and their knowledge of the children's geographical and social environment.

BB I think I am quite lucky because it is quite close to where I live I grew up in North Wales and I have lived in Manchester and the school is in the middle. Where they go on fieldtrips and what they learn about is what I learnt about when I was in school so I think it is not too difficult for me if the school was in London it would have been a huge challenge

BB   and it also depends where the pupils come from I am not sure to be honest where they come from because mine is at a Church of England and Catholic faith school so I imagine the catchment area is quite big my first placement was in [school] they were from [town] so you couldn't really do your walk to school because (IK Oh yeh), or do your local area because some were from city centre Manchester and some were from [town]

BB   Look at the school, I mean if your school is, has a whole scheme of work on Our Local Area then crossing the River Mersey and I've done it many times before and I'd probably go and do it if I am going to be teaching about it (IK Yeh) it's not even necessary the local area it's just what that school chooses to teach about, they teach about [North Wales town] anyway (unclear) (IK laughs) don't worry about going there if I had never been there before I'd be happy to go there and

IK e:m yeh I have found [school] situation it's not e:m e:m yeh its near where I am from so e:m I know a bit about it e:m got river Mersey could use that the situation is not that difficult

Familiarity with local geography

Familiarity with the local area of their first post is significant in the above extracts. The types of local knowledge of the school that may be useful in their geography teaching role is explored further during the interview.

IK Yeh if you were moving somewhere completely new you have no idea I did find that when you are doing something specific (BB e:m) things in my Block B [second] placement sort of teaching about the walk to school and the kids are going 'Aw Miss is the A34 going that way', and I go 'I don't know' that is difficult (BB e:m) and you should know you should know the geography you should know where it is on the map

IK Yeh I think talking to local people if you can, I don't know who it was saying, Oh it was a chap at my Block B school who was advising for interviews to go to the local area, catch a shopkeeper, ask what the kids are like, ask what they know just chat to people that have time for you yeh (BB murmurs agreement) that know more about the area than you because, rather than going around trying to find a little bit yourself someone else is going to tell you (BB yeh definitely)

IK Yeh because when it is your real job you take more time out to learn about the geography when you are on a placement you are not going to spend ages going wandering round the local area chatting to local shop keepers asking about things

During the above interview the two students explored the issue of familiarity with the school locality. The implicit assumption is if you are

familiar with a locality then you can teach about that locality. They assume a position of confidence that they can teach about the locality. A school ethos seems irrelevant during this interview. The issue of familiarity is more complicated than simply knowing a local area as an outsider or insider. There seems to be some recognition that you do not really know a place until you have stepped into a place and spoken to people. Talking to children rather than adults about their experiences of the locality is not mentioned until later in the interview (see next section).

Silencing as a survival strategy

The desire on the part of the interviewees to create safe learning geographical classrooms is troubled with awareness of social inequalities linked to place attachments and access to travel beyond the locality.

> *IK It would be nice to bring in the children's own, if they want to share their (BB yeh definitely) maybe where they have come from, where they have been on holiday, where the family lives stuff like that but then it is a bit hit and miss because you do not want to ask them to share that if they are worried about what the white kids (whispered) in the class are thinking about their grandma lives in India (unclear) school its 50:50*

> *BB My Block B was 70-80 % ethnic minority (IK murmurs agreement) and I never really had, if I asked anyone to share anything they would all put their hands up (IK yeh). When I kind of first approached it, I did let's write in our books so you don't have to share it with anyone else you don't have to put place names (IK that's a good one) and I said who wants to share and they all put their hands up and then I had 25 pupils come to the front and share but there wasn't pressure for someone who didn't want to, and one boy had just written like went on holiday to Asia and I never asked him why he had put just Asia I just left it (IK*

murmurs agreement) that was up to him, I think he was from
Bangladesh and maybe he didn't want to say it (IK yeh) but they can
still

IK   Yeh I guess its providing enough scaffolding so they
can give us much as they want but they don't have to but they can
still participate in the lesson while doing (BB murmurs agreement)
Yeh

BB   I think in that
lesson it was more of the pupils who were white from Manchester
that were like I am from [location] I've only lived here, not been
anywhere else who, had the opposite problem from what you might
expect (IK murmurs agreement) from a school

References to ethnicity were sensitively expressed and at times
whispered. The interviewees' own ethnicity was not referred to or drawn
upon during the interview; they may have been sub-consciously silencing
aspects of their own ethnicity. They may not have considered the impact
of their silencing upon the multi-cultural classrooms they have
experienced. The two respondents were white, and had attended schools
whose intake was predominately white British. In the above extracts we
see the interviewees grappling with some of the complexities of inviting
pupils to share personal experiences.

Boundaries between university and school geographies

Both students (IK and BB) were successful learners evidenced by their
2.1 degrees. BB had studied for a BA in Geography, whereas IK had
specialized in a BSc in Land Management.

IK before I did the course because I hadn't got a geography degree I
did a [name] university module in geography which was really to e:m

about deep geography concepts which I think is where I got my ideas from which is kind of just grown, not changed

BB pondered the boundary between the university discipline and school geography.

*BB when I was in university I studied different kinds of things like the geography of health the social construction of health and the things like that and I think maybe now after having been in university I try to take that kind of thing into the classroom I do try and make pupils think about is it really like that, as you were saying about Iraq is there like that, but I think maybe teachers who are much older maybe don't take that into their teaching so to move from A level geography where you have 2 line questions to go to write thousands and thousands of words of essays where you have to be critical I don't think there is much being critical [agreement from IK] in school geography and university geography is **all about** thinking critically.*

These interviewees seem to agree therefore that there is a loss of criticality and of intellectual engagement in school geography, compared with the discipline at university level.

Following an earlier overview of the empirical data employing Bell's jigsaw framework, I drew upon the induction interviews with student teachers exploring some of the key issues and insights shared during the early stage of their journeys to becoming teachers. The section above has focused upon the insights and themes from the interviews held on the last day of the PGCE course (2009-12), for the student teachers on the threshold to becoming a newly qualified teacher. Transition continues to be a significant theme; however, the focus is now upon stepping into the unknown life as a newly qualified teacher. In the next section I look in more detail at emerging themes and questions.

Emerging themes and questions

As the sole researcher, the responsibility for interpreting relies with me; I am aware that I am the filter of the data collected. With analysis of the interview transcripts, I need to go beyond the surface textual data and having unravelled strands introduced in the above section, I need to further analyse the data, and to add my own interpretations. Wolcott suggests interpretation 'as the threshold in thinking and writing "at which the researcher transcends factual data and cautious analysis and begins to probe into what is to be made of them"' (Wolcott, 1994:36 quoted in Coffey and Atkinson, 1996:9). His comment about transcending the data sits uneasily with me, as it links to peering over others, a trace of colonial power, and the often un-acknowledged power of researchers. However, Wolcott's words remind me to take care of my empirical data, and that the responsibility for the analysis lies with me.

The formation of a group identity

During the September 2011 Induction interview the PGCE peer group was referenced regularly by the students as a benchmark, a reference point, as well as providing an opportunity to share their awareness of a developing group identity. The group identity was further bounded and enhanced by their use of 'binary oppositions' (see MacLure, 2003:10); for example, an insider view of the group is shared early on within interviews.

> HJ *I feel that I know this group of students that I am with now inside out and I am quite happy to go to them if I have got any troubles any concerns **So can** you help me **please?** [laughs] [LS laughs} so I think the icebreakers and the fieldtrip have been . good cos you have just been shoved in a room and said right you have got to get to know each other because you are spending your time with these students for the next 9, 10 months*

The PGCE group was described as consisting of particular 'kinds of people' (HJ and LS), within which members bring a diversity of life experience: some have come straight from learning contexts, i.e., university, whereas others within the group have held non-teaching professional employment roles. The two interviewees in September 2011 represented these two entry points onto the course. The similarities that cement the 2011-12 group are expressed as those who 'really want to teach'. The financial context for this cohort – as no longer in receipt of bursaries - is used to highlight that student teachers today within this grouping have not chosen to teach as 'an easy option'.

> *LS Yeh or what kinds of people follow the teaching career e:m because I remember you saying you had noticed a change in the last few years , from people coming straight out of uni to more people with work experience coming through now e:m the people I think now who are doing it are the ones who want to be doing it rather than doing it as a [HJ Yeh] easy option [HJ financial incentives] yeh*

> *HJ   taken away from us [laughs] so you have to really want to be a teacher now*

> *LS   Yeh it's not just , people coming through who have nothing else to do I'll just give it a go especially if it is going to cost people a lot of money, cos I've taken a big gamble and a big risk because a lot of my colleagues said could you , you are very brave coming out of work e:m especially now the bursaries have gone its now fund it, I'm just going to have to see, it's what I want to do that much that I will overcome the funding issue, money is not, at the end of the day I'll have the rest of my life to pay it back*

There is an assumption that previous cohorts may have included others who were trying out the career without the 'necessary' conviction that each member of the 2011-12 group brings. HJ and LS discuss teaching

as a profession at some length. They note it is a profession that involves a deliberate choice rather than other jobs and careers that one might 'fall' into. To change professions, to 'tear' away from another profession is risky. LS terms it 'a big gamble', and within the PGCE group there are those who have taken such a gamble, demonstrating their determination to be a teacher. Unnamed 'Others' outside the group may have considered teaching as a career, yet have 'failed' to take such an immense step away from their current position to become a student teacher. Whereas in these accounts is a kind of "heroic" narrative, therefore, of geography teaching as a valuable or a virtuous choice of profession. By implication, those who have chosen this route are united by a common bond.

After just a few days on the course a schism may be identified between students and their friends who remain outside this new group, distanced by their brief yet significant immersion within educational discourse and some shared experiences. LS expressed it thus:

> *Yeh maybe one thing I have enjoyed learning about was on the field trip the kinda filler activities e:m the magic stick[4] I am actually going to try that on my friends because they all think I am mad when I told them about it [laughs]*

The students considered relational aspects of the profession. As student teachers they were aware that they were in a pupil/teacher relationship with their tutor and at the same time will be in a teacher/pupil relationship with the classes they will be timetabled to teach. An awareness that teachers can learn from their pupils, and can act upon such feedback to enhance the next learning encounters, is hinted at by HJ.

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[4] The Magic Stick is an activity in which a light stick (approximately 120cm long) is placed on the forefingers of a group of students. The tutor asks the students to keep their fingers in contact with the stick at all times. The aim is to lower the stick to the ground. As soon as the teacher lets go of the stick it 'magically' rises, as students unconsciously push the stick upwards.

HJ how you (the tutor) can either make it better or more relevant almost getting your feedback from what you think has worked well off of us does that make sense [laughs] so what we think has worked well might not be what you thought worked well so it is kinda gauging because we are pupils gauging the pupils

The theory-practice divide

Two key elements of a university-based PGCE route into teaching, theory and practice were viewed unequally by the student teachers. In the following dialogic encounter between HJ and LS, we get a glimpse of their views about the two aspects of their programme – university-based study and placement in schools during the induction phase of the course.

HJ We have learnt that many techniques that I think you can't teach us any more without letting us put them into practice or else we, it's just going to be information overload we need to work out what we, it is for us and the groups of pupils we are working with

LS   yeh because we can talk and talk about theory for weeks and weeks and months and months and just but we will have forgotten everything I think it is a good idea teach a little bit, try it out, teach a bit more, try it out [HJ yeh] yeh well that worked, that didn't , that did well I mean

HJ
  related theory to the actual learning and teaching [LS agrees]

LS   You can see it in action [HJ yeh]

HJ You can see what works

The use of 'actual', 'the actual learning and teaching', highlight an imbalance in which students value the classroom-based components of the PGCE course above the 'talk about theory' in the university sessions. As noted in a previous section, the use of the word 'actual' makes a prioritising of the immediacy and ultimately the reality of classroom practice. It is the favoured term in a 'binary opposition'.

The merits of Geography as a school subject

Geography, the discipline and the skills of a geographer are viewed very favourably over other subjects. This is to be expected from a route into teaching that selects via subject preference, trains within subject groupings and provides teaching experience focused on timetabled classes of the school subject, leading to job adverts to teach a particular subject. However, the discourse in the interviewees goes beyond a biased preference for geography, to a view of geography as 'all seeing'.

> *HJ*
>
> *yeh so I also think it is good if you take them from an inner city school and you just take them round the corner because some of them will have never seen what's half a mile away because their route to school is from home to school and that is just it [LS Ok] it is good to also show them that the area changes drastically within a couple of meters or it can do. Like that fieldtrip we did yesterday when we went to MERCI building, is that how you say it?*

> *LS   yeh you can incorporate that idea into your lessons you can, you can e:m once you have gathered the local knowledge of what you think it is then you can start to, the children start to thinking how much geography can you see or think of in your local area as part of a lesson and I can realise that it is actually all around them [HJ agrees] and is very accessible to them and like have that as one of your lessons out of the*

classroom window and go out and have a look at separate areas
come back with ideas and then you can build from that basic
knowledge of what they can see and explain to them why

In these extracts the school subject and academic discipline of geography has the potential to dissolve away blinkers (those learned routines that reduce the everyday familiar geographical environmental backdrop to the shadows of our consciousness) and to refresh our seeing and engaging with our surroundings. As LS notes, teachers need to be aware of what the pupils 'can see'. An assumption, a binary opposition emerges from the discourse of those who can geographically see what is around them, who engage in geographical 'all seeing', and others who 'never see' beyond a familiar backdrop. Again therefore, the student teachers are constructing a view of geography as a favoured and important subject.

HJ is concerned that she may not see what pupils see. She reflects upon the visual backdrop to everyday life as a child, the daily experience with 'place'. She considers new challenges for herself as a geography teacher leading fieldwork to the familiar, everyday places that she has grown up within, that for her pupils maybe very distant, unfamiliar places. HJ considers how best to respond to pupils queries about her views about their familiar, everyday experienced places, as she reflects upon her role as a professional teacher.

e:m I am I am quite a country bumpkin Manchester is a big city for
me I have only ever come to university here, I have lived over here
and stuff but . I haven't been brought up in the country and living in
the country in a small town you get used to seeing the hills and you
get used to seeing the rivers and you get used to seeing the cows
and stuff but if I was then, put in an inner city school [laughs] then
taking them out on fieldtrips and e:m trying to explain what a hill was
when I have seen it all my life, to or explain what a cow was or what
they are there for etc. I think that would be quite a challenge
because I have taken it for granted that I just see them every day .

*but then if I went into an inner city school and they asked me 'so what do you think about this area Miss?' and I didn't know then I would also be like out of my comfort zone, I don't know the area and I don't know why it is there and I don't know why the school is there and I do not know the surrounding area is like, and if it is my first day and they say 'what do you think of this Miss?", I'd be like e:m well it looks lovely [laughs] but if I don't know the area I am out of my comfort zone almost, which is **good** because it shows I can teach in different schools and I am quite happy to go to different areas, but at the same time it is bad because I'd feel like [LS unclear] I am constantly catching up.*
HJ and LS 2009

The challenges HJ refers to, resonate with TE's (2008) concern:

so the things I naturally make connections with I can see similarities in I am probably going to find difficult to teach that to people because . I haven't had to learn that myself that's something that has come naturally.
TE 2008

The concerns and challenges noted by HJ and TE complicate the notion that geographers can see differently to others, and raises the question whether familiarity can create blinkers to seeing what others might see. During this research study I have regularly returned to my original research proposal, 'Does place matter, does it matter which school or college I place students in to teach geography?' Throughout the research this concern has continued to bother me, particularly when a student teacher is expected to teach familiar, everyday geography that is the day-to-day backdrop to the pupils' lived experience. Considering the geography school topics of urban areas and coasts, would the learning of the pupils be enhanced if they live within the geographical environment? Is the learning of the pupils enhanced if the teacher has lived in and experienced the geographical environmental processes being taught?

Such musing may provide avenues for further research. However, within this study the student teachers have raised questions about teaching 'familiar environments' as they commence their training: for example, HJ, who was concerned about how she should respond to pupils from inner city environments as she labelled herself as a *'country bumpkin'*, worried that she might not *'see'* what pupils saw.

Being observed by others during the training year in a professional teaching role is part of the course. For LS this is a shifting position. In his previous professional role he did not relish being observed. After a few days on the PGCE course, LS talks about the past version of himself, and the present version, and reports that a significant shift has occurred.

> *LS e:m mine was before I started the course e:m in previous life experiences in jobs and things, I've not enjoyed being watched whilst I am working, I hate it, I hate doing evaluations with my manager I used to hate doing, I used to hate doing appointments with other people e:m but with the exercises we have been doing e:m [unclear] it broke down a lot of . I am not so bothered now about someone being there and watching me e:m because it's becoming more and more natural*

> *LS I've learnt a lot about myself on a personal level just in terms of I am more confident than I think I am there's a lot of exercises where we have sat around in a circle, in the past I would have dreaded doing something like that, but I did get the anxieties I used to get when speaking in front of a group of people , well [draws breath] you have kinda broken those down as well, you have made me realise I am a lot more confident than what I thought I was*

It could be argued that awareness of being observed by other adults (surveillance), including class teachers, subject mentors and university tutors, is one level of all-seeing (by others). Being constantly observed by

'them' (others) provides individual feedback on the next steps required in learning to be a teacher as well as encouragement and support.

> *HJ … and hopefully they should have provided you with constructive criticism, they shouldn't just say you were, that was a really bad lesson and then just walk off [laughs] they should at least tell you why and how you can improve it*
> *LS Yeh it's the knowledge of them being there I always thought it put me off but I think it is going to encourage me to . well stand there a bit longer [laughs] instead of running out and breaking down*

Students talk about an expectation from the pupils that in their teaching roles within the classroom and school spaces they will be all-seeing of pupil activities. An ability to 'see-all' LS views as necessary, to be an effective manager of pupils' behaviour.

> *LS mine personally I think is I am going to be a bit unsure as to where I stand in terms of disciplining in the corridors, I don't know if I feel I will have the confidence straight away in that is one of my big challenges I've got to go in that gate, you've got to go in and even if it is not natural to you, you've got to try and do it because if you are the one that walks past and ignores something, they will see you, oh that's the guy who ignored me in the corridor so I can try and get away with that it's trying to exert my authority I think, from that position(whispered position)*

The experience of constantly being observed by other adults and watched by pupils is a common experience for other PGCE students. However, I would suggest that geography PGCE students differ from other PGCE students in their view of the geography discipline and school subject as a lens for all-seeing of spaces and places.

Time

Time is also an important concept within the data as students draw upon their prior experiences and imagine their futures. Additionally, the concept of time resonates within my reflexive approach to analysis. For instance, is my view of time something that can be tamed, captured, polished into transcripts saved within computer memory space, and printed onto A4 sheets and stored physically in plastic wallets within my home office, thus moments of time frozen, reduced to spatial artefacts? As a fan of the 2011 BBC series Frozen Planet, I am reminded of the image of the frozen ocean sending a twisting finger of ice down to the ocean floor and in the split second of impact capturing and freezing any living life form to a frozen, dead pane of ice to peer through at what lives (or did live) on the ocean floor. Does the frozen ice represent my actions, my view of time reduced to spatial artefacts? Am I working with the transcripts as I would with fossils? '… [T]he intellect can never help us reach what is essential because it kills and fragments all that it touches' (Gross, 1981 quoted in Massey, 2005:24): am I guilty of this?

In the following extract IK considers time in reference to the enrichment phase of the PGCE course, in which individual students have some choices in how to use their final 16 days of school-based training:

> *I did find it useful having the extra time because I needed to extend teaching (draws breath) I don't think it was because that I wasn't . like proficient it was more extra evidence because I hadn't done much teaching at Key Stage 3 so I had those two weeks extra that was necessary e:m and the other time did seem a little bit like trying to find things to do which weren't particularly – [unclear] e:m yeh I probably did think it was probably a bit long for somebody [unclear] cos it seemed long for me and I had the extra 2 weeks teaching e:m*

IK grapples with the notion of time, as she considers 14 days as 'necessary' and 2 days as 'a bit long'. The comparison with 'somebody' links to the earlier discussion about a group identity. HM introduces a longer view of time with reference to:

> *there's two stages in life when you go through like big change like you go through a massive change at about 12 , 13 like adolescence, I think that early twenties as well when you are finishing your degree and like going into a new course or job or something. I feel like I've become like it sounds cheesy but a proper young man sort of thing like e:m I've really gone through like change, process of change and I have become someone new so yeh the whole teaching thing.*

As I commenced this study, the concept of time was at best ignored. As with the concept space, I came to the stage whereby I needed to consider my own understandings. Both spatial and temporal dimensions provide individuals with opportunities and possibilities, as well as constraints. We each age over a period of time within our physical, spatial body. My view is that we each have a unique trajectory through time and space. I am not referring to linear time, or clock-time, instead a 'multiple, heterogeneous and uneven … TimeSpace' (May and Thrift, 2001:5). As May and Thrift note, social time (as opposed to clock time) is now recognised as 'varying both within and between societies and individuals and according to social position' (2001:2). Pratt notes: 'At the same time, experiences from lots of places and temporalities jostle in specific places' (Pratt, 2008:73). The personally intense experience of interviewing students and pupils forced me to realise that I am rarely fully in the present. Furthermore, my experience within the interviews sharing a temporal and spatial experience was always going to be different to that of the students and pupils.

Reflections, the active engagement with prior thoughts and experiences, is valued and encouraged during the PGCE course. Such reflexive action, I suggest, constitutes an active engagement with time. As demonstrated

in the interview extracts, there were moments when individual students made new connections, their active reflection was shared. The interview became a process, a learning experience for each of the three trajectories present (interviewer and interviewees). Furthermore, the individual student teachers were imagining individual futures as they talked about what might happen when they get to their new school, as well as reflecting and talking about their past. The active listening in the present moment to another's story-so-far resulted in murmurs of agreement, validating shared common experiences, as well as opportunities to share different experiences and in some situations to compare and contrast experiences. The TimeSpace of each interview I am arguing provided differing, unique opportunities for all three participants to gain new understandings.

The advantages and disadvantages of sharing personal experiences

I have been questioning who benefits from sharing within an interview, a pupil focus group, or within a learning context (PGCE course or a school classroom). Being on a shared learning journey with peers was commented on positively by the PGCE students, and may reflect their decision to choose this particular route into teaching in England. Do student teachers benefit and learn from the voiced shared experiences of their peers during university sessions, hearing others sharing first person experience which the rest of the group have not experienced?

I am a reflexive researcher, and during the two-week period of pupil focus group sessions conducted in 2009, my unease was expressed within research journal entries. I was concerned that by sharing prior personal experiences, social and economic inequalities could be highlighted and act as a barrier to learning for individual pupils. MacLure reminds us that pupils by the time they are at secondary school have learnt what is considered acceptable to share (MacLure, 2003). Society shapes classroom discourse; pupils can be reluctant to share ideas and

information that are not commonly shared by their peers As an adolescent going through immense physical and hormonal changes, they are unlikely to want the spotlight within the classroom drawn to themselves, highlighting difference to the norm. Is this the case within PGCE university sessions, as students develop into professional teachers? Can inequalities in training experiences be minimised by sharing? This concern will be visited later.

The '*stories-so-far'* trajectories (Massey, 2005:9) through space and place were captured on A3 sheets of paper at the start of the PGCE year in response to the questions 'Why are you here? Why are you spatially in this classroom on this Campus, at this moment in time embarking on a PGCE course? Why? What experiences have been pivotal in you sitting in this room ready to train as a geography teacher?'

Previous experience

- Have done lots of youth work
- Worked in a preschool in Brazil which I enjoyed but I prefer youth, I think.
- Love travelling + learning about different countries
- Did RGS ambassador scheme + took a few lessons on returning from Brazil so I know I like teaching

Personality / character

- Need a job that is varied + interesting in which I interact with more than excel
- Enjoy learning (+ gen always changing)
- Want a challenge
- Independent but also a people person so would enjoy & being creative + planning but also then interacting with pupils / staff
- Like to challenge others / introduce people to new things
- PGCE - guidance + reflection = critical + improving (teaching)

Figure 15: Life representation DE
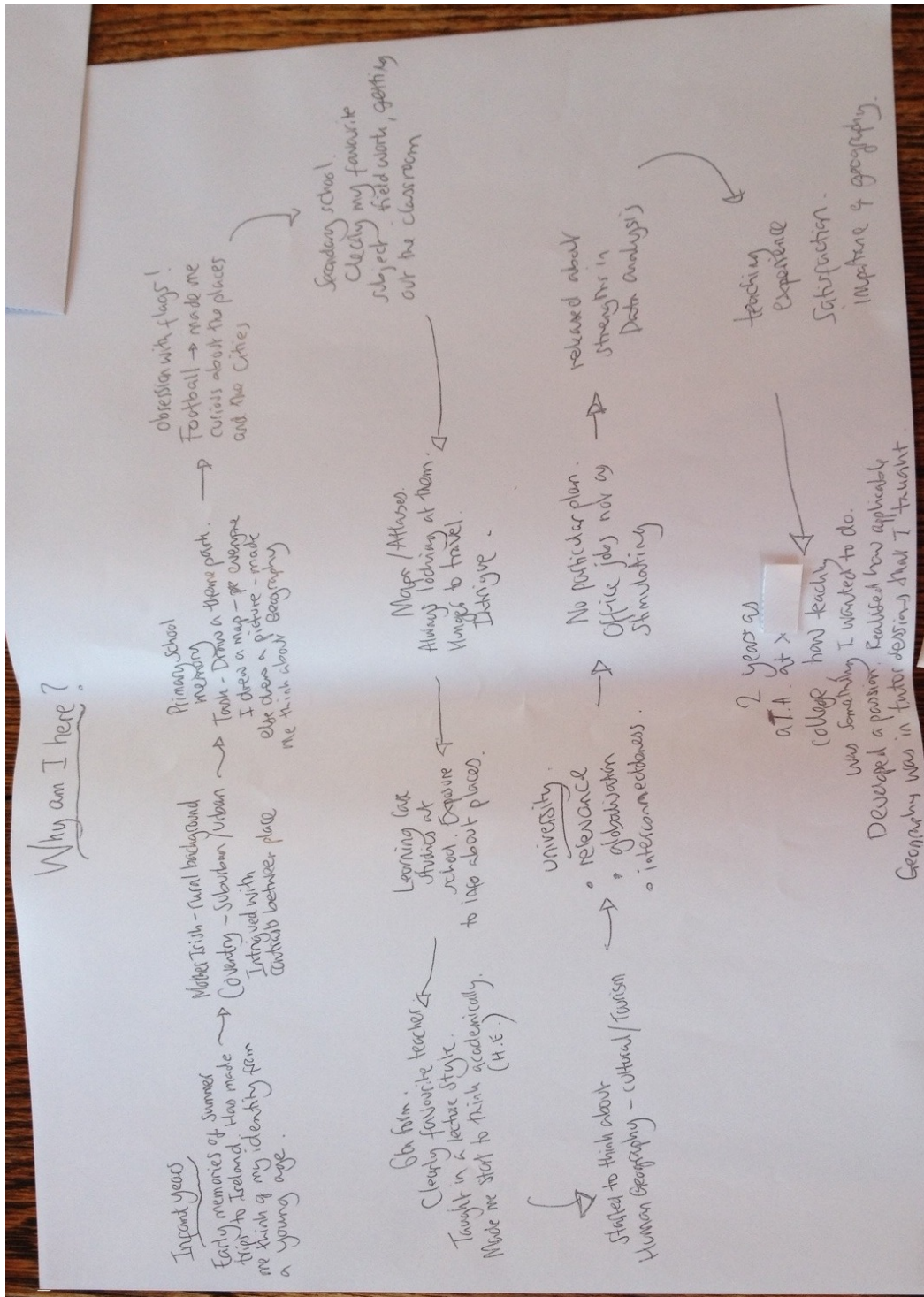
Figure 16: Life representation CL

Each year, the university classroom was quiet whilst individuals pondered why they were seated in an unfamiliar room with an (as yet) unfamiliar group of students. A visual and content analysis (see Rose, 2007) of the life representations was carried out. The analysis highlighted that each

cohort of PGCE students had experience of a vast range of countries across all continents (except Antarctica), prior to commencing the PGCE. Thus, student teachers bring a wealth of knowledge experienced first-hand to the PGCE course and school geography. However, as I have briefly noted, few have the opportunity to enhance school curricula with these experiences. I will return to a consideration of the narrowing effects of school curricula later.

The intensity of the training year

I have noted earlier that 'intense' was frequently used by the student teachers when describing the PGCE training year. Educators need to explore this perception and for many students their reality. Why is the PGCE so intense? Does it need to be? This case study research has required me to question 'Am I inadvertently making their training experience *so intense*? Is it part of my identity to always be busy, busy, busy? Have I become institutionalised into a time-management, frenzied approach. Am I afraid of "wasting time"?'

I include a vignette from beyond the research study to problematise time within the teaching profession. Whilst preparing a teaching session entitled 'Unpicking the concept of time' for a different group of students (MA in Urban Education students), an email appeared in my inbox at work advertising a time management course: 'We have places on a Time Management Course running all day on Thursday 8th March. Open to ANY staff who wish to gain an awareness of time management issues and/or build on their existing skills and practices'. This 'timely' email (7 February 2012) provided an interesting icebreaker activity for my MA students, all professional experienced teachers, including senior managers, as they engaged with this piece of text, tasked with unpicking inherent messages. Their first response was that they needed such a course. Sharing their own life experiences from the preceding 24 hours raised many issues: multi-tasking, responsibility for others' management

of time, embodying time, comparing own use of time with others, squeezing time, free time, etc. One senior school manager commented that just as she went to sit down on a chair for the first time in a hectic day, guilt overtook her as another senior manager entered the room. Furthermore, none of the MA students had taken time out during the school day to eat as a single activity. Moreover, if they noted others taking time-out at lunchtime, they were viewed unfavourably. These experienced teachers expected that others should also be multi-tasking. A binary opposition emerged in their discussion (see MacLure, 2003). Busy people were one group; 'other' people were the group with 'free' time. The experienced teachers all placed themselves within the busy group, those that multi-task, who eat on the go, who squeeze the maximum into time. Such multi-tasking, regularly practiced, sets an impossibly high level of practice, to be achieved by the student teacher in order to gain professional acceptance. As suggested by Edensor:

> Small everyday arrangements merge the local with the national through serialisation and the persistence of identifiable patterns over time underpins a common sense that this is how things are and this is how we do things. There is thus an interweaving of conscious and unreflexive thought that typifies everyday practice and communication. Most actions are habitually (re-)enacted without reflection, but occasionally they are subject to communal surveillance or self-monitoring to ensure consistency and the upholding of values and practical norms. (2006:529)

Temporal demands on practitioners

I have concerns about multi-tasking when viewed by experienced practitioners and senior managers as an educational necessity and a sign of their commitment to doing the best for their pupils. Furthermore, deeper reflections within the dialogic discussion provided examples of multi-tasking in which the interests of pupils were secondary, and

communication with pupils was by habitual body language and set phrases. Moreover, this group of experienced teachers admitted that on occasions they had not listened to the pupils, responding instead with set phrases. This vignette from outside the research study has been included as it raises issues. What habitual practices are being modelled to the next generation of teachers? More worryingly, what impact does this have on the pupils? Have teachers become too busy? Is multi-tasking more important than caring?

Molz, referring to The Amazing Race, a TV programme encouraging groups to rush across the planet, shared one participant's view: 'I think the expectation is that if you're …. (on a PGCE course?) that it is very fast paced. That everyone is out of breath, that you are tired' (Downie, 2007 quoted in 2009:275). The assumption is that this is what is to be expected, and the peer pressure supports and promotes an ever more frantic pace. Is this happening within education? Is this part of the reason why excellent newly qualified and experienced teachers leave the profession?

Figures presented at the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) annual conference in 2015 state that 'the number who complete their training but never enter the classroom has tripled in six years - from 3,600 in 2006 to 10,800 in 2011' (Garner, 2015). According to a newspaper report of the conference, Dr Mary Bousted, the 2015 general secretary of the ATL, stated that newly qualified teachers 'learn as they work with exhausted and stressed colleagues that teaching has become a profession which is incompatible with a normal life' (Garner, 2015). The ATL 2015 conference report worryingly comments that 'An ATL Future survey on how attractive our new entrants are finding the profession highlighted significant workload pressures and issues around burnout, work-life balance and bullying staffroom environments, all fuelled by unrealistic and unsubstantiated demands for results' (ATL, 2015:5).

How can educationalists reduce the intensity of the training year and the pressure to squeeze more into time? Work-life balance was on the educational agenda at the start of the research period back in 2008; however, by 2012 it was rarely mentioned. In an austerity climate of a potential '*double dip*' recession, with media highlighting the loss of public sector jobs, high unemployment and uncertainty, the pressure is on individuals to keep jobs, and if necessary to take on more responsibilities and tasks.

The use of additional experiences prior to the PGCE course was particularly valued by VH and HM for managing their work-life balance. This raises questions as to what kinds of additional experiences assist in the preparation to becoming a teacher? Is it more beneficial to have had experiences as a classroom support worker rather than experience of an 'intense' job in another field?

> *VH yeh I think actually thinking about it now I think, having worked for and in such an intense job for a year before I started, similar to HM it helped me address my work life balance, where as some people working to 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning, I could manage my work load, that I worked until a certain time at night and then I stopped and made sure I had my own time, and I think doing a job enabled me to do that. I think if I'd come straight from university I'd would have been working into the night [HM murmurs agreement] as some people have but I have managed my time effectively.*

Over the period of the research only three students withdrew from the PGCE course. One, in 2008, cited a lack of work-life balance as a reason to leave the course. In 2010 the withdrawing student who had been a TA for two years prior cited his re-engagement with the academic subject as a reason to leave (becoming a surveyor). And in 2011 the withdrawing student talked about her busy brain that was full of questions. However, since the research period (2012 to 2014) all geography students who enrolled have successfully completed their PGCE course.

Present in the classroom?

As a teacher (1983-) I am now aware that I have developed a 'skill'(?) of rarely being fully present at a particular moment in time; instead, I am constantly flitting between my professional responsibilities in the very near and distant futures and also reflecting and evaluating past actions, whilst carrying out my present roles and responsibilities. Teachers in the early phase of their training become inducted into a cycle of plan, teach, assess, evaluate, plan… This ongoing cycle of thinking, facilitating and planning leads to a very 'busy' brain. This *busyness* of the teacher's brain asking questions of the past experiences, whilst facilitating present experiences and planning for future classroom experiences was cited by one student during her exit from the PGCE interview as she withdrew from the course in October 2011; she said her brain was so full of on-going questions. Is this one of the factors affecting students in particular their lack of sleep, an inability to switch their brains from full teacher mode to relaxing? Is this a work life balancing skill for a student teacher to develop? Can ITE courses assist further?

> HM *Yeh cos you might, I couldn't sleep for about the first 4 months cos you are, minds always working [VH laughs] At the start of the course your mind [VH overlaps] is always thinking [VH laughs] you are always thinking about what you have got to do for tomorrow, your lessons cos when you first start the course your lesson planning is not as efficient as it is in Block B you know, you are thinking how am I going to plan that, it takes you ages to plan a lesson, you think I've got to do something new and different your mind is always working, that like really messed up my sleep pattern, I wasn't sleeping really well, sleep and the PGCE course it's not good for you.*
> HM and VH June 2009

In the following extract OT reflects back on his early teaching experiences to his peers on the course; he mentions his present abilities, and ponders on future experiences.

> *OT I think the . the small thing and big thing for me personally is standing in front I didn't feel I could stand in front of a class and teach kids and when I did that teaching session when e:r there was like groups of 3 and I wasn't particularly e:m happy with that at all I was like I went back to the video cam and it was shocking e:m I was doing this all the time doing this it was good to see that e:r so from now on where I am at now I have obviously improved quite a lot to be able to do that so I am pleased with that and also the fact that you sort of learn new things along the way like in one classroom doing the 1,2,3 technique works quite a lot then you know and in the beginning you thought that would work everywhere and now you know that in another school it may not work at all so these kinds of things gaining experience to know that all schools are different each class is different each pupil is different that's quite a good one I think*
> OT June 2010

Student teachers arrive on the PGCE eager yet anxious about stepping into actual classrooms and teaching groups of 30 pupils. This early concern and the support provided within PGCE courses deserves further investigation, as this early engagement with resolving and managing tensions provides a foundation and framework for future situations in the individual's professional life.

I opened up the question of what prior experiences are useful for the PGCE course to my GTE (Geography Teacher Educator) peers (Jan 2012) during a conference session. Responses included prior work as a field studies tutor, classroom assistant and being in the army. I shared the experience of HM who had been in the army then worked for two years as a TA yet wobbled and almost left the course by Christmas, and has now left teaching after three years. Another PGCE tutor shared: '*Mine*

has done the same thing, Army then a TA last year, very confident, felt he knew more than some of the younger students, his time on the course was more intense than at Sandhurst, and he couldn't cope'.

How can we reduce the level of intensity on a PGCE course? Interesting that as GTE (Geography Teacher Educators) discussed the experiences of their students with service backgrounds at a conference in January 2014, a new Academy in Oldham in Greater Manchester was being planned at the time (Phoenix Free School, 2014); its web presence highlighted 'all our teachers will be former servicemen and women'.

Contemporary policy discourses imply that the major requirements in order to become an outstanding teacher are firstly subject discipline (DFE, 2011:5), demonstrated by the 2010 Government White Paper focus upon degree classifications (DFE, 2010). This is reflected in the coalition government's desire to 'Continue to raise the quality of new entrants to the teaching profession' by 'ceasing to provide Department for Education funding for initial teacher training for those graduates who do not have at least a 2:2 degree' (DFE, 2010:9). Four years later, the then Secretary of State for Education Nicky Morgan stated: 'Teaching is a career of choice for the best graduates from our top universities – 74 per cent of those entering teaching now have a first or upper-second class degree; more than ever before' (DFE, 2014:3). According to Tapsfield et al. (2015:5) such degree classifications (first or upper-second) are assumed to act as a signifier of deep disciplinary knowledge, and that 'the most effective teachers have "deep knowledge" of the subject(s) they teach'.

Secondly, in addition to discipline knowledge, there is a prevailing assumption that contemporary outstanding teachers have excellent 'discipline' (behaviour management) strategies (e.g. Weston, 2013) and that 'without good discipline teachers cannot teach and pupils cannot learn' (DFE, 2010:10). Such assumptions can be seen to underpin the then Coalition government's push for newer routes into the profession

such as 'Teach First', 'School Direct' and 'Troops to Teachers' (Department for Education, 2015).

The temporal multi-tasking demands for classroom practitioners, I am arguing, offers similar demands to all secondary student teachers irrespective of subject specialism as they embark on their career. I am not currently aware of research indicating that particular students by gender, age or culture have a natural tendency or advantage to their peers in terms of the multiple-thinking in the past, present and future; this may be an area for future research.

Spatial demands on the teaching professionals

The spatial dimension to classroom teaching, I strongly believe, adds an extra layer of complexity for the geography student teacher. All student teachers share their classroom space with pupils. The shared space is power-infused, biased in favour of the adult student teachers who have 'chosen' to follow a career in teaching, rather than the pupils who have to 'go' to school (unless home tutored). Aware this is a sweeping generalisation, pupils tend to live in the local catchment area of the school, whereas student teachers generally need to travel to their placement schools.

Geography student teachers, as with all teachers, need to navigate and employ effectively the classroom space. In addition, geography student teachers need to be able to draw on geographical spatial exemplars, including those that are personal to the individual pupils and those found within the local catchment area, as well as exemplars from around the globe. As OG notes:

> *I think e:m more than any teacher perhaps is most important as a geography teacher to actually know what is around your school e:m and to know the geography of the area because it could come up*

within the schemes of work , I was at my Block B school and at the start I never even went out I just came into school, went around the school I thought I knew the area because I kind of know the areas around it but then I walked out of the school and walked within so 100, 200 yards and it was like there was this shopping precinct I didn't know you could get to which was all food, there was these kids there wagging it. E:m and there is like a hospital right opposite which I didn't know was a dental hospital which all the kids probably use, round the corner there was e:m all sorts of other places
OG June 2010

Geography is a dynamic subject, and struggles to be clearly defined more precisely than 'geography is what geographers do' (see discussion in Chapter 2)*.* Place is a both a key geographical concept to be taught within school geography, and a reference to a specific, unique place such as the school's site. Place managers regularly market and promote new visions and possibilities for the areas they manage; such skills, I am arguing, are also employed by contemporary school managers. To effectively lead change within a community, whether a school or local community, managers need to tap into or at least respect any strong allegiances and traces of the past held within the collective memory. Places are dynamic, undergoing change, and an effective geography teacher, I am arguing, needs to be aware of traces of the past that remain in the local community imagination (see work of Geoff Bright, 2011). Geography student teachers, new to a particular school context, face challenges in using local examples other than those visually present, as it is difficult to have knowledge about what doesn't now exist.

Over time, geography teachers may build up their own knowledge of geographical examples that are no longer are visible. To connect with a pupil's prior knowledge and understanding is part of the 2007 National Curriculum for England. A pupil's prior geographical experiences are likely to include knowledge and understanding of past land usage, adding to the complexity of learning to teach for a student geography teacher.

Diversity of academic geography silenced within schools

Student teachers are aware of a 'hidden' curriculum, beyond the visible, timetabled school experiences. As a society we learn that individual parts added together make a whole that is bigger than the sum of the parts, likewise with education and in particular schools. This can be argued as the case with geography, the subject academic discipline is more than the individual sub-disciplines. Many branches of geography are mentioned throughout the interviews; for example, BB said, '*when I was in university I studied different kinds of things like the geography of health, the social construction of health and the things like that*'; HM mentioned '*that's my big thing social geography*'; and LS shared that he '*did physical geography at uni'*. Naming a branch, providing content, proves easier for the interviewees than defining the subject of geography, as highlighted by HM in the following extract:

> *It is difficult you can't [VH laughs you can't] you can't put a definition [overlapping] It's what it is, the world but it is more than the world. It is not just . I like, I see space yeh as geography, space is geography yeh right if you can talk about locations of things you are talking about where things are [VH murmurs agreement] and space is geography you can't although geography is primarily the study of our world, what it is all about e:m in terms of human geography and physical geography it e:m I think it has to be more than that where I can put a great definition what is more than that I don't think I can you need to ask someone smarter who could [VH murmurs agreement] but for me yeh it is the study of the world and what is going on around in the world and how things interact and all the processes that take place and how human impacts on physical and how physical impacts on human. e:m you know that's I didn't want to say something like that because that is like a boring text book definition init, it's what it is [VH yeh]*
> HM and VH June 2009

The hooks and gateways into the academic discipline that buoyed the students during their own experience as a learner of geography are cited as the reason for joining the PGCE. ITE tutors need to keep in the forefront of the students thoughts the rich depth of geography academic knowledge they arrive with, as the analysis of the data shows an amnesia to the university discipline with the student teacher inducted into the educational discourse of structures, targets, accountability and professional tasks that can strait-jacket the student into teaching dated school geography. ITE tutors have a role to encourage and support individuality, creativity and the confidence to teach the geographical topics that inspired their undergraduate learning.

Within the institution where I am employed, the main PGCE assignment, worth 40 credits at Master's level, involves the student teacher in developing a geography scheme of work for one of the classes they are timetabled to teach. This is an unsettling notion for the students wishing to please, to belong to their host school, of fitting in with the established way of working within that context. At university, students are reminded of the geographical knowledge and understanding they bring to the course; however, they find it a challenge to offer their expertise to the school curriculum.

Persaud (2011) provides a useful reminder of the complexity of becoming a teacher as student teachers arrive on a PGCE course as creative, passionate individuals with a unique geographical journey from pupil to university discipline graduate. Each student teacher arrives keen to inspire the next generation into their discipline; however, such enthusiasm and confidence with their subject and discipline knowledge falters and is under strain daily from conflicting tensions as student teachers grapple with demands within the teaching profession. Apple contends that 'teachers should have a sense of their own history in order to help mediate the dominant and often derogatory discourse surrounding their profession' (Apple, 1986:187 quoted by Persaud, 2011:137).

Nevertheless, keeping afloat one's life history, the reasons behind joining the profession, during the busy training year and beyond is an immense challenge whilst being inducted into educational structures and prevailing discourses that promote sameness over individuality, accountability over creativity.

School geography, and in many cases out-dated geography, is very hard for the students to challenge when presented within school documentation. Becoming a teacher is complex and challenging; the amnesia of university geography may be a survival mechanism in a frantic year.

The problem of 'familiarity'

'Everyday geography' is one of the many sub-disciplines of geography (see discussion in Chapter 2), and one that overlaps with the interests of sociologists such as Scott (2009) and psychologists such as Hanson and Hanson (1993). Familiarity often includes unspoken assumptions and values and these may need to be identified and interrogated. An example of unsaid assumptions within student teachers' lesson planning is shown in Figure 17 below, of resources KS created from downloaded Google images (https://images.google.com/) to use to teach about different types of houses within the local area. A particular, cultural life cycle of a white, middle-class norm was not evident to KS until the lesson debrief. That such resources may represent an unfamiliar life to pupils was an unsettling notion for a committed, caring student teacher. As noted by Kobayashi and Peake, 'unlearning the whiteness of geography is a difficult but important goal' (Kobayashi and Peake, 2008:167).

Figure 17: Resources used in the classroom by KS

Furthermore, the implication of teaching familiar environments, so familiar it is hard to capture in the present moment, may have links with the teacher's busy mind that is rarely in the present moment. Teaching the familiar to 'others' who do not have a shared lived environmental experience may be the jolt, the push to focus practitioners onto the present. OT and OG (see below) talk about the pupils' different experiences to their own and the challenge to connect and relate the geography taught to their pupils, and that such reflection had provided a catalyst to disrupt their routines and provided a space to think differently, promoting a new way of planning and teaching and connecting with the pupils. The implication for this thesis is the placing of students does matter for geography PGCE students.

According to Mazzei:

> Teachers who are predominately White are encountering classrooms that are increasingly diverse, resulting in a faculty that can take on the character of a "white island" which, paradoxically, to invert a metaphor, becomes an isolated "sea of whiteness" in the midst of an "Other" student population. Such an experience can serve to solidify the perception of White as normative and nonwhite as different or not normal. This is the case in most teacher education programs where the majority of faculty are white (and often female), as are the students. (Mazzei, 2006)

As suggested by Mazzei, the majority of the PGCE geography students at the institution where this study was based were white, with more female students than males. Furthermore, I, their tutor, am also white. Placing white student teachers within placement schools that are predominantly white may lead to student teachers silencing the views of non-white pupils (see resource shared by KS). Placing white student teachers within multi-cultural schools may require students to re-examine what they have previously taken for granted (see views of OG and OT shared later in this chapter).

Whose personal geographies?

I return to the question of whose personal geographies? During the induction phase of the PGCE course at the institution where I am employed, the student teachers spend up to nine days within school contexts observing experienced teachers. On returning to the university, each cohort of student teachers are encouraged to share their observations and, for the four cohorts of PGCE student teachers linked to this research study, they were asked to complete a research questionnaire including the question 'During the Induction Phase in schools have you gained awareness of the personal geographies of

pupils?' Responses included:

- I have found that pupils bring their own experiences to the classroom, and given the opportunity enjoy sharing them, for example holidays, where their family is from, or what they have seen on TV. One school in particular had a module where pupils would create a model of where they live and write an autobiography.

Comments such as this one above resonates with the work of Roberts (2003) and her research with PGCE students. I collated such comments to create a 'comfortable scale' resource sheet (see Figure 9), which acted as a bridge between the student teachers and the pupil focus groups. However, the pupil focus groups were unanimous in slating the expectation that they would be comfortable in sharing personal (often personal to adults in their lives) and often 'too personal' information within the public classroom (see discussion in Chapter 6).

Within university cohort discussions, student teachers raised concerns about bringing pupils' prior experiences into the classroom. A student teacher's observation of an experienced teacher teaching about the lives of children in shanty towns, observed the teacher say to her class 'you do not have worries like this Brazilian child'. A pupil answered, 'I do, my mum drinks ...'. The teacher seemed to ignore the pupil's comment, demonstrating to the student teacher observing that such personal experiences are to be ignored.

Unacknowledged risks and inequalities

Discussing with cohorts of student geography teachers my early analysis of data, as I engaged with formative dissemination, provided opportunities for greater insights from the student teachers. During a university session VH shared to the PGCE group that during one of her lessons pupils were willing to share personal geographies, e.g. 'I am homeless'. By sharing

with her peers, other students were encouraged to offer their experiences, with HJ offering caution as some of the personal experiences pupils had experienced and shared within her classroom she wouldn't want to share with the class, e.g. Sierra Leone atrocities. The discussion developed as CA mentioned the particular context of her school, in a location targeted by the British National Party (BNP). This meant that as a student teacher she would not want to encourage the sharing of such views; she was very clear in her justification for not drawing upon pupils' views and experiences as she felt ill equipped to create a safe learning environment for all pupils if strong views from some parents were raised within the classroom. Teaching about 'other' people and 'other' places was considered by many student teachers as a safer way of teaching geography.

The potential of dialogic talk

The paired interviews provided an opportunity for sharing of ideas and resources; for example, 'Have you got that template?' Furthermore, the interviews provided a supportive peer environment, evidenced within the transcripts by bracketed 'yeh' and 'murmurs agreement'. The peer support I suggest facilitated individual reflections such as 'I've only just thought of that', and 'I suspect thinking that'. Moreover, the dialogic space created during the interviews provided opportunities for the two student trajectories to be linked and drawn upon ('So I think for us'), and thus created a unique interview experience. I am including a lengthy interview extract below because it is one of the few instances where student teachers engaged in a developmental way with the notion of personal geographies. I would argue that the paired dialogic space that was opened up was important for them to do that.

> OG I don't know if you asked me one thing I have learnt I couldn't say one thing because I've learnt so many things and so many different aspects you could take so you could say what have you

learnt about yourself, the pupils ,how you have learnt different techniques what I would say is I've surpassed my expectations of myself from the start in that I never thought that I would be e:m well I'll just say it, a good teacher, I never thought, at the start I knew I was going into teaching but I thought, when I look back at my teachers I thought god that could be me, and at the end it is, you don't really see e:m (OT murmur of agreement) the changes that occur because you are too busy working and at the end you're like this teacher you've got these kids in and just dealing with them, how you have learnt to deal with them and it just happened e:m which was what reflective practice is all about I suppose but yeh I suppose (whispers)

OG   geography I think, interesting sorry we both did personal geographies (T murmurs agreement) what my school's 70-80% minority ethnic pupils what's yours?

OT   mine was something like 90%

*OG   90% (OT yeh) so both quite high (OT yeh) So I think for us (OT yeh) we had to learn to make it personal because (OT murmurs agreement) I found them disinterested and just like it just wasn't there for them so I had to bring it, and deliver it in a way that made it more personal to **all** the different pupils and all the diversities in the room and like bring it all back*

OG   I did in Block A, in Block B it was where I started to develop but in Block A my subject mentor I never really touched on it, said the best lesson I ever gave, it wasn't an observation lesson said the best lesson I ever gave was one stand-alone lesson on avalanches e:m because we had been doing hurricanes and floods and just before I

left, said do one on avalanches I included photographs of their fellow school pupils skiing as part of the e:m where they had gone in Austria (OT murmurs agreement), e:m they recognised the teacher and recognised the pupils and he said to me that day, he said that was the best lesson you gave because you made that relate to these pupils (OT murmurs agreement) the pupils wanted to know they wanted to know why because they could see themselves there and that was in Block A (OT murmurs agreement) I've only just thought of that so I think it's should be with any subject now it opens up you can make anything personal (OT yeh) when you are teaching

OT A lot of the girl's come from Pakistan so use Pakistan, but at the same time teaching about other countries they don't know much about so I used [country] because I am from [country] and can use that. I could talk about Japan as I used to live in Japan, and so I could use those different kinds of countries where it is my personal view but at the same time I am using their personal views and mixing the two they are learning more about their own country but also other countries, and I found that worked effectively and then used other things like Facebook template, because they all know of Facebook and I used that as a kind of starter like a sheet where they were looking at explorers (OG murmurs agreement) and they front page and they had to go away find an explorer and do it as if they are doing it on Facebook. So they would have a picture of an example Francis Drake with a picture in the corner, what is he doing now, who his friends were and (overlapping) even if they didn't care about the topic, the explorer, the fact they were doing it in Facebook (OG murmurs agreement) because they knew Facebook so well they are like 'Ah I am doing Facebook', they loved the fact, doing the two together

OG   have you got that template?

OT   yeh I can send it, I've got Twitter (OG yeh right I'm not good on Twitter)

OG E:m . Why did I choose Personal Geographies? e:m before I knew which class and which scheme of work I was going to do, I knew I was going to do Personal Geographies from the start because I just had it in my head there was nothing else that interested me e:m it was what I wanted to do Personal Geographies. I suspect thinking then, behind it was that I wouldn't want to be taught myself something that was distant, and I know if I have been taught in the past if it doesn't quite relate to me I disengage (OT murmurs agreement) and I can disengage, I can engage very quickly but I can also disengage very quickly, now I teach pupils how I would like to be taught. I would like things to be related to myself (OT murmurs agreement), and have a clear structure e:m that this is e:m builds on what I already know e:m so that is probably why I do it cos e:m I teach how I would like to be taught

Extract from June 2010 PGCE Exit Interview

Within the interview the two students reflect and explore the notion of personal geographies and why they chose to focus their university assignment upon personal geographies. They first consider the context of their school placement, questioning each other about the ethnicity of each school. The dialogic encounter created the space, and arguably the need for a deeper reflection, resulting in the two students drawing upon their own prior experiences from different cultures and ethnicities to those of their pupils. They reflected upon these in order to consider why pupils may be disengaged from school geography. The extract is significant with the student teachers questioning in turn the school context, the pupils, and their own lives. Perhaps OG and OT were attuned to classroom silences, resulting in a need to change their practice in order to connect with the pupils in their classrooms. This is in contrast to the discussion above that drew upon a university session during the induction phase in

which many student teachers considered safer, sanitised teaching about other people and other places.

Throughout this chapter I have analysed the PGCE journey of student geography teachers who commenced their training course passionate about the discipline of geography and exited the course as a teacher of the school subject of geography, as demonstrated by this extract from the dialogue between VH and HM: '… *now we are teachers of the subject rather [HM yeh] than maybe admirers of the subject I think [HM yeh] that's, that's changed our view on geography and the, the necessity of geography to young people I think our views on that have changed quite a lot, the, I think we are much more, pupils need to know about certain aspects of geography than we were at the beginning of the year where some of us were more human geographers*'.

Tensions: School versus academia

As a researcher I feel I need to close this chapter with the following extract taken from the final interview of the research, in June 2012. The reason for including this extract may soon become evident to the reader. This extra from my empirical data provided an unsettling moment for me as researcher during the interview and within the analysis. The issue of continuities and discontinuities between academic and school geography that I discussed in Chapter 2 are evident in this extract, as the two student teachers (WS and NH) consider whether an effective geography teacher needs a geography degree.

> **S** *Can you be an effective geography teacher without doing a geography degree? Can you be an effective geography teacher without a geography degree?*
>
> **WS** *Yes em I think there is a huge amount of focus on academia, everything has got to be written, you have to write and read. For*

somebody like me I wouldn't have done a degree if I didn't know I wanted to teach. Because for me, you know, my, I do not enjoy sitting down for hours on end reading and writing for me it is about interactions. Teaching is about the interaction and I know a lot of teachers who are very good who did not start off in their subject, or perhaps they got a low grade at university whereas there is a huge drive at the moment for Masters, Firsts and everything like that, there a lot of teachers like that who are incredibly boring and I think you realize that if you go to university em and you sit in front of a lecturer and whoa this is a big shock, it was a big shock for me when I was 18 and how boring the lectures were so yes I definitely think that

NH No I don't think that (both laugh) cos I think that when you have a geography degree it is like erm you have to think a lot less like erm subject content when a kid erm asks you something in a lesson you always know the answer from having a degree as well. I have seen a teacher who was like a cover teacher at my Block B school and erm her degree wasn't geography, but she had ended up teaching a lot of geography cos someone was away on maternity erm and she like really struggled and had to have lessons planned for her and she would teach with a lesson plan and teach to a PowerPoint, if a pupil asked her anything out of what she had there, she wouldn't know the answer, it does restrict you teaching and I also think it is important to keep a certain level of erm like prestige to a course, like you should have a degree because you have a graduate salary and you should be respected as a professional graduate working, I don't think you should just walk onto the course erm you get paid like a graduate salary. Yeah I don't know like WS says as well there are teachers who teach outside their subject and they are really good

WS Subject knowledge and interest rather than an academic qualification

The discussion between the two students is significant and highlights the tensions between academic and school geographies that geography student teachers grapple with during the transitions to becoming a teacher. The extract links to the earlier discussion of 'actual' teaching, and the discussion about silencing academic knowledge in order to be accepted within school placements. WS's views perhaps link with the contemporary (at time of writing) government policy of prioritizing school-based initial teacher education. The government policy has been highlighted within the popular press with headlines such as 'Teachers less qualified than McDonald's staff, says Labour. Teachers need fewer qualifications than burger bar employees thanks to Government education reforms, Labour claims' (Holehouse, 2013).

Concluding remarks

Within this chapter I have drawn upon the insights shared by student teachers from four training cohorts of geography student teachers. I have started to identify complexities, concerns and issues for student teachers as I have questioned the implications of a personal focus within the geography curriculum.

The empirical data provides evidence of their enthusiasm for the academic discipline as they commence their training: during the interviews students brag about geography. Worryingly, the data highlights tensions for individual student teachers as they are obliged or inclined to leave behind their undergraduate geographical expertise as they try to belong to and fit in within school contexts, resulting in the student teachers teaching a school geography that is not necessarily enriched by their three years of university study.

The normalising dominant discourse of white, middle class for many student teachers is silenced; they are unaware of their role in maintaining such discourse which may result in pupils silencing aspects of their own lives that do not fit the one-size-fits-all, hegemonic view. OT and OG were forced to confront their own views and their impact within the classroom in order to connect their pupils with the subject geography. The implication from this study is that the placing of student teachers does matter. However, the link between prior experiences and the teacher they are becoming is not linear; there are many factors to further explore to understand in more depth how the training of teachers can be enhanced to benefit the pupils learning geography. Each student teacher has their own unique conceptualisation and construction of what is geography. Some students talk of the subject dissolving blinkers of everyday routines and surroundings; paradoxically, student teachers seem to adopt everyday routines within school contexts that may blinker them to the pupils they have entered the profession to teach.

The rapid, intense induction at the start of a teaching career may need further investigation. The fast-paced induction into school placements, I argue, does not provide enough time or space to acknowledge or bridge the gap between the rich diversity of geographical knowledge students bring to schools, and the school geography curriculum that is underway in school.

At the start of the PGCE students quickly form a group identity with their peers as they distance themselves from others (non-teachers). Furthermore, the individual students undergo personal transformations in thinking differently, including temporal multi-tasking adding to the intensity of the training year. The university theory-based sessions are perceived at the start of the year as second best to the attraction of learning within actual contexts, yet the danger lies in adopting uncritically routines to survive and fit into a particular context as an insider rather than to focus upon developing teaching and learning skills. Learnt routines, copied from

observing others should not replace meaningful engagements with pupils. The following chapter focuses upon pupils.

Chapter 6 Educational spaces

The previous chapter explored the journey from student of the university discipline to teacher of the school subject via a PGCE route into teaching. Building upon my earlier exploration of the concepts 'power', 'silence' and 'space', this chapter draws upon the research data to explore how individuals, including myself, pupils and student teachers, temporarily occupy and position themselves within space, and how space can contribute to silencing. This chapter is situated within classroom spaces, the type of spaces where student geography teachers are expected to build upon the personal geographies of the learner. The chapter shifts from regional to personal scales with a consideration of the location of educational sites (employed in the research) within the Greater Manchester region, followed by the location of the research with groups of pupils within schools, to the personal individual scale of the pupil participating in the research. Digital video recordings of pupil focus groups were analysed using a thematic approach focusing upon the core concepts for this thesis of space, power and silence.

Educational sites employed in the research with pupil focus groups

Seven schools were contacted (via email, voicemail and postal letter) to take part in the research with pupil focus groups. The seven schools were geographically spread across the south and east of the Greater Manchester [5]conurbation (1 Oldham, 1 Tameside, 1 Trafford, 1 Stockport & 2 Manchester) and Cheshire (1) the authority that borders Greater Manchester to the south. Five of the seven schools responded[6] and agreed to facilitate pupil focus group sessions. The table below provides location data about the schools used for the pupil focus sessions.

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[5] Greater Manchester Urban Area consists of ten local Authorities: Manchester, Salford, Bury, Bolton, Oldham, Tameside, Stockport, Trafford, Wigan and Rochdale
[6] The two schools that did not respond were located inside the M60, one located less than one mile from the city centre, the other less than two miles from the city centre.

School	Distance from University Campus	Distance from School to Manchester City Centre	Situation within or outside M60 Ring Road	Distance to nearest Town Centre / Village
A	10 miles	5 miles	beyond M60	Less than 1 mile from Town Centre
B	9 miles	6 miles	beyond M60	Approx. 1 mile from Town Centre
C	15 miles	10 miles	beyond M60	Less than 1 mile from Town Centre
D	5 miles	10 miles	beyond M60	Approx. 1 mile to local centre, approx. 2.5 miles from Town Centre
E	14 miles	15 miles	beyond M60	Approx. 1.5 miles from Village Centre, 6 miles to Town Centre

Table 2. Location of schools - pupil focus group

The pupil focus group sessions were conducted in five schools, located between 5 and 15 miles (8 to 24 Kilometres) from the city centre of Manchester and between 5 and 15 miles from the University campus located 5 miles south of the city centre. All schools lay outside the M60 Motorway ring road. Empirical data such as distances provide a universal

familiarity, data that can be shared and understood. However, the simplicity and familiarity of numbers such as five miles seduces with a taken-for-granted assumption that the distances are true. The distances can only ever be approximations, a generalisation of a straight line distance between two points on a two-dimensional map representing the map-makers' interpretation of the three-dimensional world we live on. The empirical data of the school's location highlights diversity, as the school locations range from semi-rural through to suburban and urban contexts. However, semi- rural, suburban and urban are three concepts that again seduce with their familiarity, yet are contested, complicated concepts. For the purposes of this research, it can be argued that all schools have unique locations, while also sharing certain discursive, spatial, pedagogical and organisational features.

"Liminal" spaces: the location of the pupil group interviews

The pupil focus group sessions provided the opportunity for me to meet with pupils within their school, a familiar educational site for the pupils. As a researcher visiting familiar educational settings in a new role, I had heightened awareness of self and the spaces I temporarily occupied as a researcher. Visiting five schools in the North West of England to carry out 30-minute pupil group sessions (digitally recorded) gave me new understanding of the concept of *liminal space*. My time in school was temporary, typically one hour, while the physical spaces the school had allocated for videoing pupil focus group interviews also took on a temporary configuration for this one-off interview experience. Simpson et al. (2009:54) state that 'liminality'

> refers to occupancy of 'in between' spaces … where individuals are neither wholly part of nor wholly divorced from the organization. The concept has been used to highlight the unsettling nature of these spaces and the ambiguities that can accrue.

As a geographer I am interested in many types of spaces including transient spaces: for instance, the physical spaces that facilitate the coming together of people in temporary liminal spaces. For this research the educational spaces became transient spaces, resonating with the work of Moran (2011) and her research within Russian Federation prison visiting rooms - institutional spaces that blur boundaries between insiders and outsiders. Moran states that 'it is clear that the visiting space is outside the ordinary of both visitors' and prisoners' everyday social lives, representing as it does the space in which these two groups of people leave their lives on the outside and the inside and enter a space' (Moran 2013:344). As a visiting researcher, I occupied a temporary presence within educational spaces. Furthermore, as I will suggest below, my presence unsettled the space, the routines and expectations of those who were familiar with the space. The spaces where the focus groups took place were, in Moran's terms, "outside" the familiar places of both the pupils', and my own, everyday educational lives.

The digital recordings were analysed visually (see Rose, 2007) and aurally, employing a thematic analysis of space, power and silence. My research journal entries were drawn upon, to further explore the sensory and affective experience of the pupil focus sessions. I reflected and considered the impact of space, in particular the impact that such temporary existence within specific spaces had upon myself, and others: namely, pupils and student teachers. I considered how familiar spaces could become threatening spaces as I visited with a changed professional role, highlighting the power of space to intimidate.

> *Now completed 3 schools.*
> *A – very nervous – didn't sleep – pupils arrived*
> *B – less nervous but unsure how to act/talk as we had lunch prior to the session. (teacher stayed)*
> *C – less nervous – different room setting and pupils arrived in stages over 25 minutes so unsure when to start, had started then*

restarted etc. I sat on carpet! So a very different position looking up to pupils (teacher stayed)

Journal entry 15 July 2009

The above journal extract highlights how the actual spaces intensified the emotional impact upon me of my changed role. It also documents the silent presence of other adults, powerful leaders within the school context, captured within textual brackets. Activities such as eating together (School D) added to the unsettling occupancy experience within a Design and Technology classroom temporarily configured for a sandwich lunch prior to its one-off use for a pupil focus group research interview.

I draw upon an experience beyond the research study to raise awareness and appreciation of the complexity of space/s. The coming together in a liminal, transient space was particularly felt by all participants during a visit with a group of pupils to the local Town Council Chambers within my role as a Community Geographer seconded to the Geographical Association in 2012. The pupils, teachers and the two Community Geographers sat waiting for the Mayor and Leader of the Council to arrive to hear the pupils' presentations. All sat silent, in awe, feeling the power of this space over us. In post-visit conversations with the other Community Geographers, we deconstructed the experience, reflecting upon the unique space. As Gaines noted: 'Space is never neutral, the semiotics of interior space provides a symbolic representation created to maintain an established social distribution of power' (Gaines 2006:176).

Feeling 'out-of-place' is a human response to an unfamiliar environment. Environments can be architecturally designed to remind individuals of their place within society. Reflecting upon the visit with pupils to the local council chambers and Mayor's Office provided an opportunity to consider how space can influence thoughts and actions. Such inner sanctums

within 'public' buildings with controlled temporal and spatial access are cloaked in visual signage of power and reminders of the past. These can provide an uncomfortable experience. Traces of the past seemed to add to the gaze upon our actions. Prior to the 'entrance' of the Leader of the Council and the Mayor, we felt watched without the need for CCTV surveillance as we waited in the council chamber. I offer this vignette as evidence of the affective nature of encounters with spaces, and of the disciplinary power of the Foucauldian gaze (see Chapter 3). Thrift summarises: 'we all know, certain places can and do bring us to life in certain ways, whereas others do the opposite. It is this expressive quality of place which has recently led to the emphasis on performance in geography' (Thrift, 2003:93).

The council chambers did not energise us and bring us to life; instead, the space was successful in controlling and limiting our involvement in this place. Anderson (2010) describes the 'traces' that inhabit particular spaces:

> Senses of belonging to particular places are thus created by a variety of traces. In many cases, the intention of these traces is to regulate who enjoys this sense of belonging and who doesn't ... Places are culturally ordered by traces … this cultural ordering goes hand in hand with a geographical bordering. (Anderson, 2010:41)

According to Yarwood and Tyrrell (2012:124), pupils are 'restricted and controlled in their use of space' by adults within the educational spaces of the school. Pupils' movements are controlled and monitored throughout the school day: for instance, by the architecture of the building hindering movements around the space providing geographical borders, by the use of bells to coerce movements at regular intervals, and by signage highlighting preferred movements. Power relations are visually evident, with the pupils low within the school hierarchy. Office spaces tend to be hidden from pupils' daily flows around the school. Inner sanctums are for the adults, hidden from the pupils' gaze. However, they contribute to the

establishment of psychic and geographical borders and the cultural ordering of 'us' (adults) and 'others' (pupils) in terms of identity.

The journal entry for May 2012 (see page 78) was written after a visit to the Geographical Association Headquarters for a collaboration meeting about 'The Making My Place in the World' project. As an adult, invited to work with another adult in a familiar education building yet in a new role (as a Community Geographer) provided me with new insights to reflect upon the school spaces and university spaces used and inhabited during this research. Schools contain many doors to control and limit access to adult spaces. Schools are not 'open access to all' spaces. A school's policies and ethos may promote inclusion and openness, yet school practices, architecture, signage and the need for safety may restrict and exclude.

The selection within educational spaces for the pupil focus groups

The educational spaces used for the pupil focus groups were selected by school gatekeepers. These became temporarily configured spaces, chosen and re-arranged by the gatekeeper (professional mentors, geography subject mentors or school governor) to facilitate pupils sharing their ideas on personal geographies. My experience within educational institutions differed from that of Moran's penal institutions in terms of the location of visiting suites. Moran's visiting rooms were 'located next to the administration block … to minimize the distance into the institution travelled by visitors from the outside' (Moran, 2013:344). By contrast, the visiting spaces selected by my gatekeepers were a significant distance from the school entrance. Only the teachers' work-space was close to the school reception area. In this case, therefore, the 'liminality' of the focus group space was simultaneously nested, geographically at least, further inside the institution.

The spaces provided could be read as indicative of the 'power' of the gatekeeper within the school hierarchy, as the spaces chosen were

perhaps ones familiar to their role within the school. The two visits organised by geography subject mentors[7] were located in classrooms (geography and RE), familiar spaces to the pupils. The subject mentors did not remain in the classroom during the focus group sessions. The visits facilitated by professional mentors[8] took place in a religious non-classroom space and a window-less technology workroom, surrounded by other food technology spaces. It was interesting that both the professional mentors remained in the space during the pupil focus group sessions. The space selected by the school governor was a teachers' work-space adjacent to the staffroom, with access to senior teachers' offices and staff kitchen. This was an adult only space. The school governor did not remain in the space during the pupil focus group session.

Who has access to which spaces within a school is significant. The selection of spaces selected for the pupil focus groups offers a glimpse into the distribution of power within schools. Who remained within the spaces during the research may be a reflection of their relationship with the researcher, as the subject mentors had had prior experience of joint observations with the researcher within their school classrooms, and the school governor had worked with the researcher as a PGCE geography tutor. The school mentors and school governor had therefore worked with the researcher collaboratively with student geography teachers. The two professional mentors by contrast knew the researcher in her prior role as Leader of Partnerships (2007-8). Their choice to remain in the space may have been motivated by a felt need for surveillance, or perhaps a keen interest to learn from the pupils. It felt significant to me that the two senior teachers remained within the space.

In each setting the space allocated for the research had been arranged, where possible, to facilitate a group discussion. The religious prayer

[7] Subject mentors are geography teachers who work closely with student teachers.
[8] Professional mentors have responsibility for all the student teachers within their school, they are often senior teachers. Subject mentors have responsibility for one or two students in their department, they have a minimum of two years' experience as a class teacher.

space consisted of wall-fixed seating around the room on three sides, necessitating the pupils sitting together in one corner. The classroom and workrooms had an arrangement of tables placed together into a rectangle with chairs for pupils on three sides, leaving one side for the researcher. The positioning of an adult at the 'head' of a table is a powerful reminder to the pupils of unequal distribution of power. In the religious space (Figure 18 below), I sat on the floor looking up at the pupils (the fixed seating would have placed me too far away from the pupils to pass materials to them). This created a provocation, interrupting the expected adult-to-pupil positioning within education spaces.

Figure 18: Pupil focus group session in school C- faith/prayer room

The pupils (see Figure 18 above) sat in close proximity in one corner of the room upon wall fixed velour high-backed seating. The researcher (myself) is seen kneeling on the carpet-tiled flooring in the left foreground of the photograph, an unusual position for an adult to take, positioned at a lower head height than the pupils.

The power of educational spaces and adult gatekeepers

The research aimed to explore a range of ideas and issues with the pupils about personal geography including an icebreaker activity[9] with photographs of items such as mobile phones and magazines to stimulate contributions. I reflected on the messages the educational space was signalling to the pupils about their value and status as contributors. Yarwood and Tyrell (2012) note that

> children are restricted and controlled in their use of space by adults, institutions (such as schools), legislation, peers and their own (developing) cognitive and physical skills. Young people do not have the same voice or power as adults to change or shape their environment and so children's everyday lives reveal much broader concerns about power and place. (Yarwood and Tyrrell, 2012:124)

Pupils may not have the same power as adults to change or shape their environment. However, as I will argue below, pupils do improvise within the space at their disposal.

I am concerned with space at many scales including: the school, the classroom, a group of tables, to the personal scale of the individual pupil or student teacher. Each participant within the student teacher paired interviews (Chapter 5) or the pupil focus group sessions had their own unique experience of the shared (30-minute) period of time and space. In occupying the space, were individuals able to choose where to sit? Did they have agency in locating their bodies within the classroom/area space? How institutionalised were individuals in selecting a chair or seat to sit upon? Did peer or school hierarchies influence individuals in their

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[9] Student teachers during the exit phase of the PGCE geography course (2008 & 2009) were asked: What are Key Stage 3 pupils interested in? If it was possible to visit a typical Key Stage 3 pupils bedroom what items might you see? A list of ten items was collated from responses and provided to a professional photographer. Laminated A4 photographs showed: magazines, computer games, mobile phone, social media sites, reality TV, make-up, football, a Harry Potter book, a Jonas Brothers CD and High School Musical DVD.

seat choice? Were selections made in order to avoid a particular view of the classroom, or the potential gaze of others in the room?

Entering a room first can be a powerful experience, providing time to experience the room before sharing space with others. The first to enter can become the gatekeeper to that space: as others arrive they have to negotiate the space, taking account of the earlier arrivals' presence. The last individual to arrive in a room can be placed at a disadvantage, as they need to negotiate around others as physical place-markers already in the room. Moreover, they need to tune into the presences of others. If familiar, they can draw upon prior connections and reputations (positive or negative). If there are strangers, unknown individuals in the space, there are nano-seconds upon which to register their presence and location and to decide where to stand or sit in the room. The disadvantage to the later entrant can be enhanced if recognisable educational scenarios are in action - e.g. if all are seated, all engaged in an activity such as listening to a speaker, or all busy discussing. The later entrant may enter the room and find all eyes turned towards them, becoming the centre of attention. On the other hand, it may be possible to enter unnoticed and have an opportunity to choose a location silently without disturbing others, minimising the opportunity of becoming the centre of attention.

To minimise anxiety created by the actual or potential inspecting gaze of others, an individual may consciously or sub-consciously employ a self-surveillance strategy to control herself within the expected norms of behaviour and conduct of a setting. Foucault describes how such self-surveillance operates via: 'An inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorising to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising surveillance over and against himself' (Foucault, 1977:155). Becoming one's own overseer may minimise anxiety in relation to surveillance by others, but may create internal tensions and an internal monologue questioning what to say, and how to act.

Student teachers are taught techniques to draw the centre of attention to themselves, to be the focal point of a classroom as the pivotal gatekeeper of the learning activities. In behaviour management sessions at university students are made aware of body language techniques that can be employed to direct the centre of attention to micro-areas of the classroom to control pupil engagement. The visual analysis of the pupil focus sessions brought immediately to my attention how in my role as researcher I had drawn the centre of attention upon myself: firstly, by my position at the head of the group of tables, or when I knelt upon the floor. In addition, I heightened my importance by the placing of the video camera slightly behind myself, so that the lens was fixed in position, with the camera's view of the pupils similar to my view. It could be said that the pupils were subjected to a double 'inspecting gaze'. When looking directly at me (the researcher), the pupils also faced the zoom lens, their participation observed by the unfamiliar adult at the head of the table (or on the floor in front) and captured digitally for future analysis by this stranger, if and when watched again in unknown spaces in the future. The pupils may or may not have pondered about the gaze from the digital future. All individuals experience space differently. In my own case, and perhaps for pupils, a surveillance gaze by past others may have been particularly felt in the educational rooms containing religious icons and symbols.

Familiar spaces becoming affective 'liminal' spaces

The daily choice of language and bodily actions of all actors (pupils and student teachers) is tempered to the cultural and educational norms (both national and locally based) that are learned through observation and experience in the public space of the classroom. The pupils' familiar routines of 'being a pupil' were unsettled by the addition of an unfamiliar researcher who was orchestrating the one-off event of the pupil focus session.

Figure 19: School B - geography classroom

Familiar spaces, such as the geography (Figure 19) or religious education classroom that the pupil group remained in after a lesson (with their familiar peers), may have become uncomfortable liminal spaces with the addition of the unknown adult and video camera, and the unfamiliar activity taking place. Educational spaces such as the faith room (Figure 18) and technology classroom (Figure 20) may likewise become daunting spaces when they are entered for the purpose of an interview with an unknown adult with a video camera and a senior teacher remaining in the space. There was additional novelty in the fact that, in some cases, the group comprised of pupils from more than one class (technology classroom) and from more than one school year (faith room).

Figure 20: School D - technology work room

An interview in an educational space generally out of bounds to pupils, in an adult-only space (Figure 21), entered for the purpose of an interview with an unknown adult, with a video camera surrounded by visual signage of educational power, with pupils from more than one school year – all of these factors may have contributed to an intensely intimidating experience.

Figure 21: School A - teacher work-space

The pupil focus groups facilitated by subject mentors were from the same class, a familiar peer group. The groups facilitated by the professional mentors and school governor were drawn, as noted, from a range of classes. Therefore, pupils may not have known each other. The higher status of these gatekeepers within the school hierarchy may have led to the mixed pupil groupings. They may have considered the mixed groups a more representative sample of pupils to represent their school for the research.

This research with pupils from a variety of schools across the geographical continuum from rural to urban unsettled my own prior conceptualisations of urban education[10], and the assumption that school experience is different for pupils in urban schools. I realised that outsiders such as the researcher can unsettle space, creating a transient, liminal

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[10] Researcher Course Leader for MA Urban Education 2010-11

space for all, and that the simple fact of sharing space does not guarantee uniformity of experience for all individuals. Traces of past others can add to the emotional impact of space upon an individual. The research raises issues concerning the design of education spaces, and the agency that is accorded to individuals to access spaces. It also interrogates the impact of *others* upon the affective experience of shared space, from a late arriving pupil, a new pupil, a student teacher, through to Ofsted inspectors.

Pupils' perspectives on personal scale

The 2007 Geography Programme of Study includes reference to personal scale as distinct from local scale:

> **Importance of geography**
> It builds on pupils' own experiences to investigate places at all scales, from the *personal* to the global.
> **Range and Content**
> The study of geography should include: a variety of scales, from *personal*, local, regional, national, international and continental, to global (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, 2007: italics added)

From an informal poll of experienced geography teachers[11] including myself, the personal scale was an unfamiliar concept within school geography syllabi (Chapter 2). By contrast, the pupil focus groups were confident and offered clarity about the boundary between the two scales of 'personal' and 'local'. Figure 22 below includes pupil comments highlighting the personal, as evidenced by reference to the pronouns 'you' / 'your'/ 'my' /'own'/ 'yourself' and the noun 'individual'. The pupil focus groups offered many diverse suggestions concerning the meaning of personal scale. However, there was little variation in the meaning of the more familiar local scale, as is evidenced by the small number of

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[11] I discussed the concept of 'personal scale' with eleven subject mentors (January 2010) and nine conference workshop participants (Geographical Association April 2010)

instances in the right-hand column of the table. The pupils' generalised view of the local scale resonates with Roberts' (2003:164) concern that most school geography 'is all about other people, about people too generalized for many young people to relate to'.

Figure 22: Pupils' views on the meaning of personal versus local scale

Personal (indicated by 'you', 'your', etc.)	Local
Things **you** do around People's **views** and things Where **you** are at, as **yourself**, in **your** life, where **you** are trying to go, **to be**. What **you** know about **your** area **you** are in The future where **you** want to go Finding **yourself**, who **you** are **Your** surroundings **your** home what **you** can see Home What is going on around **you** Close to **you**/area What **you** can do **Your** area **Your** area and about **yourself** Where **you** have been How to look after where **you** live What's happening Where **you** live, places **you** go to, attracted to, likes and dislikes, **my**	Area around, been to, average, Everything in your area is Local Average, taken from a number of people

life, May not want to share, personal connection to **you**, Where **you** were born, live **Your** history, places **you've** touched Where **you** live Know **your** area Places around **you**, not just stuck in one place Places **you** want to go to **You** think, view Personal what **you** go to Own **individual** experience – trips **you've** been on, **your** experiences Personal diary of what **you** have done – done and want to do Might be what's **your** life is like What **you** personally like about a topic, e.g., crime, hazards **own** views Geog. in – the lesson, or mapping out **your** life – **you** really, culture and background Where **you** are, not necessarily where **you** are living, **your** life … Very **own**, what's happening, friends **Individual**	

The responses in the table above were extracted from the recorded focus group discussions (see Chapter 4 for a discussion of the methodology, including this table). Figure 22 on first glance offers a student teacher a checklist of possible ideas to use in exploring the personal scale within the geography classroom. The pupils' comments provide insights into the

curriculum expectation of personal scale within geography. However, 'Use with caution' needs to be written across Figure 22. When the 'comfortable scale'[12] hand-out was used in the pupil focus group sessions to provide a stimulus for pupils to voice and discuss their opinions, all five focus groups were uncomfortable with the idea of student teachers ascertaining what their pupils are happy to share in the classroom via such a survey – see further below. This is in contrast to the approach recommended by Roberts from her research with her PGCE students:

> Young people shop, go on holiday, move house, and experience the quality of life in the areas in which they live and places they visit. There is something students could say about all these things. They are not, however, always given the opportunity to do so. (2003:164)

Pupil perspectives on personal geographies, ethics and silence

Pupils were very perceptive and aware of the possibility that a personal focus in geography could highlight social inequalities within the classroom. The following extracts are taken from the focus group discussions and are related to issues of social and economic inequalities:

- *Paid jobs – low wage – don't want to share, might not be as good as others*
- *Shops – Aldi take the mick out of you. Others may have more money. Make you feel inferior. Iceland / M&S – inequalities in classroom*
- *Paid jobs, what if mum disabled?*
- *Expensive hobbies, others might want to do them but don't really have enough money*

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[12] The comfortable scale was created from comments made by student teachers during the induction phase of the course as to the personal geographies they observed being used by experienced teachers; see Figure 9 in Chapter 4.

- *Teachers tend to look down on you, patronise, if mum a cleaner then teachers more like dead consistent, my mum an accountant for … they don't take interest*

The short extracts taken from across the five focus groups highlight concerns young people have about the public sharing of information concerning their lives, for instance:

- Where I live
- My hobbies
- How I spend my school holidays
- Places my relatives live
- Where my family shops, and
- Paid jobs my family do

The pupil focus group discussions considered the potential dangers of sharing economically based information. Their role within their families is not one with control over financial decisions. Such economic information could cause anguish for individuals with the highlighting in the classroom of inequalities beyond the influence of the pupil. As TE noted in an earlier section, pupils may wish to escape their lives. The pupils raised concerns over potential judgements by adults and peers. Pupils want to fit the norm, to feel safe within the classroom. They may want to avoid public embarrassment and are aware that they may play down their outsider identities (see work of Yoshino, 2006 quoted in Mazzei, 2007). As MacLure notes:

> By taking part in regular events such as news-time, as well as curriculum activities, such as painting and writing, children learn how to scan their lives and sift out bits that can be produced and recognized as 'experiences'. Experience is not, therefore, something that is natural and self-evident: it is produced through discursive practices that constitute children as 'the child' of

progressive pedagogy and developmental psychology. (MacLure, 2003:19)

The pupils have had years of schooling, learning how to scan their lives for information that is acceptable (and safe) to use in the classroom. As Roberts noted, within geography classrooms 'students in secondary schools learn quickly that they are not expected to volunteer information from their own experience' (2003:164). This new focus within the geography curriculum needs to be flagged up to teachers as an area that needs further consideration, to be used with extreme caution.

Too personal?

The following extracts from the pupil focus groups indicate pupils' anxieties over being expected to be share information that is 'too personal'.

- *I'm adopted - horrible thing for me to write. Family too personal*
- *People always criticise what my mum is doing, too personal*
- *Neighbourhood – if rough area, seeing shot, might upset you*
- *Embarrassed – religion - don't want to be the only one*
- *Spend my leisure time, you might not do anything, mum not very well, might be a carer*
- *Don't like places I have lived, care home, hostel*
- *Parents, not personal to you*
- *Relatives wouldn't feel comfortable discussing them in class. Family, they might not want you talking about them*

Pupils raised ethical considerations, highlighting concern that their lives are influenced by others, in particular significant adults in their lives. Furthermore those others may not wish for their views and decisions to be shared publically. Thus, from an ethical position pupils may choose to be silent. 'Too personal' was a phrase mentioned several times within pupil focus groups. A focus within a lesson that is 'too personal' has

potential for an emotional affect on a pupil, and to avoid potential upset pupils may choose to be silent. Pupils may prefer to leave behind their personal lives, and to engage in geography content and activities that offer a temporal escape from their lives. This issue was raised by student teacher TE in Chapter 5 who questioned whether geography should be related to pupils' lives, and suggested that geography could act as an escape route.

As a researcher my desire to give pupils an opportunity to voice their views, and bring to the research the small, personal narratives of individuals, may have had unintended effects. My actions during the pupil focus sessions of going around the group to each pupil for their contributions may have added undue pressure and potential ethical violence towards any pupil who preferred to remain silent. As noted with respect to Foucault (see Chapter 3), a silent participant in a research group may affect a researcher's ability to (ethically) perform their role (cf. Foucault, 1994:177).

Visual analysis of the focus group recordings

The visual analysis of the digital recordings highlighted other reasons why an individual may be silent. The pupil focus groups which contained pupils from more than one school year and gender created situations in which a younger boy sat next to an older girl.

> 1 Yr 8 boy eye contact very quiet, sat leaning back in chair – hand in front of mouth after researcher asked do you agree – silenced boy? Says least – only if singled out, quiet speaker OR most aware of video camera pointing at him? Starts talking, others overtake

discourse now looking down, next time moves a piece of paper as talking. Not only facing camera sat with a girl and a girl who is Year 10!!

Visual analysis field note

The presence of an older, physically larger and more confident female pupil appeared to add to the intensity of the interview experience for a younger boy in two schools. See, for example, Figure 21 above, in which a younger boy sat with arms folded within an adult work room, next to an older female.

I would argue that within the classroom, and other public educational spaces, individuals are very aware that they are potentially being observed and judged by others. Those with more power regularly make judgements and assessments about others: for example, the student teacher about the pupil; the geography class teacher (subject mentor) about the student teacher; or the Ofsted Inspector about the class teacher. All actors (pupils, student teachers and class teachers) within educational spaces have years of experience of being judged and developing their awareness of what is expected and valued. Moreover, all of these educational actors have learned that 'sharing' demands responses that fit a normalising expected view. The idea of opening up the school subject of geography to personal insights and experiences is therefore problematic.

In the next section, I return to Thrift's (2003) four conceptualisations of space introduced in Chapter 3 to problematise the educational spaces used within the research, and open up 'public' educational spaces for new insights.

Reading the pupil data in terms of Thrift's four categories of space

Empirical Space as defined by Thrift refers to space that can be described via measurements. Pupils were expected to remain sitting for 30 or more minutes during the focus group interview. A standardised personal learning space was, as noted, evident in four of the educational spaces used for the pupil interviews, as evidenced by the presence of classroom chairs (plastic / aluminium) and melamine tables. The fifth space was as noted a 'faith' room, in which the seating was high backed padded velour fixed to the wall. This space lacked predetermined personal allotted seating space, yet a uniform seating space became visually evident as pupils held a resource sheet. There was a clear link between the size of the paper resource and the pupils sat upon the communal high-backed fixed seating. Each resource sheet was 210 mm by 297 mm (UK paper size termed A4). The video recordings indicate that each pupil occupied approximately 297mm of linear seating space. The video recording also indicated a uniform distance between the resource and the pupil's face. This uniform distance appeared to be similar to that created in the four other schools in which pupils read from resource sheets placed upon tables. However, the space occupied by each pupil on the fixed seating was noticeably less than that offered by a standardised plastic chair. For the pupils seated in the teachers' work-space, the melamine table was larger than the tables located in pupil spaces. The pupils had the standardised seated chair space, yet more space between themselves and other pupils.

The analysis of personal positioning within educational spaces is significant as it raises questions concerning the English standardised learning spaces for pupils. A concern for economics and hygiene as well as assisting adults in efficiently carrying out their workplace roles, for instance, cleaning duties, may be at the expense of creating an effective personalised learning space for all pupils. The standardised chair and table may have been the best available solution for prior generations of

pupils. With advances in information, technology and our increased understandings of how pupils learn, should the classroom chair and melamine table be reconfigured for present and future pupils?

Flow space according to Thrift refers to movements of people, goods and ideas through space. In four of the schools the pupils were already present in the educational space allocated by the school for the pupil focus group sessions prior to my arrival. In the religious space, the pupils arrived in stages. The filming commenced three times and on the recording knocking at the door highlights that access to this educational space was controlled.

The researcher took on a teacher role issuing resources and managing the interactions. Learned cultural norms of behaviour with respect to handling resources - what you can touch, when, and how including leaning over others - was evident in the recordings. Talk within the interviews was also controlled, with educational routines and boundaries around who could speak/when/and the types of language allowed. Views expressed during the interview included those of people from outside the educational space. For instance, other adults' experiences were mentioned including parents: 'my dad … says and his experiences …'. Pupils also made reference to contemporary TV programmes (Ben 10, The Simpsons, Britain's Got Talent). The flow of ideas therefore represented those beyond the group of pupils present. Traces of talk, once said aloud, remain in memories of the self and others. A pupil commented on the potential danger of sharing personal information within the classroom, in particular sharing with teachers as 'Information spreads around teachers'. It was interesting that this insight was shared within the adult work space.

The row of computers in both the technology room and teachers' work-space are almost permanent fixtures, while the pupils are the temporary aspects in these educational spaces. The dormant computers have the potential to cause bursts of electrical energy power surges if switched on

into action. It might be asked, are pupils allowed such a burst of power within the classroom?

Sound flows through walls, windows and doors and circulates within the educational space. These include sounds that indicate the burst of human energy entering the room and sitting (soles of shoes walking on lino or carpet, the movement of aluminium chair legs as they are moved into desired positions). Once the learning episode commences, individual movement sounds appear magnified: the sound of a chair scraping across lino may limit potential movement for fear others may hear. Silencing fixtures and fittings become part of the daily life of a pupil.

Sounds from outside the educational space, such as an indistinguishable bubble of excitement and occasional screams during the first half of a pupil focus group session, reducing to an occasional sound can remind us within the space that this is lunchtime (freedom from work) for the rest of the school. The sound of banging of doors as they closed is a constant reminder of movement of people within educational buildings along controlled pathways. The sound of a plane in the distance indicates movement of others beyond the school grounds and locality. Sounds are powerful aspects of our engagement with spaces, locating us within a building, a locality and a time period. Sounds are part of activities, laminated sheets as they are moved creating a slapping sound against a melamine surface.

School bells are a common sound in many English schools and are used to indicate the preferred start or end of pupil movements around buildings. An adult pushes one of the double doors to the teachers' work-space but does not enter, providing a reminder this is a liminal, transient space for the pupils and researcher with a temporal limit. Another adult walks past, the door is pushed partially open, again displacing air and momentarily altering the reflected light patterns in the room (A). Such movement of others passing outside the temporarily inhabited

educational spaces beyond the frosted windows and door (A) can distort received light and air flow.

Figure 20: School E - RE classroom

Daylight bounced off laminated wall posters and the laminated sheets on the table (E); curtains were drawn against the sunlight (C); daylight was reflected on the classroom whiteboard (see Figure 23 above), generating a visual image of sunlight passing through windows as it changes intensity over 30 minutes of filming (E). Pipes ran vertically down classroom walls (hot water for radiators) (A, B) and cables (electricity) were tacked vertically onto walls (A), a constant reminder of educational use of utilities flowing constantly into and around the school grounds.

The 30-minute digital recordings also capture the bodily change and growth of adolescents, miniscule changes hidden from the naked eye. Within each educational room the smells of previous activities and bodies remain in the room.

The analysis of the educational spaces considering flows assists in considering spaces; as Massey (2005:24) proposes, 'the dimension of multiple trajectories, a simultaneity of stories-so-far' and 'that space and time are inextricably interwoven' (1994:260-1). A concern with flows highlights a variety of changes occurring within the space and disrupts an institutional focus upon linear or clock time. Each individual will have a unique experience of TimeSpace (see discussion in Chapter 5). Individuals tune in and out of the flows that influence our agency within classroom environments, and our awareness of how we contribute to the environmental experience of others.

Image space according to Thrift, reminds individuals of the constant exposure to a variety of information stimuli that surround us in our daily lives. Colour, and in the case of the 'faith' room, different textures, highlighted the purpose of each educational space. The 'faith' room looked and felt different to the other educational spaces, emphasised by the softness of the fabrics, colours and natural materials. Even the display board was cork, a natural resource (C). The teachers' work-space (A) had double swing doors (reminding the researcher of institutional doors in hospital) with a door handle (two ways of opening push or use handle), a keyhole (to lock out or in) and frosted windows (blurring view of activities within or beyond). Inside this space the plastic chairs and melamine tables were similar to those found in the technology, RE and geography spaces. This educational space was visually an adult space with management offices leading directly off on two sides of this room.

Religious icons in 2D and 3D forms were evident in two spaces, the 'faith room' and the RE classroom providing a constant reminder (to the researcher) of the expectation of good behaviour and morals. Interestingly, only on the adult work-space wall were two fire extinguishers clearly visible.

All educational spaces had notices pinned or stuck upon at least one wall. This visual signage carried reminders of power, and rules and regulations

within the educational spaces. There was evidence of pupils' awareness of wall displays. For example, a pupil pointed to a map of Britain saying 'I've been there' (E), and another pupil pointed to a poster to support a viewpoint (B). The use of wall displays by pupils occurred in two of the educational spaces (RE & geography). These were spaces that the pupils had remained in (prior to the interview they had had a lesson in that space) for the purpose of the focus group. The three other educational spaces had a noticeable lack of wall displays. Where wall displays were available they had the potential to be used by pupils, providing some opportunity to link thoughts with the resources surrounding them.

A lack of colour was evident within the five educational spaces:

- grey, grid lino tiles, black plastic chairs, pale grey/black computers (D)
- grey carpet, blue chairs, black legs, green painted door (B)
- neutral colour velour beige/grey curtains and pale wood, natural colours (C)
- grey plastic chairs, shiny wood grain effect table, white/neutral walls with blue skirting boards, floor dark brown carpet (E)
- white tables with black legs, green or lilac plastic chairs with aluminium legs (A)

The pupils, the human life forms, provided colour and variety within the rooms (hair colour and texture, skin tone, eyes). School uniform minimised difference, although individuality was expressed in tiny improvisations such as hair ornaments (bands, toggles, clips) and in one case hair dye amongst the girls. Boys expressed some individuality in knotting and positioning their school ties (B).

Talking within English educational spaces is, as I have discussed previously, controlled, with power residing with adults. During the focus group sessions the power relation was exemplified for instance when a pupil (B) raised his hand up to indicate he wanted to speak. The adult

researcher was the only one who summarised words uttered by others, for clarification. The expected power relationship within educational spaces between an adult and pupils, with the expectation of pupils sitting for the duration of the learning period and the adult having a choice to stand or sit on a chair, was interrupted in the 'faith' room, as pupils were required to visually look downwards at the researcher who sat on floor (C).

The images that we encounter within our daily lives influence our agency within spaces. We select from the 'snowstorm' of images and information that surround us. We draw upon past experiences for reminders of expected roles and behaviours. A visual scan on entering an educational space can provide reassurance or anxiety to the pupil about the likely activities they will be expected to engage in. Images add to our affective experience within spaces.

Place space is linked by Thrift to embodiment and the affect of encounters in spaces. Our encounters within spaces, the multi-sensory experience of our particular spatial location can subdue or energise us. Looking around our surroundings during the learning period beyond the immediate learning activity can result in our performance being subdued, or re-animated. For a living, breathing, growing adolescent to remain passively seated on a hard plastic chair for 30 minutes is a challenge: to control all aspects of one's body and silence the fixtures and fittings in bodily contact, and to be perceived by others as fully engaged, is extremely hard work. Our physiology requires us to regularly blink to lubricate our eyes, to regularly look close then at a distance, to look after the eye muscles. This action was evident in the recordings as pupils moved their eyes up, down, around the space. This natural eye exercise led on occasion to an individual re-positioning their body. For instance, on turning and seeing a senior teacher in the room, a pupil places hands on face (D). Looking around another pupil comes face to face with the camera lens (D). The presence of a senior teacher, even if sitting out of the focus of the group during the interview, was hard for the pupils to

forget, and as the session came to an end the majority of pupils eyes immediately gazed towards senior teacher (C), and one pupil waved goodbye to the camera (C).

There was a lack of opportunity for improvisations in the 'faith' room, where a greater control over one's own body was required as there were no physical limitations to the personal space for each child, such as a classroom chair (C). There was less visually noticed individual movement in this recording. Pupils would presumably have been acutely aware of others' body heat and smell, and realized that others would be made more aware of their presence, as they were physically seated so close. Improvisations were limited to hand movements in the space vertically above one's knees as such movement had less physical impact on others. English classrooms contain allocated individual learning spaces and these carry cultural expectations for visual and aural awareness of peers and adults. Being aware of the physical presence of others' body heat and smell is unusual within academic learning spaces in England (Rodaway, 1994).

As Yarwood and Tyrrell (2012) noted, pupils may not have the same power as adults to change or shape their environment, yet they do improvise within the space at their disposal. A range of improvisations were noticed in the pupils sitting on chairs aligned to the melamine tables. These included:

– elbows on table and head supported by hands
– arms outstretched on table
– fingers tapping table
– arms folded across body
– stretching arms out or neck movements
– leaning back in chair, upright, leaning forwards
– the distance of chair from table
– legs crossed at knee or ankle

There was a noticeable lack of leaning on hands however in the adult work-space during the first 20 minutes of filming. This may have been due to the unfamiliar space, enhancing awareness of self or uncertainty as to what was permissible by way of small improvisations in this space.

Hands were mobile during the recordings for:

Touching
– face (eye, nose, mouth)
– jewellery
– hair, and

When talking using hands and arms for a purpose
– use of hand to mimic reading a piece of paper (C)
– use of moving hand to indicate spatial movement of person (C)
– use of hands to locate different places (E)
– hand movement to emphasize an activity – drawing (E)
– use of hands to emphasize ideas, point, show lines, explaining relative positions i.e. above (A)

In the limited, non-defined individual space of the 'faith space', however, greater improvisation in the use of hands was employed.

Contact with resources
– moving laminated sheet by a few millimetres on table (E)
– pupil picks up laminated sheet, moves a few millimetres, lifts up flicks over replaces (A)
– girl moves a few laminated sheets (A)

Contact with own possessions
– behind group away from individual space on a computer table
– under chair on floor
– hanging from back of chair
– between back of chair and body

- book cuddled close to body (A) (additional protection in an adult space?)
- putting bag strap over shoulder in anticipation of end of interview

Touching, a kinaesthetic activity connecting to possessions, body or fixtures and fittings was evidenced by all participants during the recordings. Touching as a means to connect with surrounding space seems to be important for the learner, and having available space to move one's hands and arms to communicate physically needs further investigation. Pupils who communicate with their body are likely to be silenced by the classroom expectation and norm of sitting beautifully (Jones, 2013).

Affect, a communal experience within the space, was particularly evident when pupils shared unique personal geographical insights. On these occasions the group all turned towards the pupil speaking with facial expressions of wonderment. For instance, there was a communal swelling of admiration from pupils hearing another pupil share their experience having 'seen a volcano erupt' (B), and a communal awe and wonder as we all looked towards an individual pupil sharing her experience of an earthquake (C). Such affective response was evident with the 'awe and wonder' aspects of geography, such as the large-scale natural hazards that are unlikely within the UK. Is there similar potential for affective response with small-scale personal aspects of geography? The experiences that proliferate in the pupils' voiced responses were ones that do not fit the narrow confines of what is school geography; for example, witnessing road traffic accidents.

Thrift's fourth category of 'place' further assists our analysis of the English education spaces used for this study. A focus on 'place' highlighted the tiny improvisations individuals make to connect themselves within spaces that they share temporarily with others.

Discussion

The four conceptualisations of space (Thrift, 2003) provided a useful framework to problematise a range of educational spaces, including typical classroom spaces found in English schools. It is within these unique educational spaces, with their standardised plastic chairs and melamine tables, that geography as a school subject is taught. There is a tension emerging: on the one hand, classrooms are very uniform, with standardised furniture, colours and textures. All of the five schools within this study have a school uniform, and the visual message of such images is that standardisation, uniformity, is valued. Yet, within such bland, standardised controlled English classrooms, the 2007 curriculum expects pupils to share their personal experiences, and furthermore, that within classrooms such diversity of experiences would be welcomed and valued. The curriculum appears to value individuality (DFES, 2004a), personalisation (Pollard and James, 2004) and the sharing of personal experiences of geography (QCA, 2007). This is in contrast to the classroom environment that minimises differences and promotes sameness. This study highlights the mixed messages inherent when opening up the curriculum to personal experiences within an education system that promotes normalisation.

English educational spaces are designed to limit our ability to move, twitch, exercise or embrace our surroundings, and to silence the fixtures and fittings we encounter in the classroom. The empirical data suggests that pupils strive to find tiny improvisations to enhance their feeling of place within such standardised classrooms. Such improvisations, I propose, assist pupils' engagement with learning activities, and in their ability to fully communicate within the classroom. In such controlled classroom environments, as those used with the pupil focus groups, this research has problematised the question of who benefits from sharing personal experiences and information.

Silencing experiences

The curricular expectation and notion of valued experiences were evident with examples of pupils sharing experiences of the awe and wonder aspects of geography, i.e., seeing a volcano, experiencing a hurricane. Pupils are inquisitive about the world around them, yet their world and interests may not fit the geography within the school curriculum. As noted above, the responses from many pupils included a keen interest in traffic, in particular, traffic accidents. A geography curriculum that ignores such an emotive aspect of people and their environment, of direct interest to pupils, may be silencing and creating a distance between the pupil and the subject.

My role as Community Geographer within the 'The Making My Place in the World' project highlighted the resistance of experienced teachers to loosening their control of the subject, and allowing pupils a voice and route into geographical inquiry that resonates with them. Pupils when allowed to 'voice' their opinions appear acutely aware of inequalities and the fact that power resides within a minority that place a value on economics. The pupils that visited the Town Hall, for example, to share their research and views with the Leader of the Council and Mayor, were interested to find out what had happened to the homeless people, displaced by the flagship regeneration shopping centre. Pupils at a second school in the project were comfortable with the explicit and known CCTV cameras within their school, yet shocked into bursts of energy (indignation) at the hidden CCTV cameras within their local shopping centre. This became very evident when I, as their community geographer, was taken to task for transgressing unknown rules of conduct, namely that no photographs were to be taken in this space.

The geography curriculum's assumed boundaries of experience (hegemonic) may result in pupils silencing their experiences, which this study has shown can lie beyond such boundaries. As noted in Chapter 5,

the resources used by teachers play their part in maintaining a particular view of accepted experiences to be shared within the classroom.

Concluding remarks

The focus of this chapter has been upon educational, classroom spaces. Such spaces are where student geography teachers are expected to build upon the personal geographies of their pupils. The spaces visited during the study represented a range of spaces found within English schools, including a geography classroom and a work-space for teachers. The schools represented a range of locations within the North West of England.

Within this chapter I have considered the impact of myself upon the spaces, how my presence as an unknown 'other', as well as the introduction of a digital camera, can disrupt a familiar space for pupils. I employed Thrift's four categories of space to analyse the educational spaces visited during the research. Schools are power-infused, controlled public spaces, with rules and border controls as to who can enter. Within each school the signs, routines and the ever-presence of adults control pupil access to spaces. Pupils are surrounded by a 'snowstorm' of images to remind them of their position as a pupil. Pupils may feel the tension, the mixed messages between a school's ethos of inclusion and the visual images and routines that restrict and exclude.

The visual analysis highlighted the images that surround pupils. These images provide constant reminders of expected roles and behaviours, as well as memories of past encounters. The faith room problematised the standardised pupil-allocated workspace found in the subject-based classrooms. In the faith room there was no clear boundary to personal space and on entering such a space the images that could have reassured or caused anxiety for pupils regarding expected behaviours

were troubled by the presence of a digital camera, an unknown 'other' and a seated senior teacher. The educational spaces experienced during this study became transient, 'liminal' spaces, each provided constraints upon the possibility of sharing of personal experiences.

Pupils offered clarity over the concepts personal scale and local scale, yet rejected the suggestion that student teachers might survey classes to ascertain what pupils are happy to share within the classroom. The pupil focus groups were very concerned about the potential for highlighting social and economic inequalities in such public spaces. Furthermore, the pupils raised ethical concerns about the sharing of personal information, aware their lives are influenced by others, and that those others may not wish their views to be shared publically. My role as a researcher desiring to hear pupils' views may have caused anxiety and potential ethical violence towards any pupil who would have preferred to remain silent.

Within power-infused educational spaces a pupil's agency may be evident in the tiny improvisations they make to assert themselves within the space, and in their choice to remain silent.

Chapter 7 - Concluding thoughts and next steps

This thesis has primarily been concerned with the concept 'personal geographies' as included within the 2007 National Curriculum, investigating its genesis, implications for training geography teachers and benefits, or otherwise, for pupils. Inevitably, the research has broadened into other areas including what knowledge is valued or silenced within the geography classroom, and what prior personal experiences are valued for entrants into the profession. I have also considered the design of classroom spaces for learning, and student teachers engagements with time, as these relate to questions of personal experience. In this concluding chapter I summarise and reflect on the key insights generated during the research, and draw out some implications for research, teacher education, classroom practice, education policy and the geography curriculum.

Key concerns and issues arising from thesis

This section highlights the key issues that the thesis has identified. Issues to be discussed include the *lack of clarity* over the concept 'personal geography', and the significance of *silencing* as a strategy for survival for student teachers and for pupils. The *unacknowledged risks* of a focus on personal geography, one that connects with the child's social, community and physical environment, are revisited. *Transitions* emerged as a major concern for the student geography teachers – a concern that has a specifically personal dimension. In the transition from an identity as student of a university discipline to expert teacher of school geography, a further theme emerged – that of *relationships between the academic discipline and the school subject,* as these are played out in the individual student's personal trajectory. Finally*, space,* a complex geographical concept, was put to work to explore the educational spaces temporarily configured for the pupil focus groups. The visual analysis of the digitally

recorded data raised concerns about English educational spaces, and questioned whether these were effective sites for learning. The thesis considered the strategies pupils used to create a sense of place within the educational spaces and suggested that such strategies deserve further research to assist pupils to feel safe and empowered to speak of personal experience.

Lack of clarity and consistency in curriculum and textbook definitions

The 2007 National Curriculum offered the potential of a school geography curriculum that valued difference as the subject was newly centred on the personal space of the learner and her/his connections to the world. The aspiration was to support a more personal conception of geography that draws on diversity, but which is not dictated by it. The lack of clarity of the concept 'personal geography' offered possibilities, a space to consider new ways of working with a policy that stated that the 'curriculum should provide opportunities for pupils to: build on and expand their personal experiences of geography' (QCA, 2007)

As noted in Chapter 2 the vagueness surrounding this 'loosely defined' concept (Butt, 2009) was at odds with the terminology of 'must' and 'should' within the policy documents. I argued that the concept of experience was frequently used in the curriculum documents in relation to personal geography/ies, yet this concept was also never adequately defined. This compounded the potential for confusion, distancing individuals from understanding, resulting in resistance to the implementation of policy within the classroom.

An exploration and content analysis of three training textbooks marketed as 'essential', 'authoritative', 'powerful' and 'invaluable' (Chapter 2) failed to assist in clarifying the concept 'personal geography', which was not listed in their index or contents pages, thus maintaining its illusive nature.

Reference to personal geography was limited to the occasional mention; for instance, expert teachers could 'tune into pupils' personal geographies' (Brooks, 2010) and teachers were prompted to 'use your geography' (Lambert and Balderstone, 2010).

The thesis questioned whether personal geography was about sharing, or voicing prior experiences of the child or teacher. The concept at first glance appeared to empower classroom actors; yet without clarity and a shared understanding, it was argued that power remains within the hierarchical educational structure rather than the classroom actors. The thesis posed a number of questions: How do pupils benefit from hearing others share their experiences? Can this lead to reinforcing social inequalities? Who decides what is permissible to share, whose voices to silence?

Silencing of personal knowledge and experiences

One of the most significant issues raised by the thesis concerns silencing. The thesis drew attention in Chapter 2 to the predominance of white, male, middle-class geographical texts in the UK until the 1990s, arguing that this restricted the diversity studied within the academic discipline. My own geographical learning (school, BA, PGCE and MA) was limited within a male (tutor) view of the discipline and unwittingly may have perpetuated such a narrow view of the world to previous cohorts of student teachers. The doctoral study highlighted and insisted upon new ways of viewing the world for the researcher.

The thesis raised questions about the geography curriculum in England at each educational transitional step from Key Stage 1 through to undergraduate, asking 'Are those whose experiences are not recognised silenced and pushed away from further studies in geography?'

The four cohorts of student teachers within the case study were themselves predominately white and middle class. The thesis noted that novice teachers' own prior experiences of geography teachers are mainly limited to white, middle-class teachers. It proposed that student teachers may unwittingly use in their classrooms resources and activities that might silence some voices, if pupils' experiences do not resonate with geography content that is normalised and standardised. The thesis therefore questioned the kind of 'personal' knowledge valued within the English geography classroom, and the role that teacher educators have in influencing school geography knowledge.

The thesis further pursued the notion of silencing – how it works, and how it affected the student teachers and the pupils, as well as the researcher. The thesis proposed that pupils were expected to be 'transparent entities', their prior experiences including personal geographies to be made available to others in the room. The thesis raised concerns that individual pupils' prior experience might become just another piece of data, data they are expected to give, for the class teacher and others to use.

The thesis noted that students often ignored the unique geographical insights that they brought to their studies, and wondered why this happened. It considered whether there was something within the English educational structure that results in students not valuing the knowledge that they bring, only valuing 'other', non-personal geography that their teachers and lecturers use in the classroom. The thesis also found inconsistencies in pupils' use of personal experience. The pupils interviewed as part of the research were asked if they had experienced anything geographical. Many exemplars were shared from travels abroad, such as seeing a volcano erupt or being caught up in a hurricane, as well as locally based exemplars linked to traffic and traffic accidents. When asked if they had shared this knowledge with their geography teacher the answer was a resounding no. The thesis argued that pupils' perception of the kind of knowledge valued in the classroom needs further exploration.

The pupils' personal geographical experiences - the funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) they have access to or their repertoire (Bernstein, 1999) of knowledge and skills that they bring to the classroom - continues to excite me as a researcher and a teacher educator. The thesis asked how teacher educators could prepare initial teacher students to be aware of the uniqueness of each pupil, their geographical starting point, to create individual geographical learning journeys that value the experiences each pupil brings. It was argued that this aspiration was further complicated if the pupil silences what they perceive is not valued in schools.

The thesis raised the question of whether the discourses of geography education within the UK over the period of the research may have promoted forms of knowledge, experience and identity that are more familiar and accessible to students from certain groups than to others. This question was informed by a substantial body of discourse research, often based on Foucault's notion of power/knowledge (e.g. 1972), that has argued that schooling operates to reproduce inequalities of class, gender and ethnicity. For example, Gee (2008:4) argues that educational discourse 'incorporates a usually taken for granted and tacit set of "theories" about what counts as a "normal" person and the "right" ways to think, feel and behave' (see also Cazden, 1988; Luke, 1995). I was interested therefore in whether the normative discourses of geography in education tended to assume a predominantly white, middle-class view of the world. Some evidence for such a view was detected in the visual imagery of teaching resources, for instance, and to a limited extent in the views expressed by some of the student teachers. In common with other studies of classroom discourse, the thesis raised issues of equality of access to prevailing meanings, and was concerned that pupils may misrecognise themselves to fit into prevailing notions of experience that do not accord with their own. Thus, it was argued, language can silence. Comparing self to others, and/or playing down one's own transgressions from the 'norm', may assist pupils to cope with the day-to-day pressures

within school. The pupils who participated in the research seemed to be aware of what was 'safe' to speak about and share within the classroom. However this may have involved tension or personal struggle: pupils may have chosen to be silent about aspects of themselves and their personal geographical experiences, playing down 'outsider identities' to fit in with classroom norms. Yet as I also noted, they could not be *too* silent, in case this prevented others from playing their classroom role, as unwanted attention might then be focused back upon the pupil.

Language is the primary tool for communication, and educational spaces are the primary sites for formal learning. Both language and space enable learning, yet both have their limits and can constrain and restrict learning. All agents (pupils and teachers) develop survival strategies within public educational spaces. The thesis contends that silencing may be such a strategy, empowering individuals that are unable to recognise themselves within the generic activities and content of geography lessons.

The unacknowledged risks and inequalities of introducing 'the personal' into the classroom

The thesis considered the problematic status of the personal – whether the personal can ever be uniquely 'owned'. During the policy climate of 'personalisation', there appeared to be an unquestioned assumption that personal geographical experiences and explorations in the classroom would be beneficial to pupils. For instance, the national 'Every Child Matters' agenda stipulated that 'learning should connect with the child's social, community and physical environment' (DfES, 2004).

The thesis questioned whether geographical subject knowledge that connects with the child's social, community and physical environment was necessarily an appropriate focus for a child living in relative poverty. Concern was expressed that researching 'me' and my personal life may be a more appropriate research focus at undergraduate level rather than

for the individual child, or at least that the ethical and cultural implications of introducing the personal into the classroom need to be carefully considered.

Pupils want to be respected as individuals but not, I have argued, at the expense of raising social inequalities within the public classroom space. On this matter their views, expressed in the focus groups, resonated with the personalised learning aim (2004) referred to in Chapter 2, in which pupils are thought of as individuals regardless of 'distinction' caused by gender bias, social economic status or ethnicity.

The pupils in their focus groups reflected upon the question of whose geography was represented or shared: those of their parents/guardians or their own. Children may find it hurtful to share their experience of place and where they have lived if their experience does not meet the norm (e.g. children in foster care or who are refugees). The thesis noted that pupils set boundaries around what they felt acceptable to share within the public space of the classroom, and what they wished to keep within more private bounds. For some pupils, it appeared to be the escape from personal experience within the boundaries of the classroom that allowed them to learn – their 'personal' geography may be too personal and not conducive to a safe learning environment.

'*Too persona*l' was a phrase used within pupil groups. The thesis raised concern that a focus within a lesson that is 'too personal' can have an emotional effect on a pupil; therefore, pupils may adopt survival strategies to avoid potential upset. The thesis considered choosing to be silent such a strategy. Pupils may prefer to leave behind their personal lives, to engage in geography content and activities that offer a temporal escape from their lives.

The thesis also highlighted silencing of pupils' experiences as a survival strategy of the novice teacher anxious to avoid lessons infected by controversial issues. A sanitised view of the world is easier to plan for

than unknown pupil experiences and views which may contain traces of others (e.g. parents). For example, one student was placed in a school in an area highlighted by the media as supporting the views of the British National Party. Bringing personal experiences into the classroom can therefore introduce elements of risk that can never be wholly anticipated. The pupils themselves raised ethical considerations, expressing concern that their lives are influenced by 'others' and that those 'others' may not wish for their views and decisions to be shared publically. Thus, from an ethical position pupils may choose to be silent.

As a researcher desiring to give pupils opportunities to voice their views, aiming to bring to the research 'thick description' (see Geertz, 1973) based on personal narratives of pupils, my actions during the pupil focus sessions drew upon 'seasoned' (Jones et al., 2010) experience as a professional teacher. However, encouraging each pupil to contribute may have added undue pressure and potential ethical violence towards pupils who may have preferred to remain silent. The thesis thus highlights the complex relationship and tensions in the research process, and the ways in which the researcher's prior experiences can impact or 'infect' (Jones et al., 2010) the research.

Ethics

There are power dynamics within any research situation and this inevitably influences what participants feel able to say. While this is significant for all research studies, it is particularly significant in this study because the main focus on the personal is itself a political and ethical issue. Introducing the personal into geography classrooms can, as I have shown, have very direct ethical implications and may impact on pupils' wellbeing. Moreover, one of the key issues that emerged in the course of the research concerned silencing and who feels able to speak. It was important therefore that my own interactions with the participants were sensitive to issues of power, silencing and the possible implications for pupils of speaking out in public about personal matters.

My understanding of the ethical issues raised by the research developed as the study progressed. For instance, from the anxieties expressed by some of the student teachers, I learned that bringing the personal into the classroom not only raises complex ethical issues, but that the precise nature of these can never be fully known in advance. I also learned from the responses of the school pupils the extent to which the ethical implications of making personal knowledge public may be either positive or negative, depending on the situation and the personal history of the individual pupils.

Therefore, although it is crucial that ethical protocols are developed and informed consent sought from participants and potential ethical implications thoroughly explored at the outset, ethical dilemmas can never be fully specified in advance and participants (including the researcher) can never fully know or be aware of the direction that the study may take. Ethical responsibility, and the trust that must underpin this, are therefore matters for continuous reflection and negotiation throughout the course of a study and beyond.

Transitions in becoming a geography teacher

The thesis has identified transitions as a key theme running throughout the training year. The student teachers arrive with their disciplinary knowledge of geography. Some of them at least are excited by the prospect of enthusing others with their passion for geography, unaware of the challenges and transitions they will experience in becoming a teacher. The research showed that student teachers are generally eager to start their training. Driven by a need to be seen as an expert in the classroom, they want to learn successful survival strategies to use immediately. The student participants in the study were cautiously keen to get into classrooms as quickly as possible at the start of their training 'to avoid information overload', in the words of one interviewee. One implication is that potential students may be seduced by new routes into training (such

as School Direct) which offer an immediate 'belonging' to a school from the start of the training year.

The thesis drew attention (Chapter 5) to many aspects of transition and transformation during the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme for the student teachers. Firstly, the rich diversity of disciplinary knowledge shared and voiced with confidence by students as they commenced the course, as expressed in the induction interviews, was diminished by the time of the exit interviews into a more normalised view of school geography. The thesis noted with concern the increasing 'distance' between the breadth of their academic geographical knowledge and the limited version prescribed by the National Curriculum.

A second major transition was evident within the exit interviews with student teachers. On the threshold of becoming a qualified teacher, they talked about 'past me' and 'present me' (see pages 156-157), showing that they were aware of the process of personal transformation. There were personal difficulties experienced by some of the students in making such transformations. For example, for one student with prior experience as a professional, the transition to the identity of professional educator was not smooth; it included a shift in his notions of professionalism and acceptance of the need to be critically observed by others. For some students the transition from their prior experience as a Teaching Assistant working alongside and observing teachers to becoming a teacher involved thinking differently. The significance of prior occupational experience varies therefore according to the current perspective of individual students.

The university-based training programme for most students (some have prior post-graduate experience) involves the transition from undergraduate to postgraduate. This requires the ability to write academically at a new higher level. However, this transition is complicated by the need to acquire the skill of conveying geographical knowledge in an accessible manner to younger learners.

The main transition identified in the thesis involves the rapid induction into professional discourses and practices. This was described by the student teachers in the study as intense. The speed of the transition - from classroom observer of practice and receiver of information to teacher of pupils and provider of information - was traumatic for some students. A myth perpetuates from one cohort to the next that 'you will cry' during the course, and for many students this was a reality. One student described the year as 'more intense than Sandhurst'.

The thesis raises important issues beyond learning to work and coping with the harsh realities of life. Keeping afloat one's passion for geography and the reasons for wanting to be a teacher was a struggle for many students during the intense training year, as they went through transitions to become a qualified teacher, constantly observed by 'others'. Students spoke of the increasing distance between themselves as a becoming teacher and their friends beyond the course, as a sense of 'insiders' versus 'outsiders' developed. The student teachers were partly cushioned and supported during the training year by the close networks developed with their peers, as they developed a group identity and a supportive 'community of practice'. Unfortunately, this was not enough support for some students, who in order to survive and gain respect within placement contexts abandoned some of their disciplinary and professional knowledge in order to become 'insiders' within 'their' school. The thesis proposes that student teachers may silence or have amnesia about the discipline of geography as a survival strategy, as they desire acceptance as 'expert' teacher within a particular school context.

Time, and the problem of being 'present' in the classroom

The thesis questioned whether a teacher can ever be fully present in the classroom. In a leaving interview with a student teacher as she withdrew from the training course, she stated that the main reason for leaving was

her 'busy brain', and the inability to switch off thinking. The thesis drew upon conversations with senior teachers who similarly shared their inability to be fully present, and their tendency to answer pupils' questions with routine responses. My own journal entries highlighted how the interview process with others grounded me, as researcher, in the present. Outside of those 30-minute digitally recorded snapshots of time, I was aware that I flit constantly between time dimensions.

The theme of time developed over the research period, from a relatively neglected concept, limited to historical changes in the development of the discipline and school subject (Chapter 2) to an important feature of student teachers' biographical timelines/maps. During the analysis stage of the research, notions of time developed further as it was noted that individuals experienced time differently whilst sharing the same educational space.

Rarely being in the present may be a survival strategy in the busy lives of teachers, acting with routine responses rather than in direct engagement with what a pupil has said, as teachers negotiate multiple time dimensions. The thesis problematised the notion of time within the current (2007-2012) educational climate, not just in terms of the expectation of having to work harder, but as a skill in negotiating multiple time dimensions to be developed during the training year. The thesis suggests that student teachers need to acquire the skill of being present in the classroom, whilst planning next steps for individual pupils and constantly evaluating and reflecting on past and present experiences.

Massey (2005) highlighted how the trajectories of individuals pass through spaces, and that each space can be the temporal site of many trajectories. The thesis raised the concern that though physically and temporally a teacher's trajectory may be within the same educational space as the pupils', the potential engagement between the teachers and pupils may be minimal, limited by learned routines of behaviour replacing meaningful engagement.

The relationship between the academic discipline and school geographies

If the academic discipline is conceived of as a static body of knowledge, and the teacher's role as that of a technician, then there may be an argument for reducing dialogic spaces and promoting routes in to teaching that are shorter, and based within a single context. However, the evidence from this thesis strongly refutes this suggestion. The thesis explored the origins of school geography and its relationship to the professional bodies (RGS-IBG & GA) and the university discipline. I suggested that understanding of the relationship between school geography and the academic discipline is central to any notion of what a curriculum and pedagogy should be, both for schools and for teacher education.

These relationships, and their change over time, were considered in some detail in Chapter 2. Using Stengel's (1997) categories as a starting point, I discussed the ways in which university and school geography had enjoyed variously 'discontinuous' and 'related' relationships over time, and the interventions of the professional associations. The thesis highlighted the role teachers are obliged to play in mediating between what they have learned at university and what they are required to teach to their pupils. Although there has arguably always been some degree of disconnect between university and school geographies, the thesis argues that the 2007 National Curriculum created a predominantly 'discontinuous' relationship between the discipline and schools, with the school curriculum newly focused upon the child. There is a danger that the gulf between the academic discipline and school geography will be exacerbated if training is provided entirely within school contexts. The fast-paced two-week induction at the start of a PGCE, after which students go straight into the classroom, fails to acknowledge or bridge the gap between the diversity of the geographical knowledge students bring

to the profession and the school geography under way in the school placements. Students as a survival strategy tend to adopt uncritically the school's geography curriculum, as they desire acceptance as a professional within the school setting. This is particularly significant if the degree specialism is in a different area of knowledge to that valued within the school's schemes of work: for example, where a student holds a BSc in Geology, and undertakes a school placement teaching a unit on crime.

The individual student teachers had particular conceptualisations and constructions of what geography is. These may not be apparent if one does not research them. Two students who may seem quite similar in terms of their prior qualifications and age may have very different connections with the discipline: for example, one student used phrases such as 'natural' to conceptualise and define geography, whereas another focused upon the links with sport to formulate his conceptualisation of the discipline.

Common sense assumptions about the ways in which the biographical past affects an individual's relationship with the discipline cannot simply be read in terms of the brute facts of an individual's biography. Analysis of the student teachers' life history maps challenged and complicated potential links between the presented prior experiences and interests, and the particular kind of teacher individuals would become or aspired to become. The complexity of the relationship between an individual's past experience and their progress toward becoming a teacher also emerged as a result of the decision to interview students in pairs. During the dialogic encounters the language they used to get at what geography meant to them highlighted individual differences which did not relate in a simple way to their individual backgrounds and prior experiences.

The thesis demonstrated therefore that prior experiences did not necessarily influence how the student teachers viewed their role as teachers of school geography, or their views of children. Some, for instance, had quite diverse experiences in their background yet shared

quite narrow views of children or geography, whereas others had limited prior experiences yet appeared to be more aware of and open to the diversity of the discipline and of children's views. The diverse educational and cultural background of one student from West Africa appeared to be associated with a personal struggle to connect with pupils in an all-girls Muslim school in a northern town. He could not use local area knowledge because the girls did not know the local area – their knowledge was from a small region within Pakistan. The student had to become unfamiliar with his own life, to see differently in order to appreciate other ways of viewing and experiencing the world. Another student felt his own background was *too* similar to that of the pupils in his placement school, and struggled to connect the geography he was teaching to his pupils, until he reassessed his way of viewing the world, again making the familiar unfamiliar. The key implication is that geography teachers cannot draw uncomplicatedly upon their own geographical experiences. The research complicated notions of, and the significance of, the personal within geography.

Educational spaces

The thesis foregrounded and recognised the complexity of space, its role as a location for data creation and collection (focus groups and interviews), and the significance of space as the site for formal education. The thesis thus adds to the work of others who have raised awareness of space used within qualitative research, such as Rapley (2004), who argued that the physical space of interviews is one of the 'multiple possible "influences"'(2004:18) on what is shared during data collection, and Dyke's account of the marginal nature of interview spaces within institutions (Dyke, 2013).

The visual analysis of the pupil focus groups highlighted the need for all pupils to twitch and fidget, as they engaged and improvised with the fixtures and fittings in order to create and assist their feeling of a sense of place. Pupils need to feel safe in order to learn; the thesis noted a strong

need to touch connecting to possessions, body or fixtures and fittings by all pupils within the case study. Further research is needed to explore how teachers can welcome and embrace such kinaesthetic engagements within learning spaces rather than insist on 'sitting beautifully' (Jones, 2013).

The thesis also showed, using Thrift's (2003) categories of space, how the material, symbolic, affective and cultural dimensions of educational spaces work to silence and enable certain voices, with implications for policies and curricula that aim to embrace personal experience in teaching and learning.

Implications of the foregoing issues

Within this section I draw out some of the implications of the issues and concerns raised within the thesis for education policy, teacher education, research, classroom practice and the geography curriculum.

Implications for education policy

New curriculum proposals need to be considered not as self-contained documents, but in relation to the policy climate in which they emerge. The thesis has shown how a seemingly small intervention in the National Curriculum for geography, i.e., the inclusion of 'personal geography', can be situated within the policy interest of the time in the so-called 'personalisation' of learning (Chapter 3). The thesis traced some of the ramifications of that policy-driven intervention, e.g. how the policy shift operated in advance of curriculum, pedagogy and professional understandings of what might count as 'personal geography'. The thesis has argued that not enough attention was paid to the complexity and the possible implications for pupils of bringing 'the personal' into public educational spaces. One of the possible implications of the research

therefore might be to slow down the processes by which policy ideas become translated into the curriculum, and thence into practice, in order to allow for critical interrogation and reflection prior to changing classroom practice.

Implications for geography subject knowledge and school curriculum

The thesis has shown how the breadth and complexity of academic geographies are, perhaps inevitably, simplified and perhaps even fossilised when geography (like other subjects) becomes inserted into educational and training discourses. The thesis also showed how the move from 'academic geography' to 'teacher education geography' to 'school geography' has implications for becoming teachers, who must themselves move through these transitions, with more or less struggle on the part of individuals. One of the implications would be the need to consider how changes in the status of subject knowledge are an issue for intending teachers, and that this could be addressed more explicitly within teacher education programmes. Another implication is the need to strive for richer, less reductive bodies of subject knowledge, and to resist the progressive watering down of the breadth and complexity of subject geographical knowledge that takes place in the progression from undergraduate level, to teacher education, to school curriculum.

Implications for classroom practice

The thesis drew attention to the tiny improvisations pupils make as they touch and engage with the classroom fixtures and fittings, arguing that these actions are important in assisting a pupil's sense of place, in feeling safe within the classroom spaces. An implication would be the need to consider the effectiveness of educational spaces for learning. Further research is required into classrooms and how such educational spaces could be harnessed to enhance a child's 'sense of place' within the

learning environment. It is also clear that educational spaces may themselves impede the expression of personal voice, and that this needs to be further examined in curriculum development and research.

The thesis has interrogated and problematised the notion of the 'personal', particularly within the geography curriculum, showing how generic notions of 'personal' overlook the diversity of personal experience across pupils (and student teachers), including differences of class, ethnicity and experience of trauma. The thesis pointed therefore to the risks and dangers, as well as the advantages, of breaching the public-private boundary in the classroom. One of the implications would be the need for much more careful, empirical and sensitive exploration of the risks, limitations and advantages of engaging with personal experience in schools.

Implications for teacher education

The thesis has shown that there is not a simple linear link between a student teacher's prior experience and the kind of teacher they are becoming. There is a need therefore to challenge and complicate notions of the importance of prior experience for professional development.

I would argue, on the basis of this study, that one of the benefits of university-based teacher education is that it offers a place where the above issues can adequately be addressed. This thesis provides a strong rationale for maintaining university involvement in teacher education, on the grounds that this preserves a space for critical reflection and awareness of other ways of viewing the world. University-based programmes can assist student teachers in becoming aware of their unique and culturally schooled view of the world, and the ways that this can act as a blinker to their engagements with pupils. By offering a space for critical reflection on the complexities of introducing the personal into the geography curriculum, university-based teacher education can help

student teachers maintain their passion and develop their disciplinary knowledge of geography. Despite the constraints of a National Curriculum, it is still possible in principle to combat the reductionism that reduces the geography curriculum to a narrow band of knowledge and skills.

The breadth of contrastive experience gained through school placements, interspersed with university-based provision, provides students with resources to critically interrogate the question of what might count as geographical knowledge. Student teachers might not recognise that they could be silencing some pupil voices, if they are not placed in situations that force them to confront the fact that the way they see the world is not the same as how individual pupils see the world. This thesis proposes that ITE courses need to provide access to a breadth of educational experiences, and furthermore, to create opportunities for student teachers to reflect upon differing conceptions of the personal within geography.

Limitations of the research

As with any small scale doctoral study, the research cannot fully address the potential diversity of pupil and student teacher views and experiences and classroom contexts. The research data has included the views expressed by pupil focus groups and pairs of student teachers to consider the possibility of novice teachers building upon the prior geographical experiences of pupils. An ethnographic approach was earlier rejected in favour of a case study approach. However, an ethnographic engagement within the classroom, observing teaching and learning in action, might have resulted in more depth of insight. A major limitation is myself, my ability as a researcher to design and employ effective tools and methods of analysis, and my role as interpreter and presenter of data within the thesis. My prior experiences have shaped how I view the world. My trained preference, dependence and appreciation of quantitative and factual data that I could manipulate for

patterns was rejected during the early stages of this research on the grounds that this hindered and failed to provide effective tools for a research focus on personal geographies. Nevertheless, there may remain sticky textual reminders of prior ways of thinking within this final version of the thesis.

This research is a product of its time: 2008-12. It would not be possible to repeat it in 2014. As I write up this thesis, the five schools visited for the pupil focus groups do not all exist: one school closed in August 2011 as part of an amalgamation. The educational system in England has continued to change. The research is one example, a case study that may not be representative of other locations within England, or other PGCE Geography programmes. Nevertheless, the issues and concerns raised may be more widely applicable, or may provide insights to support other educators seeking to understand the factors that influence curriculum development and initial teacher education in geography.

Further research

Further research is required into the school geography curriculum in England, as the majority of English schools do not need to follow the (2014) National Curriculum, raising questions about what geography will be taught. The thesis has pointed out the lack of research into geographical education within England, and as the quote below demonstrates, this gap is also a concern in the USA.

> We need better and more research before we can understand even the most fundamental ways individuals develop proficiency in geography. The current state of geography education across the United States is a threat to our social, political, and economic well-being. (Bednarz et al., 2013:19)

Further research is needed into teaching and learning geography in English classrooms. Whose interests are promoted? How can geography lessons celebrate diversity? How do children engage with and become proficient in geography?

Finally, the thesis focused upon one route into teaching geography during the period 2007-2012 – that of the one-year, university-based PGCE course. Further research is needed into the increasing range of UK teacher training routes. Do the new models and routes into teaching embrace the diversity of the discipline, and value diversity of views within the geography classroom?

Reflection on what has changed between the 2007 and 2014 versions of the National Curriculum

This thesis, as with all research, is a product of its time. As I write the concluding thoughts and next steps, I am very mindful that if the research was commencing rather than ending it would be very different. The education landscape of 2014 with the latest 'new' National Curriculum is significantly different to 2007. The National Curriculum in 2014 leaves a majority of 11-16 schools and colleges (academies, free schools, etc.) free to design their own curricula. The main route into teaching for geography teachers in 2007 was via a PGCE course based within HE with a minimum of two school placements. In 2014 there are many routes into teaching including the current government's flagship School Direct PGCE route, where students undertake their training in the workplace.

What this thesis has done is highlight important questions that need to be put to ITE and school curricula. The educational landscape and times have changed since the thesis was written. Yet the concerns raised by the research, such as silence, transitions and space, remain relevant. It is still important to ask what happens to students in the transition between

undergraduate, teacher education and qualifying as a teacher of geography.

During my professional career there have been a number of 'new' or revised National Curricula. The 2007 curriculum ignited my curiosity about 'personal geography'. As I capture and place upon the typed page the knowledge and understanding gained, and contemplate the questions and flights of further study yet to investigate, I pause to glance within the 2014 National Curriculum programme of study for geography, looking for reference to personal geographies. I come upon the following statement.

> A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. (DFE, 2013)

The above quote resonates with my enduring curiosity and fascination about personal geographies. The reference is the nearest I could find within the 2014 programme of study to personal geographies. Where the 2007 programme of study placed the spotlight upon pupils' personal experiences, the focus has for the moment shifted to a curiosity about others, about the planet, and about 'its people'.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Extracts from field notes and research journal

23rd Jan 2009 At the end of the first week (Sept 2008) I had acquired two volunteers to interview and tape record. I was up front with my desire to develop my own research skills of interviewing and transcribing. I asked two individuals for their help and time, selected for their confidence and energy demonstrated over the first few days, and these two 'volunteers' were different genders, with different geography views (a life history approach on the first day of the PGCE highlighted student's experiences and views on geography). 'Volunteer' is an inaccurate term to describe their participation, as course leader for the Geography PGCE my role would have made it difficult for the students to decline as they would have wanted to make a good impression. I did stress that they could say no, and I promised a time limit of 30 minutes and that the experience was for me as a learner of research techniques.

Ethically, I introduced my PhD focus with the PGCE students on the first day of the course, students were also asked to sign a piece of paper to record that I had shared my focus with the group. The two volunteers asked for a copy of the recording, I provided each with a CD copy approximately 2 weeks after the interview. The students were interested to ask me how I was progressing with the transcription after the interview.

As a researcher I was excited, yet very nervous about this interview. I had a few questions ready that had emerged from my reflections on the first few days with the group. I had read about interviewing techniques and was very keen to make the relationship between interviewer & interviewee as equal/participatory as feasible. My office had a very quick make over to ensure seats were clear of papers. Having the interview in my office raises an issue as this was an unknown/unseen space/environment for the two students, this is something for me to bear in mind when conducting interviews – the actual environment of the interview.

28th Sept 2009 As an action researcher analysing, reflecting on my own practice and hence the experiences of my students, I cannot replicate the past as I have moved forward.

The interview with two students in the first week – I looked again at their comments; I wanted to find out whether the course this year has helped student teachers' awareness of personal geographies. I considered emailing the questions to a couple of students. Hey, emailed answers don't need transcribing. What would be missing is the

opportunity to develop answers, and for the students to bounce ideas together. This bouncing is a feature I want to 'capture', explore further from the video footage I have of the pupils. Influence of peers.

I emailed the TEC rep – last year's 'volunteer' did become the TEC rep. For the second student, my sampling technique was … the most recent two students to email me – TEC rep followed by NJ. NJ had sent an updated school placement form – I checked his home address – close to campus (would have been a bit unfair to ask a Bradford located student to come for a 30 min session).

The two students emailed yes 'That should be fine, where should I meet you at 2.00pm on Thursday?' NJ
'yeah that's not a problem, i think the majority of us will be in the library on thurs anyway!' GT

So 2 students for 2 p.m. tomorrow. I've extracted the questions from last year. Many were planned, some arose during the session.

14th June 2010 *I taped (with a digital recorder – no actual tape involved) 2 students who had completed their CDA on Personal Geographies. 44 mins on recording.*
Now have 2 cohorts of tapes at start & end of course.
Also with permission have copies of their CDA to analyse.

20th Sept 2010 *At lunch time (Fri 17th) sat with group – mentioned that over last 2 years I had interviewed a pair on the first Friday – would anyone like to volunteer – the 2 closest said yes!!*

Field notes and Journal entries

Appendix 2 - Summary Information of the student participants

Code	When interviewed	Gender	Secondary School location	Degree from	Other info
TE	During Induction Phase 2008-9	Female	Suburban, Manchester	MMU 2.1 BSc Geography	Course representative 5 years Outdoor Ed Instructor
HM	During Induction Phase 2008-9 & End of Course	Male	Small town, Derbyshire	University of Chester 2.1 Geography with Sport & Exercise Sciences	1 year teaching Assistant
VH	End of Course 2008-9	Female	Small town, North Wales	University of Leeds 2.1 BA (Hons) Urban Geography & MA Urban Regeneration	1 year Research & Evaluation consultant
GT	During Induction Phase 2009-10	Female	Suburban, Leeds	University of Salford 2.2 BSc Aquatic Science	Course representative
NJ	During Induction Phase 2009-10	Male	Town, Cumbria	UCLAN 2.1 BA (Hons) Geography	2 years working in a Special Needs School
OG	End of Course 2009-10	Male	Small Town, Midlothian & Town, Greater Manchester	University of Salford Environmental Geography	Writer (plays & poetry)
OT	End of Course 2009-10	Male	Small town, West Yorkshire & West Africa	University of Huddersfield 2.2 BSc Geography Applied (Hons)	Experience as a pupil abroad

KR	During Induction Phase 2010-11	Female		Sheffield Hallam 1st BA (Hons) Geography	
WF	During Induction Phase 2010-11	Female	Large town, Yorkshire	University of Manchester 2.1 BSc Geography	Cover Supervisor Football Coach
IK	End of Course 2010-11	Female	Town, Greater Manchester	University of Reading 2.1 BSc Land Management	Course representative
BB	End of Course 2010-11	Female	Small town, North Wales	University of Manchester 2.1 BA (Hons) Geography	Taught English abroad
HJ	During Induction Phase 2011-12	Female	Small town, Derbyshire	MMU 1st BSc Human Geography	Assisted with Aim Higher during 1st and 2nd year
LS	During Induction Phase 2011-12	Male	Suburban, Stockport	MMU 2.2 BSc Physical Geography	Summer School in USA
NH	End of Course 2011-12	Female	Village, Somerset	University of Manchester 2.1 BSc Geography	RGS Geography Ambassador
WS	End of Course 2011-12	Female	Town, Hertfordshire	University of Leeds 2.1 BA (Hons) Geography	Students Associate Scheme GCSE Exam Marker

Appendix 3 - Induction questionnaire

1. How has the induction phase of the course been for you so far?

2. What have you learnt?

3. Has there been any particular session that has really stuck out in your mind any particular activities that has really resonated with you?

4. How do you define geography? What is your definition of geography?

5. Any particular geography topic you feel will be a challenge to teach?

6. What do you perceive will be the main challenges for you as a teacher you are about to go into your first placement school?

7. Do you think there will be any particular challenges for you as student geography teachers - the actual school location? At the moment you don't know where your two main placements will be and they could be anywhere in a very large radius.

8. Do you think it is important to make the geography you are teaching very connected to the pupils you are teaching?

9. Once you know what school you are going to on your main placement what preparation could you do to really find out to really find out about the geography of that area so you can use it?

10. Do you feel ready for the Block A placement?

11. Thank you so you have answered all the questions I have prepared, could you share back to me what you think my PhD is all about?

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