

“Living On the Island But Staging the World”

Can drama help children to understand how they belong in the world?
*A joint exploration of values and identity by primary aged children
and their teacher.*

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This thesis results entirely from my own work and has not been offered previously for any degree or diploma. The word length conforms to the permitted maximum.

Signed.....DC Binns



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Abstract

The aim of this project was to find out how drama might support an exploration of values, identity and citizenship with primary aged children within a critical pedagogical framework. The findings are offered as an alternative dialogue to the British Values agenda, which has been widely viewed as problematic and divisive. The project adds to existing research on the use of drama to support citizenship education and also adds to the literature on the practical application of critical pedagogical theory to classroom practice.

The project uses a methodology which puts the children's voices at the heart of the research. The methodological approach is critical grounded theory, utilising drama as a method. This research attempted to remain true to an immersive form of drama education known as "process drama" rooted in the classic "Theatre in Education" movement. The premise of this approach is that the work should facilitate social change and promote social justice.

The findings demonstrate that participatory drama is an effective tool to critically engage children with values and identity. Drama deepened the children's understanding of the concepts of a "value" and widened their appreciation of a range of values. The children in the project demonstrated that they were open to multiple identities and ways of belonging. The findings demonstrate clear links to recent articulations of critical pedagogy: pedagogies of "difference" and "discomfort". This project includes strong evidence from the perspectives of the pupils and demonstrates that the development of shared values requires an investment of time and resources. It is a complex, challenging, yet worthwhile endeavour.

Acknowledgements

“Our classrooms need an open door. To find new ways to reveal what we have and what we are. When we are known, we are untouchable. What we do matters. Drama is an intervention into nothingness. Drama seeks life.” (John Doona, 2013)

In memory of John Doona, without whom none of this would have happened. Thank you. My deepest thanks also go to Sue Harding, Matt Wardle and Chris Wright who gave me the tools to bring the magic of drama to my classroom and sent my life in a new direction. I am richer in so many ways from being part of the Children’s Shakespeare Festivals.

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Finally, I would like to thank my family. My mother for feeding my love of books throughout my childhood and always believing in me. My father for the endless repetition of “Alice in Wonderland” and “The Secret Garden”: my first journeys into magical worlds which have stayed with me ever since. Lastly, to my husband Neil Binns without whom I would never have had the courage to begin this journey.

For Joseph and Charlotte,

I hope that the world you grow up in will be a better place, one that is more compassionate and more tolerant. I hope you read magical stories that fire your imagination. Dream big and believe in impossible things. Go on adventures, fall down the rabbit hole, go through the wardrobe and find the key to unlock the hidden door to the secret garden. Because there should always be time for one last story.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Background: My Journey into Drama in Education

From as early as I can remember, I have understood the power of stories. As a child, I would disappear into a book for hours on end. I loved those magical worlds. I knew the characters like friends and often found it hard to believe that they could not really exist out there in the world. It was an escape, but also a way of understanding the world and all of its troubles. My mother fed my habit with what spare change she had left at the end of the week, returning regularly from the local second-hand market with a bag of children's books. Over the week I would greedily devour them all. I digested the language almost by osmosis and regurgitated them into my own stories, experimenting with new vocabulary and ways of speaking. Reading and stories inspired my choices at secondary school. In English, I was introduced to Shakespeare and I went to the theatre for the first time.

I graduated in 1992 from Manchester University with a degree in psychology and my original intention in taking a Post Graduate Certificate in Education was to become an educational psychologist. I quickly found that I loved being in the classroom; building relationships with the children was one of the most rewarding aspects of the job. I never went on to do the educational psychology training and I found my first teaching position. My background in psychology served me well in schools and I became the SENCO (special needs coordinator), completing a Masters in Special Needs a few years later. The school was at the heart of a struggling community and for some children, the stable point in their lives. I quickly became aware of how much social disadvantage impacted on children's lives, but also how as teachers we had the opportunity to make a small difference.

I discovered the power of story to engage children and I drew upon all of my personal knowledge of children's literature. Drama was a natural progression, a new way of exploring the story and deepening understanding of the characters. I began to dabble in drama, attending a few courses and reading some books. I started taking the children to the theatre as part of writing projects and we won a grant to participate in a project with the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester.

It was at this theatre around ten years ago that a chance meeting occurred which changed my life forever, both personally and professionally. I had been teaching for fourteen years by now. I was the Deputy Head Teacher of a primary school, as well as the year six teacher and SENCO. Our school still served an area of extremely high social deprivation, one where the community was truly "on the margins" of society. This small church school had over the years taken many of the most challenging children and supported families with complex needs. We were committed to giving the children experiences that might open their perspectives and give them a wider view of the world. I was constantly fundraising and applying for grants and projects to facilitate this. I had managed to secure some free tickets for a small production of "A Thousand Slimy Things" in "The Studio" a small side theatre in the Royal Exchange. After the performance, we ate our packed lunches on the floor behind the café, with the theatre staff kindly turning a blind eye. My class were excited after the performance: "Oh Miss, it's amazing what they could do with two men and a table...wasn't it magic?" A man supervising a large group of children nearby laughed and asked what we had been to see. The children explained with great animation and enthusiasm. He listened with a smile as they explained exactly how the table had been used as various props, including a ship and a bed. "Have you seen it Sir?", they asked, scattering crisps and sweets on the floor.

A little later, as we were preparing to leave, my class became aware that something else was going on in the main theatre. A lot of children were arriving. We peered through the glass into the main theatre with great curiosity. The man with whom we had spoken earlier introduced himself- John Doona. He explained that these children were rehearsing "Hamlet" for a performance the following day and he invited us in to watch. My kids were spellbound. Children were not merely watching, but PERFORMING in the main theatre! With lighting and sound. And Shakespeare? Wasn't that something they did in High Schools? We tiptoed in to the rehearsal...and that was how it began.

Back at school, things worsened. The future was uncertain as we were threatened with closure. There was much heartbreak, but then came some hope. As part of a federation process, we got a new headteacher. He was an inspirational man, committed to the arts and with a strong sense of social justice. We also got some money for enrichment opportunities for the children, so I told him about the Shakespeare Project. With a generous discount from John Doona, we were in! It was Macbeth...

That year I watched 25 children flourish and grow in a way that took my breath away. Drama gave them a voice, confidence, a fresh perspective. Kids who had never spoken in public stood up in the Royal Exchange Theatre and performed Macbeth in front of a full house. Eight of these children had special needs, almost half were children "at risk" because of their home circumstances. One child began the year with a target on his Individual Education Plan that was simply "to smile" when he felt happy. He had been so badly abused, he simply did not know how to. He learnt every word of "She would have died hereafter..." and stepped into the stage lights in the finale smiling and smiling until the lights went out. There was a look of utter joy on his face that I will never forget.

It was transformative. The kids took their parents back when they went to Manchester- maybe only to use the “posh toilets” or the café, but they went through the door, they picked up flyers. They felt like they belonged. It was “their” theatre. In the following years we did everything we could to participate in the project. We wrote letters for donations, we went carol singing with buckets in the local supermarket, we sold cakes. *Midsummers Night’s Dream*, *King Lear* were next, alongside other projects we ran in school. Drama became the beating heart of the school. The children became more confident, articulate, co-operative. We wove the strategies from the drama through lessons, their writing resonated with the creative ideas. They would do anything if there was drama involved. But the SATs results were still poor. These tests did not measure the skills that the children had developed. How can you measure the capacity to become human on paper?

“Special Measures” came and our worst fears came true. The school was to become an academy and the question was posed repeatedly: who was responsible for these low standards? It must be poor teaching, low expectations, the failure of the staff. These children were not making enough progress to do drama. It was not a priority. Neither was art, music, educational visits.

After all we had been through, this was more than I could bear. It broke my heart. I could not reconcile what was happening with what I knew these children needed. All that we had strived to give the children was being destroyed. Standards were “too poor” for the children to have access to the arts, but I knew that these children needed it the most. It wasn’t drama that was the problem, it was a chronic lack of funding, but this was dismissed as an “excuse”.

This whole experience has made me consider what is important and what my values are. I no longer hold a management position and again experience the joy of being a teacher in the classroom. I remain committed to the power of drama to transform children's lives and eternally grateful to the doors it has opened for me as a teacher. It is a gift to be able to engage with the children through drama and story. It opens up their imagination and brings out the best- and sometimes the worst- in them. It is a powerful way of working.

1.2 Starting Points for the Research.

"Drama is events occurring on a site. The site is the scene of some particular human and social problem. The problem is specific but ultimately the site is the whole of society and human reality. It stretches from the kitchen table to the edge of the universe"

Edward Bond (2013a, p.35)

The notion of Britishness and National identity have never been addressed with such intensity in education as in these present times. There is an increasingly politicised discourse on the role of National values and through the Fundamental British Values (FBV) agenda (DfE, 2014), all schools must now demonstrate that they actively promote a prescribed set of values outlined in law and policy. The starting point for this research was the controversy that resulted from the release of this agenda and the debate that followed about the role that schools should play in developing their pupil's values and identity. The directive to promote these "fundamental British" values has major conceptual difficulties which have been widely identified (Healy, 2018; Revel and Bryan, 2018). Primarily, there is a lack of reference to any theories of belonging or citizenship. This lack of philosophical understanding of social cohesion leads to a misunderstanding of the values needed to support it. Another

major difficulty is a lack of clarity on how this policy can be translated into action; how can schools actually *do* this work?

I tried a variety of methods to fulfil these statutory requirements in a meaningful and inclusive way. I also witnessed well-intentioned attempts to address the British Values agenda that, in my opinion, resulted in tokenistic teaching and a failure to equip children with an understanding of the complexity of values. Around the time that the FBV agenda was being introduced, Nicky Morgan, the then education secretary was announcing measures to “instil character” in young people by funding projects for disadvantaged pupils run by ex-military personnel (Paton, 2014). It seemed that the debate about values was becoming increasingly militarised, a development I found very worrying. I began to feel that the British Values agenda was overshadowing positive work that had previously been done in PHSE and Citizenship because it was now such a central focus in Ofsted inspections. However, I struggled to offer up any alternative that would meet the legal requirements.

In this research, I attempt to address the conceptual difficulties of the FBV agenda by using the theoretical structure of a critical pedagogical approach to citizenship and values education through drama. I apply this framework to a type of drama education that I believe shares fundamental characteristics with an approach to teaching and learning that comes under the umbrella of “critical pedagogy”. This term will be explored in the following section. Values education and identity is receiving increasingly urgent attention in the current political climate; through critical exploration of these challenging concepts, I attempt to demonstrate both theoretical engagement and practical application.

The roots of this project come from a strong desire to make a small contribution to better social justice in education; I wanted the project to be “transformative” for the

children. The term “transformative”, along with notions of “empowerment” are acknowledged to be problematic within critical pedagogy and will be explored in the following section. As the project evolved, a collaborative approach to the research guided many of the decisions I made about the methodology, as did my aim of centralising the voices of the children. “Voice” and discussions about the validity of claims to representation though the reported “voice” of subjects in research will form another important thread throughout the project.

1.3 Values, Identity, Belonging and Citizenship Education

Although the focus of this research is an exploration of values, values are inextricably linked to notions of identity and belonging. When discussed in a school context, these concepts have traditionally come under the umbrella of “citizenship education”. A commonly agreed definition of citizenship education describes it thus: “*the development of knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils need to play a full part in society as active and responsible citizens...pupils learn about politics, parliament and voting as well as human rights, justice, the law and the economy...they also learn the skills of active citizenship*” (Association for Teaching Citizenship, 2019). In secondary schools it exists as a separate subject, but in primary schools in England it is not statutory at the current time. Citizenship is the third strand of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), but there is no set programme of study or learning objectives. It is up to schools to decide how content and skills should be delivered. In the context of this research, most of the work was done within sessions entitled “Global Citizenship”, which encompassed many of the aspects of the above definition, along with RE, Eco Schools work, local action projects and of course, the drama sessions. In order to situate this project, a brief history of citizenship education in the UK will be given in the opening of Chapter 2.

The “British” Values agenda outlines a set of prescribed values designed to be deeply embedded within all school structures and actively promoted within the ethos of the school. There has been little acknowledgement of the complexity of the definition of “belonging” and the values that might underpin this. Western governments are struggling to define what it means to “belong together” in increasingly diverse societies. The FBV agenda remains “untethered” to wider schema of citizenship and presents a very narrow definition of belonging through the selection of such a restricted set of values. This will be explored in detail in Chapter 2.

“Values, which transcend language and culture, are the common currency that makes life meaningful and the normative principles that ensure ease of life lived in common”
(James, 2001. p3).

In using the term “value”, I acknowledge this is a complicated, confusing and challenging concept for children to understand. However, primary schools are now required by law to engage with values, so we must find a way of meeting this challenge.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

My intention was to explore the potential of drama through the lens of critical pedagogy to offer an alternative to the British values agenda which was more “ground up” than imposed. By involving the children in defining and exploring a variety of values, I aimed to put their voices at the heart of this process.

There are three main concepts which underpin my approach to values education. Firstly, I refer to a form of values education that does not impose values upon children, but seeks to raise awareness and promote critical discussion about

alternatives. This approach owes much to an already established “values-led” tradition in education, which will be explored in more detail in Chapter 2.3.

A second important aim, which links to the term “transformative” is that pupils would be encouraged to recognise social injustice and take action to address this injustice when they encountered it in the drama sessions. Although this study does not measure behaviour outside the drama sessions, it is hoped that this work would raise the children’s awareness of injustice in the world around them.

A final aim which I feel to be at the heart of this project is the centralising of the children’s voices. I aimed to give children the resources and power to make their voices heard and to communicate their own concerns about drama, values and identity. In giving the children a strong voice in the project, they have a means of representation. They have supported the transformation of values education in their school, so that it is more relevant to their own lives and their own concerns.

Voice, empowerment, representation and claims to a “transformative” education are held to be problematic within the field of critical pedagogy, although they are key aims of this project. The following section will problematise these terms and the key tenets of critical pedagogy with reference to the work of contemporary critical educators.

1.4.1 Key Tenets and Criticisms of Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy has been defined in the following way by Ira Shor, who along with Freire, has been one of the leading exponents in the field:

"Habits of thought, reading, writing, and speaking which go beneath surface meaning, first impressions, dominant myths, official pronouncements, traditional clichés, received wisdom, and mere opinions, to understand the deep meaning, root causes, social context, ideology, and personal consequences of any action, event,

object, process, organization, experience, text, subject matter, policy, mass media, or discourse"

(Shor, 1992, p.129)

Critical pedagogy aims to enable learners to understand, interrogate and transform not only discursive functioning of classroom teaching and learning, but also of everyday life practices in the larger social world (Alexander and Katz, 2017). The term has come to refer to a wide range of critical social theories and it encompasses a complex array of attitudes and analyses that support awareness of *"the myriad ways in which people dominate one another and consideration of whether, or to what extent it is possible to conceive social relations that ameliorate... the effects of this domination"* (Alexander, 2014, p.903).

Advocates of critical pedagogy reject the idea that knowledge is ever politically neutral and argue that teaching is an inherently political act, whether the teacher acknowledges that or not. Teaching cannot be separated from issues of social justice and democracy. The goal of critical pedagogy is emancipation from oppression through an awakening of the critical consciousness. Thus, education should create citizens who are critical, self-reflective, knowledgeable and willing to make moral judgements (Giroux, 2011, p.3). Another key tenet is the development of "voice" through the critical examination of one's world/society which takes place in dialogue with others. The aim of critical pedagogy is to transform society towards equality for all citizens through active participation in democratic imperatives (Giroux, 2007). Critical pedagogy demands that teachers challenge the neo-liberal influences which are seen to commodify education, supporting learners to discover their authentic voice and their "destiny" of emancipation.

Clemitshaw (2013) notes that, whilst these prescriptions resonate with a posture of virtue, they represent an impossible demand of schools. They are too binary, imposing an exaggerated contrast between oppressors and oppressed. The reality is a more nuanced play of power between the institution, teachers and students.

Questions arise about what it means to be critical and how this can be implemented in educational context and across the curriculum, some asking whether education in a critical viewpoint is even possible. Critics have also questioned whether it is morally right for educational institutions to explicitly promote radical political activism among their students. Adherents of critical pedagogy have been accused of focusing on promoting political perspectives to the detriment of “basic” skills for the workplace. Critics have also denounced over-simplification of complex social issues related to race and social class, often taught by educators that have little genuine understanding of the positions they are teaching about. A number of practitioners may lay claim to “transformative” teaching, believing that they instruct based on the tenets of critical pedagogy; however, they may not be entirely aware of the oppositional intention and dynamicity of this model. Freire himself, the “father” of critical pedagogy, is keen to offer warnings against progressive conceit in education and politics. *“All too often when we consider ourselves to have transcended oppression, and to have freed ourselves and others from oppression, we can find ourselves blinded to the oppressive aspect of our own practices and supposedly emancipatory approaches”* (cited in Irwin, 2018, p.67).

More recent articulations of critical pedagogy view it as is a worldwide movement dedicated to listening to and learning from diverse discourses and questioning educational hegemony (Kincheloe and Steinberg, 1998; 2008). Within these many current understandings of critical pedagogy, the terms “critical”, “empowerment”, “student voice” and “dialogue” are only surface manifestations of deeper

contradictions involving both traditional and critical pedagogies. Each classroom holds a multiplicity of knowledges and these knowledges are contradictory, partial and irreducible. Thus, they cannot be known in terms of a single discourse or theory (Ellsworth, 1989). There are many interpretations of “critical” pedagogy; there is no single definition and no final version of the term. It is constantly evolving and context specific. It might therefore be more appropriate to talk about critical *pedagogies*. Katz (2014) puts forward a definition of critical pedagogy that is not overly reductive: “*rooted in what the students already know based on their daily lives*” (p.3). Students explore their own reality, share experiences and then make links to their socio-political context; by addressing issues that affect student’s daily lives, students become more engaged and critically conscious.

Macedo (1994) argues that critical pedagogy is always an “anti-method” pedagogy. It is thus hard to classify and define. Critical teacher education provides no specific roads to the way that a critical educator must teach or how the students must learn. Simplistic notions of “the correct way” to “do” critical pedagogy should be avoided. This is exemplified by Kincheloe and Steinberg (1998), who collect and celebrate many types of “unauthorized methods” and note that these examples show what can be done in teaching, but never what should be done.

So called “teaching for liberation” is a complex picture. Many theorists have called for an approach that works “through” and “out” of the highly abstract language of the literature to examine the “myths” of what should or should not be happening in the classroom (Ellsworth, 1989; Britzman, 2003; Albrecht-Crane, 2005).

“Critical pedagogy has developed along a highly abstract and utopian line, which does not necessarily sustain the daily workings of the education that it’s supporters advocate” (Ellsworth 1989, p.297).

In a review of the literature, Ellsworth (1989) found that educational research was consistently stripped of discussions of context and classroom practice; the language employed was abstract and more suited to philosophical debate than the everyday life of a classroom. Ellsworth argues that the critical education movement has failed to develop a clear argument for its existence, its goals, priorities, risks or potentials (p.301). The following section will discuss more recent work within critical education, re-examining the key tenets of critical pedagogy in the light of these criticisms.

1.4.2 The Crisis and Conflict of Teaching: Pedagogies of Discomfort

Britzman (2003) outlines the affective element of teaching, which was missing from previous articulations of critical pedagogy. Teaching is full of contradictory realities, conflicts and crises. Teaching occurs in structures that are not of one's own making and this is "*an uncertain experience that one must learn to interpret*" (Britzman, 2003, p.3). Britzman describes a process of projection, identification and disassociation in "becoming" a teacher. There is internal conflict or even "crisis" experienced by teachers who identify with the role that they have taken on, whilst simultaneously disassociating with the authoritarian connotations of this role.

Within discussions of the politics of education, viewpoints have often been described within the binaries of "progressive" versus "conservative". Britzman states that splitting the world of education into progressive or regressive tendencies does not do justice to the forces of uncertainty, discontentment, helplessness and disorganisation that also characterise education. Nor does this dichotomy acknowledge the "pleasure, laughter and absurdities of the job." (2003, p.5).

Warren and Davies (2009) also outline the risk of simplistic binaries in articulations of critical pedagogies. They fear limiting and reductionist ideas of what democracy is

and can do. In all too many critical projects, democracy becomes a token offering, “creating idealist notions of hand-holding and multicultural festivals” (p.307). The teacher is often seen as the critical moment of change in the classroom, but by painting more complex images of teachers in context, we might begin to forge progressive spaces for critical democratic practice. This is not to suggest that teachers can never be agents of change. However, democracy and its principle of equality and dialogue needs to be modified by critical theory itself. Warren and Davies state that with a critical orientation, one can examine how binaries work and teachers might then begin to foster a classroom space that makes for transformative ends.

Dutta et al (2016) have also grappled with the “messiness” of teaching and learning social justice in the classroom- a context imbued with many social injustices. Students and teachers must engage with difficult and discomfoting spaces. The “vulnerability” within discomfoting pedagogies of educators is not simply an emotional state, it includes the structural conditions that constitute the context. *“Neoliberalism is not a distant foe- it is an intimate, often intractable enemy that shapes and engenders meanings and practices inside and outside the classroom”* (Dutta et al, 2016, p.7).

Boler (1998), notes that this vulnerability and emotion has the potential to derail critical inquiry when not treated correctly, particularly in lessons where inequality is a focus. Instead of quelling these “emotioned” responses and meanings in the classroom, Boler argues that teachers should encourage their students to explore what insights are to be had in the space between their emotions and their beliefs. This forms the origins of her descriptive phrase: *a pedagogy of discomfort. “The first sign of a successful pedagogy of discomfort is, quite simply, the ability to recognize*

what it is that one doesn't want to know, and how one has developed emotional investments to protect oneself from this knowing." (1999, p. 196)

Boler and Zembylas (2003) define a "Pedagogy of Discomfort" in two parts. It is both "an invitation to inquiry" and "a call to action" The point is not to change students' values, but to challenge students to self-interrogate and dwell in moral differences in an informed manner. Exploration into emotional attachments creates opportunity for students to see their own personal experiences, perspectives and values as they are shaped by larger social, cultural, and political orders. This theory offers an important pathway to transform "happy consciousness" into "critical consciousness". Bloch (1991) has described this as "informed discontent", stating that teachers and students must not just dedicate time to understanding the economic and social imbalances of power, there must be work to practically create cultures of dissent. Instead of offering interventions that prepare students to manage the psychological impact of neoliberalism, educators could think more deeply about how formal education might support students to make independent judgements about acceptable ways to live and be. Emotional dissonance and discontent could be seen as necessary conditions for the development of critical sensibility.

1.4.3 The Centrality of Affective Sensibility in Critical Pedagogy

Alongside pedagogies of "discomfort", there has been more recent interest in pedagogies of "comfort", as illustrated in the growth of certain forms of 'therapeutic' education. Drama and the arts are commonly viewed as "therapeutic" interventions, that foster creativity, emotional expression and therefore well-being. Terms like "growth mindset", "resilience" and "emotional intelligence" are now commonly understood and used in British classrooms. The new Ofsted Inspection Framework (Ofsted, 2019) requires schools to deploy behavioural psychology to educate children how to manage or control undesirable emotions and acquire desirable ones,

especially those that support productive labour and citizenship. Amsler (2011) discusses this “affective turn” in mainstream education in recent years, especially in the form of therapeutic pedagogies. Educators understand the importance of the affective conditions for learning, which connects abstract knowledge with personal experiences. However, Amsler warns that this development cannot contribute pedagogies for critical consciousness when it is reduced to gratification, comfort and satisfaction and when the transformative aspect of critical pedagogy is overlooked. Some of the most affectively oriented educational practices in fact prepare students for the very forms of educational and life experiences that produce the most mental suffering: *“the aim is to produce emotionally balanced people that can live productive lives in an unjust society”* (Amsler, 2011, p.58). Critical pedagogy asserts that questions of emotional well-being should be placed at the heart of educational practice; they must be *“problematics for dialogue in practice”*. Fundamentally, a critical pedagogical view would be that an affectively oriented education is not about teaching students to *feel* in a particular way and it is not necessarily connected to feelings of well-being. The aim would be to enable students to understand why they have certain feelings, needs and desires and then to enable them to critically imagine conditions in which alternatives could be enacted.

1.4.4 Questions of Subject Transformation, Empowerment and Emancipation.

Questions of subject transformation within critical pedagogy are problematic. Even the most democratically intended forms of pedagogy can turn authoritarian in attempts to produce *right thinking, moral* students. There are dangers of imposing alternative, yet still authoritarian regimes of truth. Participation could actually become a *“tyrannical form of governmentality”* within romanticised expectations about dialogue, voice and criticality (Amsler, 2001, p.49). If public resources are being used to further various “progressive” political agendas believed to be for the public good,

then those involved in this work should be explicit about their aims. Ellsworth (1989) states that there is a need to clearly name the political agenda, making explicit the underlying assumptions and rationale.

A key theme within critical pedagogy is the idea of student empowerment and emancipation from hegemonic power structures. This notion should be unpicked and discussed with caution. The structures of institutions often seek to impose order and control, both on teachers and on students. Discussions within critical education have often failed to acknowledge impact of these structures in the educational context on teaching and learning. Empowerment as a concept *“treats the symptoms, but leaves the disease unnamed and untouched”* (Ellsworth, 1989, p.306). Empowerment, when linked to rationalist views on teaching students analytic, critical skills can result in the opposite. The political interests expressed by those in marginalised groups could be rejected on the grounds that they are “irrational”. Empowerment has also been defined as a change of position from “teacher” to “learner”, with the teacher “learning alongside” students. However, the only reason given for this has been to bring the student “up” to the teacher’s level of understanding. Students are treated as though they ought to be concerned about social justice, but this is done in a depoliticized abstract way, using such broad terms as “human flourishing”. These broad terms do not challenge any identifiable social or political position. Discussion within critical pedagogy has focused on the “authority” of the teacher and teacher/student power imbalances. However, it has failed to launch any meaningful way of reformulating the power imbalances of the institution.

“Empowerment” implies utopian moments of democracy, equality and justice. These moments are unattainable. Ellsworth (1989) suggests that a better goal would be to become “capable of a sustained encounter with currently oppressive formations and

power relations that refuse to be theorized away or fully transcended in a utopian resolutions” (p.308) This requires entering into the encounter in a way that owns up to one’s own implications in those formations.

1.4.5 Pedagogy as Friendship

Albrecht-Crane (2005) attempts to shift attention from an ideological critique of education based on identity relations to a consideration of the multiplicity of relations possible between students and teachers and the potential of these relationships for promoting affective connections. Critical pedagogy in neoliberal contexts requires new ways of being together. *“By refusing to meet students in a confrontational stance, teachers can subvert the power of identity construction and strike new modes of connectivity and learning”* (p.491). Albrecht-Crane suggests a change in focus from identity-based relations to the localised contextual possibilities of working together “between and through” hierarchical positions and institutional structures. The dualistic features of progressive pedagogies position the student and teacher either against each other or fighting the power of the institution. There is also a vision of students as deficient, needing to be “enlightened and empowered” by the teacher. These binary oppositions simplify the cultural struggles at work. The critical question is not how we can escape these binaries, but why do they appear so strongly in our attempts to overcome them? We need to consider how we meet the “other” in the classroom. Can we engage difference more positively? We could examine student resistance to learn more about classroom pedagogy; moments of “crisis” can offer opportunities to learn more about the way teaching practice is being experienced. When pedagogy addresses students at the level of identity, social position or ideology alone, the underlying affective forces can consume the experience. Albrecht-Crane (2005, p.508) describes a spectrum of affective “moorings” to which student and teacher are tethered: feelings, desires, commitments towards the social structures within which they must operate. Nothing here is fixed and identity operates through these affective

investments; critical education must therefore operate within this terrain. The classroom is a compromised and complicated place where clashes cannot be avoided, but individuals can meet by way of their passions “*side by side and not face to face*” (p.509)

1.4.6 Exploring “Voice”

Within the field of educational research, the concept of voice is acknowledged to be complex and contested. Voice has been tied to feelings of empowerment and authenticity. There are two main views of voice, as described by Britzman (2003). One comes from identity politics, where certain groups were “voiceless”. Voice was seen as a way of addressing questions of power/empowerment. In education, both teacher and student can be viewed as “silenced”. This would include “silences” within the curriculum and the “hidden” curriculum. In another view, “voice” can also be seen as metaphorical: voice is a personal discourse representing an individual’s struggle to make meaning. It is linked to the desire to represent something of the self, but in doing so there is an experience of conflict with the main discourses in education. Conflict comes through institutional imperatives and constraints, curricular pressures and the social, historical, economic and personal contexts of learning. In trying to adhere to a particular pedagogical approach, teachers experience a private struggle. The narration of that struggle makes significance from the events and their “voice” can be heard. Teacher identity is shaped by their work, as well as shaping their work. There is a conscious construction of a pedagogy that balances student concerns with the constraints of the curriculum. In this way the struggle for voice could be viewed as a creative and emotionally engaging narration which attempts to make significance from these events.

The concept of “pupil voice” has also become highly visible and influential in current educational debate. The discourse suggests that the pupils become empowered

when the critically motivated “progressive” teacher supports pupils to express their subjugated knowledge and become “authors” of their own world. The literature has recognised that there is a lot to learn from student’s experiences, but has failed to address the fact that there are many things that a teacher can never know or understand about the experiences and oppressions of those in their classrooms. Ellsworth (1989) describes the “repressive myth of the silent other” (1989, p.308), stating that there has been a failure within critical pedagogy to systematically examine the barriers that power relations in the classroom present to student expression and dialogue.

“What we say, to whom, in what context, depending on the energy we have for the struggle on a particular day, is the result of conscious and unconscious assessments of the power relations and the safety of the situation” (Ellsworth, 1989, p.313).

When claiming to represent “voice”, there is a need for methodological caution. A critical voice attempts to articulate the tensions between and within different contexts, so that voice is not just represented, but narrated, considered and evaluated (Britzman, 2003, p.34). In this study, there is an attempt to represent the voices of the children. However, this is more than recording their words; interpretive effort is necessary because words express relationships and contexts beyond the immediate situation. The validity of claims to the representation of children’s voice in this study will be further considered in the methodology and discussion. As Britzman (2003, p.36) points out, the narrative of lived experience should not be confused with experience. There is no identical correspondence and this is not the goal: *“the retelling of another’s story is always a partial retelling bound by one’s own perspectives and external constraints”*.

1.4.7 Dialogue in a “Safe Space”

The classroom environment is commonly assumed to be a “safe space” for dialogue; often there are rules to promote open, honest and respectful talk. In this study, I refer to the “safe space” of drama. I attempted to create a space where children would feel able to take risks and have open and honest dialogue about the sessions. It is therefore important at this point to acknowledge that caution should be applied when describing any classroom space as a “safe space”.

Dutta et al (2016) define a safe space as an environment where people are willing to participate and honestly struggle with challenging issues, are comfortable to express themselves without fear of ridicule or attacks and where experiences are acknowledged, not denied (p.2). However, the embodied and unequal power relationships of the classroom call into question the validity of claims to a “safe space”. Dialogue has been defined as a fundamental imperative of critical pedagogy, as the basis of a democratic education and the foundation of citizenship. Can we really assert that the classroom is a safe space for democratic dialogue? The power dynamic between teacher/student and student/student can make democratic dialogue challenging. This should be considered when student “voice” is being interpreted and studied. Reflection upon this will form part of the discussion in Chapter 6.

1.4.8 Pedagogy of Difference

The task of creating educational sites that support difference is acquiring increasing urgency as the interconnected world brings closer contact with ways of being and people that are “not like us”. Alexander (2018), Keith (2010) and others have advocated a new concept of critical pedagogy, suitable to the education of students in diverse democracies. The pedagogy of difference holds that in order to engage worthwhile knowledge, one must begin with a conception of what it means to be worthwhile and what should count as a worthwhile end. The task of education is to prepare students with the skills and attitudes to establish and defend a common life

that allows differences to prosper. Students need exposure to, and a willingness to engage with, a variety of perspectives which engage alternative, or even rival viewpoints and orientations. It is a dialogical process which supports students to understand the traditions and histories with which they choose to identify, whilst also engaging with views that are different or contradictory. Alexander (2018) calls this dialogue “across difference”: students learn to critique the standards of their own inherited or adopted traditions and review these according to the criteria of alternatives. Invoking difference rather than diversity or multiculturalism calls for immediate attention to binary constructions of “self” and “other”, through which “self” defines and creates itself as normal and the “other” as not normal—a negative mirror that reflects back what the “self” rejects or finds wanting. A pedagogy that takes a stance for difference calls for teaching and learning practices committed to encouraging students and teachers to learn and work together in places where multiple subject positions intersect, recognising our mutual involvement in the complex histories that create our identities.

1.4.9 Teacher as Researcher

Kincheloe and Steinberg (1998) note that within critical pedagogy, the concept of “teacher researcher” is of key importance. Practitioner knowledge is often dismissed; there is a chasm between official discourse and that which is developed by teachers in action. Teachers are excluded from the process of producing knowledge about their profession. Critical teachers must also become researchers, developing reflexive awareness of societal and educational contexts. This reflexive awareness allows teachers to “step back” from commonly held world views and take a more critical stance. Teachers can thus clarify what is possible in schools and bring a new understanding to the rhetoric of transmission. They can adjust their pedagogy accordingly and strive for change within their institutions to better support what their students need, with these actions underpinned and validated by robust research

methodology. This was my personal aim in embarking upon this project and the wider work of undertaking this PhD.

1.4.10. Contextual Interpretation: Applying Critical Pedagogy Within This Project

I believe the following points to be the key issues from the readings of critical pedagogy described above that are particularly relevant to this context.

Firstly, this project is an attempt to describe my own “encounter” with the reality of attempting to use a critical pedagogical approach within the classroom. Whilst I have taken inspiration, advice and caution from previous work, I have also tried to apply this understanding to my own unique context. Kincheloe and Steinberg (1998) bring together a selection of materials that they describe collectively as “unauthorized methods”. My own project, in common with those outlined in “Unauthorized Methods”, represents a movement away from curriculum coverage and test scores, to the far more important issues of engaging the student’s curiosity and enlisting them as co-creators of knowledge that will be included in their schools. Process drama facilitated this joint exploration.

I remained committed to the principles of democracy and empowerment, the promotion of the children’s voice and the provision of a safe space in order that the children would feel confident to make their voices heard, whilst maintaining a reflexive awareness of the contested nature of these concepts.

In seeking to explore values and identity, the work of Boler and Zembylas (2003) and Alexander (2018) on pedagogies of “discomfort” and “difference” frame the discussion of the key findings. The pedagogy of discomfort urges both students and

educators to think outside their comfort zones, inviting inquiry into commonly held beliefs and encouraging a sense of responsibility in the collective struggle for justice as global citizens. Through drama, I encouraged the children to engage with alternative perspectives which exposed them to conflicting viewpoints: “dialogue across difference”. This form of critical pedagogy resonates with process drama as it supports teaching and learning practices which take place in a space where multiple positions intersect and where mutual involvement in the histories that shape us is paramount. Process drama promotes “cultures of dissent” (Bloch, 1991) and challenges children to self-interrogate and “dwell in difference” in a more informed and reflective manner. These themes will be reviewed in Chapter 6.3.

I have remained mindful as to the extent to which the key tenets of critical pedagogy can be meaningfully applied within the constraints of the classroom, the institution and the educational system within which I work. In particular, I have considered the affective dimensions, the tensions present when my own strivings for a “critical” education have encountered barriers from the system within which I have to work. The “crisis and conflict” of teaching forms a thread in the discussion and concluding reflection.

1.5 Research Questions

These research questions are used throughout the project to structure both the data analysis and the discussion.

Research Question

What is the potential of drama to engage children in citizenship education and enable them to think critically about values, identity and belonging?

Sub questions

- How well can drama help children to identify, understand and engage with values?

- How well can drama help children to think critically about values?
- What are the implications of the research findings for reimagining the British Values agenda and for the development of a more transformative and relevant citizenship education programme?

I gave careful consideration to how I would know that children’s understanding has changed as a result of the drama sessions and further details of the criteria that I used for my judgements on the research questions can be found in Chapter 4.1

As there is a participative foundation to this research, the themes that have emerged from the data have been verified with the children themselves through an ongoing process of analysis and clarification. This had direct implications for the research design, which uses the structure of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014). This approach is explored in detail in Chapter 4.

1.6 Thesis Structure

This chapter introduced the purpose of the study, critically examined key concepts and gave an overview of the theoretical framework. The following chapter explores historical approaches to citizenship education in the UK and contextualises approaches to values education, critically examining how the FBV agenda fits in to this wider work. Chapter 3 reviews relevant literature on approaches to drama in education, including a discussion of how drama has been used for citizenship and moral education. Chapter 4 outlines the research methodology and presents the rationale for the use of constructivist grounded theory and drama methods. The structure of the drama sessions and key “conventions” are explained. Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the data and addresses the research questions and the themes within the findings, focusing on the voices of the children. Chapter 6 widens

the discussion of the key findings with reference to other work in the field of drama and citizenship education and to the critical “pedagogies” outlined in the introduction. The contribution to knowledge is made explicit and suggestions are made for future research. In Chapter 7, there is a final reflection, which relates this work to recent developments in educational policy. The thesis ends with a “coda”, a reflection on how the process of completing this PhD has impacted on my own story as a teacher and has influenced my current position in education in these challenging times.

Chapter 2: What is Citizenship Education?

This chapter outlines historical approaches to citizenship education in the UK. Within that context, there is a discussion of approaches to values education as well as the more recent Fundamental British Values (FBV) requirements. Theories of citizenship are outlined with reference to cosmopolitanism, global citizenship and the ongoing debate about local, national and global identities.

2.1 A Brief History of Citizenship Education in England

It is useful here to give a brief overview of citizenship education development in England from the 1970's to the present time. This contextualises values education and relates it to interpretations of national and global identity. These interpretations have historically been fraught with controversy, although never more so than in the current political climate.

In England in the 1970's there was the first clear attempt to implement some form of citizenship education across English schools with the implementation of the "Political Literacy Project". However, this was more about promoting an idealised vision of the British Constitution than democratic citizenship (Lister, 1995). Despite this narrowness, there was an attempt to engage students with action at the local level and there was a global dimension with units on war and peace, pollution and world poverty. Moral elements were considered, with procedural values such as freedom, fairness and tolerance underpinning the programme. In addition, a skills inventory was included, which promoted skills such as analysis, negotiation and constructing an argument (Crick and Lister, 1975). Around this time, the term "global education" was promoted by the Centre for Global Education at the University of York (Lister, 1995). The term discouraged a "nation centred" curriculum, instead focusing on a framework of global perspectives, stressing skills that would produce active world

citizens. Under this umbrella there were new developments, such as peace education, multicultural education and education for human rights (Richardson, 1979). A notable feature of this movement was the idea of citizenship “skills”, education and activism.

Global education in the 1980's faced many of the political and ethical challenges that are still causing controversy today, in particular those centred around issues of national identity. Lister (1995) summarises some of the backlash, which included accusations of indoctrination by peace educators about disarmament, "Third-Worldism" and unpatriotic messages. Global educators were working in a hostile political environment, although Lister notes that there was very little research at the time on what was happening in schools to support the movement's cause. Some of the limited research suggests that there were pedagogical problems, many of which are still relevant in the current educational and political climate. Case studies suggested that pupils struggled with the scale of many of the issues, it proved challenging to engage pupils in a way that was relevant and meaningful and stereotypes were often reinforced (Lister 1995; Stradling, 1984).

Such criticisms influenced the agenda of the Education Reform Act of 1988 (HMSO 1988), resulting in the new "National Curriculum". There was a loss in funding for citizenship, coinciding with, and sometimes as a result of, the challenges of implementing the new curriculum. The emphasis in education switched to "traditional" school subjects; citizenship education was not a priority at this time.

Change came in the 1990's, when an all-party body was appointed to look at citizenship education, recommending that the subject should be part of every young person's education. These recommendations were finalised in The Crick Report (Department for Education Commission for Citizenship, 1998). There was now a

consensual agreement for a type of citizenship education that would be appropriate for a culturally diverse and interdependent world. This new citizenship curriculum included links to human rights frameworks and had a strong moral element.

A report commissioned by the Department for Education looking back over the decade of 2000-2010 found a mixed picture about the effectiveness and success of citizenship education in schools in England (Keating et al, 2010). On the one hand evidence was found for an increase in civic and political participation, but there was also a hardening of attitudes towards equality, a weakened attachment to the community and an increased distrust of the political arena. The report recommended discrete citizenship lessons and a focus on “political literacy”, with better training and resourcing to support teachers.

A few years later, with fear of extremism and terrorism increasing, and in the aftermath of the much publicised “Trojan Horse Affair” (a reported attempt by a number of associated individuals to introduce an Islamist ethos into schools in Birmingham), the British Values Agenda (DfE/Nash, 2014) arrived. This agenda was released to the press without consultation with teaching associations in the summer of 2014. It was received with much consternation and some outrage. The agenda was very different to previous visions of citizenship education in school; this was not seen as a set of discrete lessons or a curriculum. It was intended to permeate the ethos of the whole school and go beyond the classroom. In addition, the release marked a significant and sudden shift in values education, as it now had a direct mandate from the government and an explicit link to Ofsted inspections.

Educators were expected to “patrol” these standards; dissent was considered “extremism” by definition (Healy, 2018). There was also a lack of clarity about what teachers should (or should not) be doing, along with publicised cases of schools “failing” Ofsted inspections as they were not fulfilling the requirements (Paton, 2014).

2.2 British Values Critically Examined

There is, and has been for some time, a “global” dialogue about values, although this research is focused on the current situation in England. Values education is not new, but the attention given to the promotion of “values” in the time following the release of the British Values agenda in England has been unprecedented.

The four "British Values" as defined by Ofsted are: *"democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith"* (Ofsted, 2015). The FBV agenda has been one of the most controversial responses of the British government to the issue of community cohesion and identity. It has overshadowed citizenship education and narrowed it in a way that could be viewed as exclusionary and didactic; in some instances, citizenship has been reduced to teaching about cultural symbols and historical events. The agenda focuses on greater cohesion, unity and common values, all seen to be more desirable than an emphasis on pluralism and diversity, with the promotion of Britishness as a core identity that unites all (Commission for Racial Equality, 2007; Osler, 2009). Schools in England now have a legal duty to teach the values, but there is a paucity of research or guidance on how this should be done, or how success can be measured.

The controversy provoked by the origins of this agenda has been well documented (Banks, 2015; Kundnani, 2015; Richardson and Bolloren, 2015). Commentators have argued that this origin means that the values are divisive, alienating and undemocratic. The term "fundamental British values" first occurred in a definition of extremism in the appendix of a Home Office "Prevent" document (HMSO, 2011). The terminology implies a deeper cultural problem embedded within a community instead of it residing within a set of individuals who are engaged in criminal activity. It

generates problematic racialised assumptions, such as the idea that it is only minority ethnic groups that need to be targeted, or who would be resistant to Britishness. It also implies that those who dissent from the values are excluded from “Britishness” (Keddie, 2014; Osler, 2011; Rhamie et al, 2012).

That schools are obliged to “actively promote” this set of prescribed values is a source of unease for many commentators, who feel that values should not be forced or imposed. “The rule of law” does not even fall within the remit of academic discussion around values, but is rather a disposition or attitude, informed by a range of complex and interconnected values (Bowden, 2016; 2017). There is also little guidance on what “active promotion” might mean. Many believe that the impetus has changed from raising awareness of values, where legitimate diversity is recognised, to an insistence that citizens self-identify and commit to the values.

Much of the scepticism about the idea of national values stems from the difficulty of defining exactly what British identity is. Research has documented the dynamic and multifaceted nature of identity (Rhamie et al, 2012; Richardson, 2015). Conceptions of Britishness have changed greatly in the last 100 years and definitions of what a “British identity” might be are many and varied (Gamble and Wright, 2009; Shelton and McDermot, 2010). The FBV agenda relates to security policy and does not connect with research into the promotion of social cohesion, which shows that this is a complex issue with many interconnected and overlapping elements. There is little consensus on what kinds of communities are most conducive to social cohesion, or which specific values support it (Healy, 2018). What is clear however, is that the FBV agenda is unlikely to support social cohesion with the imposition of such a restricted set of values.

At the heart of this debate is the relative weight that should be given to local, national and global identity. The question of how to be both a citizen of the nation and a citizen of the world has long been a challenge for education (Nussbaum, 1996; Hill, 2011; Dunn, 2014). Tensions are now becoming increasingly apparent on both a national and global scale. In addition, there are increasingly complex ways of “belonging”, which cross territorial boundaries with networks formed through social media, political interests, sport, educational pursuits and religious identification to name but a few. There is a huge dilemma as to how a sense of belonging can be fostered along with a commitment to a school, place, culture or nation, whilst at the same time supporting the capacity to engage positively and constructively with global issues.

2.3 Universal Values and Value-Based Education

There is an existing body of research into values which are widely shared or universally recognised. This was ignored when the FBV guidance was produced (see for example Schwartz, 2012; Seligman, 2002; Kidder, 2005). The guidance ignored the existing well respected and well researched work on “universal values”, which are globally recognised (Schwartz, 1994).

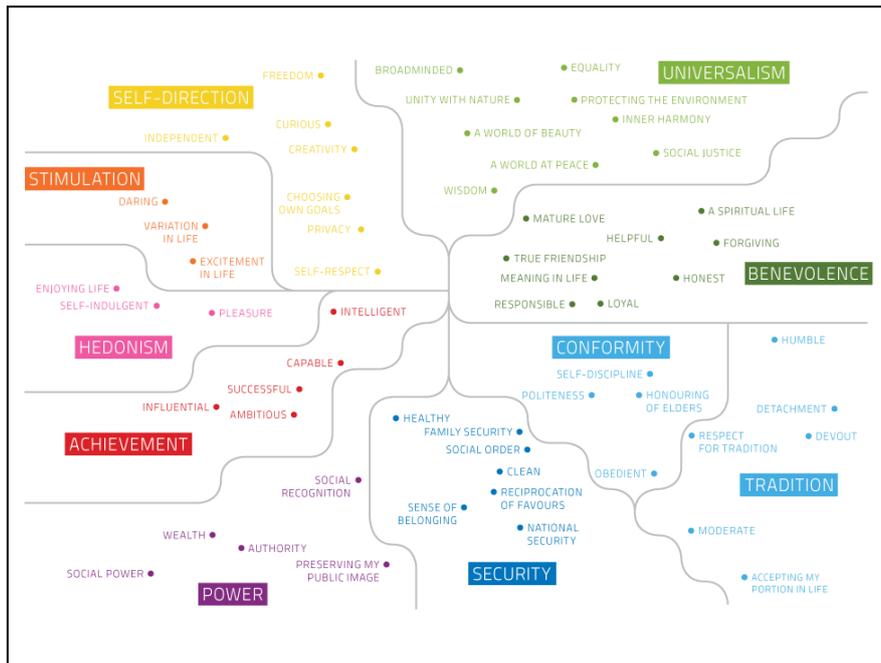


Fig 2.1 Universal Map of Values

Diagram reproduced from training materials from *Lifeworlds Learning* with permission.
www.lifeworldslearning.co.uk/learningthroughvalues

The universal values are 58 values identified through cross-cultural research over many years, academically tested and rooted in psychology. They emerged from cross-cultural responses to what we value and what is globally significant. They are rooted in notions of commonality and thus offer an opportunity for dialogue and enquiry, as opposed to the divisive “us and them” terminology of the FBV. The very fact that there are 58 of them rejects the notion that they can be “instilled” and thus they provide a suitably complex framework for values education.

Values or “character education” has been firmly established for many years in the formal education systems of Singapore, Australia, India, South Africa and the USA (Bowden, 2016). Although there is diversity within these approaches, there is a broad similarity, justifying the collective term “value- based education” (Bowden, 2013; 2016). Tormey (2005) suggests that values have become part of an established educational trichotomy of knowledge, values and skills. This trichotomy was underpinned by the Global Learning Programme in England (Global Dimension,

2017) and is reflected in value-based learning approaches such as virtues education, living values education, character education, ethical education and learning through values, to name but a few (Bowden, 2016).

A particular approach to values education has been implemented under the umbrella of “character education” and is frequently allied with the armed services. The Department for Education is currently funding curriculum programmes influenced by this military ethos, for example “Commando Joe” (2019), which promotes a “character curriculum” and mentoring programme. The political spin and headlines around values education have become dominated by this military ethos and considerable investment was given to such programmes in England between 2014-2016, with over 50 million pounds being spent on the Cadet Expansion Programme (CEP, 2015).

Positive initiatives such as "Education for Peace Building" (UNICEF 2011d), "Rights Respecting Schools" (UNICEF 2016), Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (DfE 2010) and Philosophy for Kids (P4K, SAPERE) are available to schools, but many of these programmes have been overshadowed by the British Values agenda. Some schools now assume that they no longer need to teach universal values such as freedom, dignity and equality through citizenship, as they are obliged instead to teach FBV instead (Struthers, 2017).

Bowden (2016) suggests that the British Values could be used to open up discussion and debate, giving educationalists new opportunities for engagement with the universal human values (see below). The dialogue about how values are interpreted and framed is perhaps more important than the values themselves. This principle was used within this research; in this study, the 58 values were a starting point in planning and the children were introduced them through the stories and the drama sessions.

| “British Value” (as defined in statutory guidance) | Relevant “universal human value” |
|---|---|
| Democracy | choosing own goals, independent, social order |
| Rule of Law | social justice, a world at peace, responsible, self-discipline, respect for tradition |
| Individual Liberty | freedom, self-respect, independent, equality |
| Mutual Respect and Tolerance (of those with different faiths and beliefs) | sense of belonging, broadminded, moderate, equality, humble, respect for tradition |

*Table 2.1: Finding the universal values in so-called British Values (Bowden 2016, p8)
Reproduced with permission from the author.*

In November 2014 around 60 established voices from within the values and character education sector came together for two days of discussion and planning. They concluded that good values education is: *“one that helps to foster respectful, caring relationships with other people, animals, nature and ourselves...this is achieved through compassion, reciprocity and the provision of opportunities that are risky and empowering; it is based on choice rather than coercion and collaboration rather than competition.”* (Lifeworlds Learning England, 2014, reproduced in Bowden 2016, p14). This definition resonates with the critical pedagogical approach that underpins this research.

2.4 Dimensions of Citizenship: How Do We Belong?

The underlying principles of citizenship education are subject to the political climate and definitions of citizenship are a product of the spirit and concerns of the age. There are challenges associated with living in increasingly diverse communities, where the

nation state may no longer be the focal point of citizenship. Changes have occurred in the social dimension of citizenship, brought on by the impact of an increasingly global economy. Improving participation in democratic society is another challenge, whether this is at a local, national or international level.

The introduction of the FBV in England has promoted the importance of “national identity” and “Britishness” within schools. However, in the wider world, the last ten years has seen an increased educational imperative to "globalise". It is useful here to examine the rationales which can frame the notion of "global learning". According to Birk (2014), these traditionally fall within three categories:

(i) A neo-mercantilist rationale, which focuses on a narrow set of vocational and market-oriented ends

(ii) An internationalist rationale with an emphasis on cross cultural awareness and competences

(iii) A liberal-aesthetic rationale, which has larger goals of self-enrichment.

Birk suggests a new rationale which she calls “critical cosmopolitanism”. This provides the “missing” focus for global learning through its attention to the ethical dimension of the global project. This provides a link between citizenship education and critical pedagogy. The use of the words "global citizenship" instead of "global learning" seem to differentiate the ethical dimension from one that emphasizes market-oriented aims. The use of the word cosmopolitan embeds a moral standpoint within global citizenship, connecting it with values education and the framework of universal human values.

The sessions that I led at school were given the title “Global Citizenship” within the school curriculum plan and this is how they were introduced to the parents and

community. It was the intention that the sessions would have a strong ethical dimension and they were also planned within the framework of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs) as defined by the United Nations (2015). The next section will further explore the link between global citizenship, cosmopolitanism and critical pedagogy.

2.5 Global Citizenship, Cosmopolitanism and Critical Pedagogy.

Global citizenship has roots in cosmopolitanism and is frequently associated with a focus in four key areas, summarised by Sherman (2017). The first of these is characterised by an appreciation for cultural diversity and an acceptance and respect for different ways of living and being (Nussbaum, 1997; Clifford and Montgomery, 2014). A second focus of global citizenship emphasizes shared bonds and global interconnectedness (Noddings, 2005; Schattle, 2008). Central to this second focus are values of moral responsibility and solidarity towards people around the world and also towards the environment. As such, consideration should be given to the wider impact of personal actions on the well-being of distant others. The affective conditions for learning (see Amsler, 2011; Zembylas and Boler, 2002) have relevance here. Global citizenship is an affectively orientated educational practice, which connects abstract knowledge with personal experience, exemplified in the “think global, act local” slogan. In emphasizing the shared bonds that connect us and promoting a sense of responsibility towards others, students feel strong emotions when they engage with global issues that impact on people’s lives. The productive value of “discomfort” with the status quo is emphasized and has been described as “informed discontent” (Bloch, 1991). The notion of “discontent” has been developed in global citizenship the work of Bowden (2016; 2017) when he describes dialogues of “working dissensus”. In creating cultures of “dissent” in global citizenship education, students can be supported to make independent judgements about acceptable forms of existence, developing a critical sensibility which can be transformed into informed

social action. Pedagogies of “discomfort” are a move towards a more critical engagement with foundations of hegemonic power itself. This is at the heart of global citizenship education, where a “charity mentality” is challenged and the aim is to support students to understand the implications of the unequal distribution of resources, the consequences of our actions on the global community and the interconnectedness of all peoples of the world.

Thirdly, global citizenship is also closely linked to social justice and human rights values (Osler and Starkey, 2003; Pallas, 2012) and *“the compassion to maintain an imaginative empathy that reaches beyond one's immediate surroundings and extends to those suffering in distant places”* (Ikeda, 2010, p112). As noted by Earl (2014), any model of education that claims to promote emancipation and social justice as a goal must be cooperative, collective and community minded. Such a model must discourage individual competition and support students to understand the connection between knowledge and power. Global citizenship is an ideal forum for such work.

Finally, an important characteristic of global citizenship is knowledge and awareness of the self in relation to others. This can be viewed as an understand of values and identity, both at the personal and group level. Linked to this is the capacity for critical self-reflection (Nussbaum, 1997; Clifford and Montgomery, 2014). The classroom is a lively place of radical possibility, with a huge diversity of students and multiple affiliations. It is a place of “learning to learn from the other” (Alexander and Katz, 2017). Central to this is the notion of reflective dialogue and responsible participation. This is not a simplistic conversation, but one that takes place within a community of learners where there is an interest in one another and respect for one another’s voice. Most importantly, according to hooks (2010), learning comes from the Other when one unlearns one’s privilege and enters into an ethical relationship with the Other.

These four areas overlap and complement each other.

Bates (2005) discusses what a "global" curriculum should look like. It should include "subjugated knowledge", it should cross cultural boundaries and should see development as freedom. Such a pedagogy should be flexible, dynamic and have a problem-solving approach with varied and indeterminate outcomes. Evaluation should not simply reinforce hierarchization and exclusion, as do high stakes testing systems. Education should encourage multiple readings of the world, affirming all of student's capacities and their diversity. This forms another obvious connection with the "problematization" of knowledge key to critical pedagogy. This vision of citizenship is not simply an openness to, or by-product of global experiences, there is an underlying expectation of responsibility and a commitment to action which reaches beyond the nation state.

Appiah (2006) emphasizes the two moralistic strands of cosmopolitanism which are paralleled in global citizenship; a sense of responsibility to others and valuing life in all of its diversity. The emphasis on human rights, social justice environmental sustainability, cultural diversity and democracy further align the two theories (Appiah, 2016; Smith, 2007). Cosmopolitanism and global citizenship mirror each other and this is why both constructs are frequently interchanged. The ethical dimension and inherent critical approach to power structures, subjugated knowledge and the distribution of resources, along with an appreciation of dialogue within a diversity of viewpoints would situate both within the framework of critical pedagogy.

2.6 Patriotism, Global Identities and Pedagogies of Difference

The term "global citizenship" is not without controversy. In general, notions of cosmopolitanism and "global" identity implies that identity, identification and ethical

obligations are held beyond the bounds of the local and the familiar. Critics claim that this view obscures or denies the "givens" of life, such as parents, ancestry, race and tradition which underpins a person's defining characteristics. Traditional understandings of citizenship assume that a person is anchored in bounded communities, often within territorial boundaries. In using the term "global" citizenship, a new form of social belonging is introduced which brings different responsibilities and allegiances. This has been the source of dissent.

More recently, reconstructed notions of cosmopolitanism and global citizenship have been advanced which attempt to address some of these criticisms. Whilst the origins of cosmopolitanism reflect an affiliation beyond the local, it has now evolved into a broader, more contemporary discourse. Global citizens do not need to view their local identity as being in conflict with national identity or patriotism. These loyalties can in fact be viewed as wholly complementary (Appiah, 2006; Schattle, 2008; Birk, 2014; Sherman, 2017).

This resonates with recent criticisms of the dualistic nature of identity politics within critical pedagogy, where binary oppositions simplify the cultural struggles at work. Albrecht-Crane (2005) argues that we need to ask questions to establish what it is about identities that elicit such strong responses. The critical question is not how we can escape binaries, but why do they resonate so strongly, particularly in our attempts to overcome them. If we can understand how binary thinking affects attitudes, we can then engage difference more productively. This suggests a change from identity-based relations to the localised, contextual possibilities of working with what one finds "between" and "through" positions of identity (Albrecht-Crane, 2005, p.492).

Erskine (2002) describes "embedded" cosmopolitanism- a position that recognises community membership as being morally constitutive, but challenges the assumptions that communities are territorially bounded. Erskine criticises "impartialist" cosmopolitan standpoints, which fail to acknowledge the role of community and family relationships, appearing "*skeletal*", "*ghostly*" or "*lacking in substance*" (Erskine, 2002, p.461). Erskine argues that the embeddedness of our moral experience can allow for a preference for those who share our experiences, whilst also showing regard for those outside the group. Nussbaum (1996) has considered this idea in detail, concluding that a position that considers all human beings to be equal does not exclude the possibility of giving a special degree of concern to one's immediate sphere.

"Politics, like childcare, will be poorly done if each thinks herself equally responsible for all, rather than giving the immediate surroundings special care" (Nussbaum, 1996, p.6)

A multitude of compatible, yet diverse, overlapping territorial and non-territorial communities can co-exist; we can extend moral commitments beyond borders. Global citizenship can therefore be seen as a position that recognises the self as existing "*at the point where circles intersect*". (Erskine 2002, p1).

These citizenship dialogues share many common themes with work on pedagogies of "difference" (Alexander and Katz, 2017; Alexander, 2018) which holds that in order to engage worthwhile knowledge, one must begin with a conception of what it means to be worthwhile, promoting dialogue across difference. Global citizenship offers a promising ground for developing such a critical attitude if it paves the way for interactions, perspectives and exposure to alternative points of view. Students need to be willing to engage with views different to their own and take on perspectives with

which they might disagree. There must also be a feeling of responsibility to care for others different to one's self. Dialogue across difference is integral to teaching of this kind.

In this project, I aimed to support the children through the drama sessions to engage positively with difference and to widen their perspectives about identity and belonging. I hoped that drama would develop their understanding of multiple identities and the complex and sometimes fluid system of values that exist around these ways of belonging. In this way, I hoped to apply a critical pedagogical framework to notions of citizenship and the values.

I believe that the combination of critical pedagogy and global citizenship offer a socially relevant and transformative language for values education using a deliberative dialogic approach that builds upon Freire's concept of problem posing participative pedagogy (1996, p.62). Global citizenship and critical pedagogy both share the idea of an "interrogation" of one's perspective; for the critical educator there are many sides to a problem and many perspectives. I hoped that drama could be a pathway into these complex and challenging issues.

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter began with a brief history of citizenship education in the UK from 1970s to the current position, with the recent introduction of the Fundamental British Values. The controversy surrounding the British Values agenda was examined and reference was made to other values-led projects that use the framework of the Universal Human Values. Differing perspectives and theories of citizenship education were examined, including global citizenship. Links were made between citizenship education and key tenets of critical pedagogy. The next chapter will explore

approaches to drama education that support a critical pedagogical approach to education for citizenship and values.

Chapter 3: The Role and Purpose of Contemporary Drama in Education

3.1 Introduction: Drama as an “Unauthorized Method”

Kincheloe and Steinberg (1998) note that any student-centred pedagogy must shift the focus from curriculum coverage and test scores to engaging student’s curiosity and enlisting them as “co-creators” of the knowledge that will be included in their schools. The teacher thus becomes the “explorer” who works with the students to create mutually understood texts. In order to be effective in this goal, teachers should possess the freedom to make their own plans, honouring the responsibility to become knowledge producers as part of a network of educators. This type of classroom becomes a “think tank”, where important knowledge is produced. I believe that drama can be a powerful vehicle in such a quest. Through drama, knowledge can be “problematized” and explored in a way that allows children to develop an awareness of themselves as social agents. In this project, I wanted to explore the potential of drama to reunite context, content and methods in values education with critical pedagogy. In bringing values education into the children’s everyday experience through the drama sessions, I hoped to make this educational experience meaningful, not just a “superfluous hoop” that held little meaning for the children. I see this project as adding to the “unauthorised methods” described by Kincheloe and Steinberg and others, who have narrated the application of critical methods to educational practice. This project represents my own attempt to make sense of the contradictions and dilemmas inherent in the application of critical pedagogy in the classroom. However, it shares key aspects with the other critical education projects described by Kincheloe and Steinberg: a commitment to democracy, empowerment, collaboration, dialogue and academic rigour in the research.

It is important to begin this chapter with an examination of the role and purpose of contemporary drama in education. Many drama publications ignore ideology and do not acknowledge the social and cultural context within which drama education is taking place. Teaching is a political act, which can serve to challenge, enforce, or reconstruct societal norms and values. I therefore believe it is important to clarify my ethical and ideological stance at the outset of this research. This stance led me to embrace the form of drama used in this project.

In the rest of the chapter, I will explore the link between critical pedagogy and drama. There will be a detailed explanation of the principles of the drama used in this project, along with a discussion of some of the ethical issues.

3.2 What is the Purpose of Drama in Education?

As a teacher, I see that there is a danger that drama education in England could be limited by the need to serve the National Curriculum. There is considerable pressure on schools to demonstrate attainment and progress in core subjects and I have often found myself justifying the teaching of drama by linking it to the requirements of the English Programmes of Study and assessment targets. Wooster (2016) has described how current educational policy threatens the progressive roots of Theatre in Education. At the heart of this movement, as it emerged in the 1960's, was a belief in the necessity for children to become critically engaged with the world. Wooster charts the descent of drama education into "utilitarianism" which promotes "didactic messages and exercises in socialisation" (2016, p.1). Nicholson (2011) also describes the way that the arts have been promoted to serve the neo-liberal agenda, valued in so much as they promote certain skills now viewed as important in a globalised economy. Nicholson notes that creativity is being removed from the idea of personal fulfilment and self-expression and is seen instead as a commercially exploitable and marketable commodity (2011, p.99). It is indeed often argued that

drama enhances certain marketable skills for the workplace, such as the ability to think creatively, express clear opinions and put oneself across well in a social situation. Whilst there is nothing inherently wrong with using drama to develop these skills, I believe its real power goes beyond this.

The terms “Theatre in Education” (TIE) and “Drama in Education” (DIE) need brief explanations. Applied Theatre is the practice of theatre and drama in non-traditional settings and/or with marginalized communities. It encompasses theatre practices that tackle areas of social and cultural policy such as public health, education, housing, social welfare, and juvenile and criminal justice. TIE and DIE come under this umbrella (Wooster, 2016). Both share a commitment to the use of theatre as an educational medium. However, Theatre in Education is usually a written theatre performance for schools presented by professional drama group centred on ‘real life’ or topics relevant to the school curriculum and the pupils. The “message” is communicated through dramatic interactions between actors-in-role and the audience/students. Drama in Education is a learning method, making use of drama workshops, which do not necessarily end in performance. Teachers or facilitators work collaboratively within the classroom environment. Both can provide a deeply emotional and transformative experience. Process drama is a type of DIE that owes much to the work of Dorothy Heathcote. Heathcote (1984; 1995) was a pioneer of a radical new approach concerned with the experience “within” drama; the engagement and transformation that occurs when students encounter issues in a dramatic moment. Process drama will be examined in detail later in this chapter.

3.2 Critical Pedagogy and Drama

Adams (2013, p301) has associated drama in education with three tenets of critical pedagogy:

- (i) The use of a problem-posing model. The teacher is replaced as the sole authority and the student is not seen as an empty vessel. The relationship is one of collaboration where teacher and student become co-investigators who co-construct knowledge (see Freire, 2006).
- (ii) Dialogic participation. Both drama in education and critical pedagogy work to develop “conscientization” through dialogic participation. This is defined by Freire as “an ethical encounter taking place between humans who meets as equals to make the world” (Freire, 1996, p.88).
- (iii) Education as a transformative process of liberation. Drama is a form of education which, like critical pedagogy, resists domination by transforming students into active learners working for social justice. It does this by exploring subjugated knowledge as well as conventional knowledge. The ultimate goal is to allow students to develop a critical consciousness and thereby resist and rewrite the powers that shape them.

3.2.1 Drama and Critical Thinking

There is a real danger within the current educational climate in England that children are never challenged to examine their perspectives and values in schools, thus “sleep walking” through the curriculum, unaware of the biases and power imbalances that underpin the content. As Edward Bond notes:

"we are sleep walkers walking towards death and the world begins to creak like a coffin" (Edward Bond, 2013a, p.13)

Drama education can be a powerful and practical method for the development of critical thinking, but many commentators have criticised current approaches in drama education which "commodify" it, removing these political and ethical roots. The belief that children need to be more critically engaged with the world has been lost. Huge social problems are being written out of theatre for the sake of popularising it and art is therefore "gift wrapped". In the words of Bond (2012a, p20), "*Don't look for meaning, watch the spectacle*". Drama becomes an extravaganza of pure entertainment and its potential for eliciting profound thoughts about complex issues is being lost.

In this project, the potential of drama for supporting critical thinking about values and identity is examined. The following sections will outline how my reading of critical pedagogy relates to the "process" drama used in the project.

3.2.2 Engaging Pedagogies of Difference

By giving children certain experiences in drama and linking these experiences to citizenship education, they may better understand their own values, the values of others and the powerful forces that can impact upon their values and beliefs. Young participants in drama can be supported to test their own understanding against the characters, relating this to their own experiences. Children are scaffolded to connect what they know to the wider world: from the "particular" to the "universal" (Wooster, 2016. p21). This insight is the first step in seeking to take control and lead change. This has strong links to the critical cosmopolitan form of citizenship education outlined by Birk (2014) as described in the previous chapter.

My own early experiences in drama in education used the tools of drama to explore challenging issues with the goal of a resolution through consensus. However, researchers such as Davies (2014); Nicholson (2014) and Mouffe (2007) have called for a more radical approach, one which does not seek easy solutions to such

challenging issues. Children could instead be encouraged to reflect, to question their value systems and those of their social groups. Mouffe (2007) suggests that drama education is a useful tool for citizenship education, but need not impose a view of citizenship based on assumptions of conformity or consensus. Instead a viewpoint could be encouraged built on the premise that politics is an antagonistic struggle, involving dissent and a vibrant clash of democratic political positions. Indeed, critical thinking and dialogic, deliberative democracy are deeply rooted in some forms of theatre; democracy was inextricably bound with theatre from the time of the Ancient Greeks (McGrath, 2002; Leipzig, 2010). Therefore, certain types of drama education are a way of theorising citizenship that chimes with critical pedagogical ideals.

According to Alexander (2018), the Pedagogy of Difference tasks society to prepare students with the skills and attitudes to establish, protect and defend a common life that allows difference to prosper. Learning to engage with this sort of process requires exposure to a variety of perspectives, which challenges young people to consider rival and contradictory viewpoints. Within drama, there are obvious opportunities to “stand in the shoes of another”, often a complex character who might be very different to oneself. Process drama is episodic: the “story” is built up by the participants and they enact the consequences of the decisions they make “in role”. It can therefore support participants to recognise their mutual involvement in the complex histories that create our identities.

3.3.3 Engaging with Affective Dimensions: Discomforting Pedagogies

There is a strong body of thought that acknowledges the “harm” caused by modern schooling, particularly to minority groups. Schools can be places that serve to uphold the status quo, reproducing hegemonic knowledge and ideological relations through knowledge selection, withholding and transmission (see for example; Apple, 2004; Harber, 2004). “Radical” theatre helps young people to understand their own histories

and thus illuminates the imbalance of power (Adams, 2013). This relocating of power is what Freire termed “conscientization” (Freire, 1996). A key question for the critical educator concerns the complex relationship between teaching and our capacity to transform the experience of education through a commitment to social justice. According to Britzman (2003), a critical voice attempts to discursively rearticulate tensions between and within worlds, not just representing voices, but narrating, considering and evaluating them. It is also necessary to challenge passivity and facilitate participation. The drama space is an ideal forum for such work. Britzman describes “renegade knowledge” (p.43), which occurs in times of spontaneity, improvisation, interpretive risks and crises. Fragmented and compartmentalised knowledge, which is severed from the socio-cultural context, thwarts a critical relationship with this knowledge and hinders agency. Drama supports a pedagogy that moves away from a form of education that is about instilling knowledge; instead it is built upon the web of mutual dependency, existing knowledge and the emotional connections that shape classroom life.

Critical pedagogy, according to Amsler (2011) asserts that questions about emotion should be placed at the heart of educational practice and problematised. Drama should not be used as a therapeutic intervention which treats emotional suffering without engaging with the root causes of this suffering. The playful nature of drama is inherently appealing to children; it can be a welcome release from more formal lessons. However, in this project, the purpose of drama was not to teach children to feel in a particular determined way; drama cannot be simplistically connected to feelings of well-being. The real power of drama is the way that it can support students to understand WHY they have certain feelings, desires and needs. The exploration of character’s viewpoints, the “backstory and side story” and the process of following and creating storylines with actions and consequences facilitates this understanding. Therefore, the practice of drama strongly supports pedagogies of discomfort, allowing

students to make independent judgements about acceptable forms of existence. This may be practised in “imaginary” worlds, but students bring their own background and experience and will take learning beyond the drama sessions if supported to make these links. In this way, drama can be a practical way of engaging pedagogies of discomfort with younger children, within a context that can sometimes appear to stifle critical thought. Indeed, Boler and Zembylas note that their own theory is not particularly “radical”; it is located in cramped spaces within a set of relations that are often intolerable, where change can be blocked and where voice can be strangled (2003, p.59). Drama offers the opportunity to “be human in dehumanising conditions”.

3.3.4 Socially Constructing Knowledge: Active Participation

Britzman (2003, p. 229) notes that the construct of the teacher as “expert” and the source of all knowledge is a normalizing fiction that serves to protect the status quo. Recognising that all knowledge can be deconstructed and transformed opens up the dialogic, enabling participants to respond to and shape the social forces that construct lived experience. Pivotal to the experience of drama is a developing ability to understand and respond to the social dynamics at work in any scenario. Responses draw upon past and personal meanings; practices are “process and becoming” (Britzman, 2003, p.229). Dialogical discourse connotes equality of social relationships, intellectual openness and the possibility for critique and creative thought. These are all key aspirations within exploratory drama practices and were important guiding principles in the drama sessions in this project.

DIE can engage critical pedagogy effectively because, as an art form, it engages the whole human being cognitively and affectively. It works through images, symbols and story to understand the world and make connections between experiences. It resonates with personal stories and group identities. DIE emphasizes the social

construction of knowledge, so connects with constructivist theories of learning (for example Vygotsky, 1986; Dewey, 1938) by embodying the notion of play. Participants engage with ideas in the “safe” space of drama through “play” and they take action and learn by “doing”. Drama education can therefore be a strong ally of critical pedagogy as it resists positivism by engaging emotion, physicality and cognition to construct knowledge socially.

The seminal texts of Jonathan Neelands showcase classroom participatory democracy through ensemble-based theatre education (see O' Connor, 2010). The connections between applied theatre, citizenship and participation have also become associated with the work of theatre director Augusto Boal and his famous work on "Theatre of the Oppressed" (1979) where teacher and student share the roles of playwright, director, actors and audience to explore and attempt to resolve situations of injustice. This type of theatre has become known as “forum theatre” and was been very influential in the development of more radical drama education projects such as process drama.

3.3.5 Power Dynamics

Albrecht-Crane (2005) has attempted to shift attention within critical pedagogy from an ideological critique based on identity relations, to a consideration of the multiplicity of relations possible between teachers and their students.

“By refusing to meet students in a confrontational stance, teachers can subvert the power of identity construction and strike new modes of connectivity and learning” (2005, p.491).

Process drama subverts traditional power dynamics, particularly in the use of “teacher in role”. Criticisms of critical pedagogy note that strategies such as student empowerment and dialogue give the illusion of equality, whilst in fact leaving the

authoritarian nature of the student/teacher relationship intact. Critical pedagogy has critiqued the socially constructed “authority” of the teacher, but has failed to launch any meaningful alternative which would reformulate this power imbalance (Ellsworth, 1989). Drama offers a different way of working, one where “traditional” structures of education are more likely to be disrupted. It has been noted that critical pedagogues have made no systematic examination of the barriers that unequal power relations in the classroom throw up, particularly in the realm of student voice. Can we even assert that the classroom is a safe space for democratic dialogue? Drama occurs in a different sort of space, often outside of the classroom. It has different rules of engagement and is more playful in nature. It engages the imagination and action takes place in the “make believe”, although it is built upon the everyday experiences of the participants. It may therefore be a way of working that is more likely to challenge existing power relationships. As noted by Earl (2014), a more democratic education must allow for the central positioning of young people’s views and needs and should facilitate the opportunity for young people to make critical decisions and moral judgements. This way of working is central to exploratory drama. Dialogue in process drama is reflective and responsible participation is central. In process drama, children do not speak “for” the other, they speak “as” the other. All have the right to speak and the responsibility to listen.

The form of drama used within this project owes much the “process drama” approach developed by Heathcote, with Brian Way and Gavin Bolton (Bolton, 1979; Heathcote and Bolton, 1995; Way, 1967). Process drama centralises the moral or ethical “dilemma” and facilitates a critical, problem solving approach. This form of drama has the potential to unlock a more exciting, creative and unpredictable outcome, which can articulate the complexity and interconnectedness of social networks. Facing “the dilemma” raises awareness of the social forces that manipulate us and supports

participants to take action. I believed therefore that this approach would facilitate in investigation of values and identity within the citizenship sessions

The next section will outline some of the ethical challenges to be considered when using drama to understand contentious or sensitive moral issues.

3.4 Moral Education and Democratic Citizenship Education through Drama.

A moral question for the drama educator is whether to promote certain values and beliefs in the name of social justice or safeguarding, or whether to allow students to form their own judgements. This was a dilemma that was often a personal source of challenge when balancing the roles of researcher and teacher. Citizenship education and values education require contemplation and reflection, drawing on personal attitudes and beliefs. It is a moral enterprise, drawing on personal convictions. British teachers are not used to this way of working: it is well documented that much time is spent at the lowest level pursuing the most efficient means of achieving predetermined goals (NEU, 2018). This issue was not given sufficient consideration when the British Values Agenda was released. Teachers were simply asked to “promote” a set of values with little thought being given to the ethical issues around this requirement.

Neelands (1997; 2000) urges the drama teacher to promote key human values such as tolerance, compassion and respect. In addition, he advises the teacher to have no concerns about censoring images and characteristics which might exacerbate prejudices. Davies (2014) questions this standpoint, stating that there is a danger that drama can simply be used a tool to further embed and develop societal concepts and values. Davies discusses how drama should be transformative, empowering students to make their own value judgements by giving them the skills to critically examine the

world in which they live. This ethical question is explored further in Chapter 5.4 where examples are given to how this dilemma was managed “in action” during the project.

Many educators and drama theorists have used drama to “explore” moral issues and a common thread is the notion of open dialogue and discussion; participants have been supported to explore their viewpoints in partnership with others. Much of the literature demonstrates that improvisational role play and open discussion of the events that unfolded can impact upon notions of identity, values, attitudes and empathy towards to different "types" of others (for example see; Miller, Rynden and Schlein, 1993; McLaughlin, 1990). Drama has been shown to impact upon self-expression, trust and awareness of others (Gourgey, Bosseau and Delago, 1985). It has been shown to enhance cross cultural understandings, improve human relations and reduce interracial tensions (McLaughlin, 1990). It has also been used to aid recognition of multiple perspectives in historical events, giving pupils the understanding that knowledge about history is not fixed or authoritative (Hume and Wells, 1999). More recently, McNaughton (2014) explored the relationship between "Global Storylines Drama" and citizenship, finding that drama made a valuable contribution to young people's understanding of sustainable development. Throughout all of these projects the imaginative use of play was used to place children empathetically into the thought processes of another. 'What if' underpinned the creative endeavours in the drama sessions, enabling the visualisation of alternative outcomes. Children were encouraged to critically evaluate the responses of the characters to their situations creating “*a cauldron in which ideas and imagination are exercised in a catalytic fusion*” (Wooster, 2016, p.20). This key tenet of drama has strong links to aspects of critical pedagogy outlined in Pedagogies of Difference and Discomfort.

3.5 Process Drama

In this project an attempt was made to work within the ideals of process drama, engaging the children's critical thinking skills and offering moral and ethical challenges through the scenarios and stories they were confronted with. Although the work done sometimes led to sharing in the form of a formal or informal "performance", the emphasis was always on the "process". In using the term "process", I refer to an emphasis on the discussion and understanding that comes from interactions with the characters and situations of the drama and the events unfolding.

"Process drama...evokes an immediate dramatic world bounded in space and time, a world that depends on the consensus of all of those present for its existence... (it) proceeds without a script, its outcome is unpredictable, it lacks a separate audience, and the experience is impossible to replicate exactly" (O'Neill, 1995, p.xiii)

Process drama was developed primarily from the work of Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton (1984; 1995). It is a way of working that is very dynamic and requires both pupils and teachers to think "on their feet" in response to unscripted events in an exploratory drama session. It is used to explore a problem, situation, theme or series of related ideas or themes through the artistic medium of unscripted drama. It is rooted in dramatic play, where children are encouraged by an empathic adult to create imaginary worlds which they then explore and develop (O'Neill, 1995). In an educational setting, pupils create a world and invest time in developing it. They are then supported to explore themes and challenging issues within this imaginary world, attempting to resolve these issues through the negotiation and interaction of the characters they have invested in.

The term "process drama" seems to have arisen in Australia and North America in the late 1980's as a response to an existing form of drama being developed in schools that was seen as unambitious and which failed to locate drama in a theatrical

context (O'Neill, 1995). The approach emphasises that drama is a complete learning medium, not just a rehearsal device or a form of entertainment. The term “process” implies an ongoing event, not an exercise limited to one session or a single day. It is built up from units and is thus episodic with an inherent structure articulating an expression of a complex world, where ideas are expanded and elaborated over an extended period of time. Thus, it differs from improvisation, which would be considered as existing in one episode or scene. The dramatic world develops spontaneously in the process, but these worlds have their own structure, logic and potential for further growth.

Metaxis, a term first used by Boal (1995, p.44), refers to the state of existing in two worlds at once. It has been redefined by Bond (2012; 2013) and Bolton (1976; 1992) within the context of process drama. Boal saw that the “oppressed” in his forum theatre techniques “forgot” the real world (where the image of oppression originated) in order to play with this image in the theatre space. Bolton uses the phrase “living through” to describe a type of drama where pupils can co-exist in both worlds at the same time. Pupils are in role in the drama world, but also bring their outside experiences to the drama; “*being not pretending*”. This has links to research in psychology on children’s narrative worlds and their understanding of “make believe” play (Engels, 2005; Weisberg, 2013). It is an intellectually challenging form of learning, as the participants have to use perception, imagination, speculation, interpretation and many more social and cognitive capacities. The links to the articulations of critical pedagogy outlined in section 3.3 are clear. Central to the approach is an engagement with multiple, often conflicting perspectives and there is a need to “wrestle” with discomfiting emotions as characters encounter challenging “dilemmas”. In order to create “belief” in a character, a participant must take into account context, history, identity and values. Characterisation also involves taking on

roles where power dynamics are challenged or disrupted, allowing participants to better understand how power impacts on choices and opportunities.

Davies (2014) contends that some drama devices which have commonly been used in schools have kept the potential of drama in check. He uses the example of “conventions” approaches, which he sees as distancing pupils from the drama experience. “Conventions” are set of ways of doing something that children would recognise and engage with. One such approach is the "Mantle of the Expert" approach (Heathcote, 1984) where students work in role as “experts” in a particular field. For example, students may be put in role as archaeologists excavating a site and thus would need to complete the necessary historical research to carry out this role, developing cross curricular knowledge and skills. This approach emphasises "how it was for them" not "how it is for me now" and thus distances pupils from the immediacy of the drama and the potential for the exploration of moral and ethical issues. Davies contends that process drama allows for a deeper and more personal engagement.

In process drama, participants work collaboratively to construct contexts and events, building a collective belief in an imagined community or context to understand issues. Relationships, courses of action and the subtexts of interactions are critically explored, enabling participants to *"look at reality through fantasy and to see below the surface of actions to their meaning"* (Wagner, 1999, p.5). A key characteristic is the equitable involvement of everyone in the group, including the teacher, who often works “in role”. The spirit of collaboration and mutual support proved to be a very powerful force in this project. Again, this strongly resonates with critical pedagogy: the social construction of knowledge is pivotal. The knowledge students bring to the classroom is valued and understanding is co-created with consideration given to the context and the personal histories of the participants.

3.6 Questions of Content and Form: Exploration or Performance?

Critics of process drama have claimed that pupils learn nothing about drama as an art form, that no attention is given to theatre skills and that there is an absence of progression (Neelands, 2010). I am not a drama or theatre specialist, but from my experiences in schools as a teacher working with drama, I have not felt that the two positions need to be in opposition.

In this study, each participant was an actor, a writer of drama and the audience. There will be further explanation of the structure of the drama sessions in Chapter 4. In the main, performance was not prioritised outside of the drama sessions. The emphasis was on the engagement, solving the problems, not on “switching on” and showing particular emotions or communicating a given message. Story was frequently used a prompt, but the emphasis was on opening up the story and exploring the events, ultimately transforming it from its original form. In removing the end goal of a public performance in drama, there was a de-prioritisation of communicating a message to an external audience. Participants could then concentrate on the situation at hand, an advantage which fostered exploration and critical thinking.

The children involved had been receiving regular drama sessions for some time before this project started and were already confident in many drama conventions and techniques. Their feedback to each other often referred to how something had been presented and communicated. They took pride in “sharing” their work within the sessions and did consider performance elements. On some occasions, work in the sessions was developed for an “external” audience, scripts were “devised” (written by the children within the sessions) and rehearsed. Props and simple costumes were added and there was a formal “performance”, usually in the round. On these occasions, more attention was given to theatre as an art form and the children were

supported to develop the necessary performance skills. The children really valued these opportunities. In these circumstances there was a different focus, but I feel this was complementary to the main part of the project.

The preparatory work that had been done gave children the skills to engage with the art form, the “tools” to engage effectively, but from within that discipline they could then be creative in developing their ideas. Experience meant that they were more able to respond to the challenge of the process drama approach. I did not feel there was opposition or conflict between promoting theatre skills and an exploratory, immersive approach.

A focus on participatory “classic” drama in education techniques, moving away from the idea of a “performance” has implications for funding. In the current climate, school funding is stretched to the point that huge cuts are being made in many areas. Classic DIE has always been a “hidden” art form, as there is no “audience” or “performance”. It is hard to evidence or record. Fifty years on, misunderstanding means that some funders still think that they are supporting “plays in schools” or “treats” for the children (Wooster, 2016. p16). The type of drama education advocated in this project may not be valued sufficiently to be funded. The majority of primary schools in England will at some point put on a “play”, but the benefits of participatory “classic” drama in education remains largely unrecognised. There are implications here for teacher training in drama pedagogy and also for a deeper research base to evidence the impact of drama in education. This will be discussed further in Chapters 6.

3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter explored the role and purpose of drama in education, situating this study within a drama ideology that centralises ethical and political motives. The key

features of the “process” drama approach were outlined and links to articulations of critical pedagogy outlined in the introduction were made explicit. Ethical and moral issues were considered. Questions of content and form were also acknowledged, with reference to the perceived need for drama to lead to “performance” and the development of theatre skills.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This chapter details the methodological approach underpinning this research, the methods used for collecting the data and the rationale for the choices made about the research design.

4.1 Introduction

This research reports a project within a primary school which uses drama to engage pupils in a form of citizenship education which is informed by a critical pedagogical approach. The research questions that are restated below have been further unpicked following consideration of how they would be evidenced. Although I gave consideration prior to the commencement of the project as to what I might observe as evidence, I retained an open-minded approach as I wanted the children's views and perspectives to be the central focus. My aim was to remain open to changes in direction that were led by the children as the project progressed.

4.1.2 Research Question

What is the potential of drama to engage children in citizenship education and enable them to think critically about values, identity and belonging?

Sub-questions

- (i) How well can drama help children to identify, understand and engage with values?**

I might observe:

- Children showing an improved awareness of a wide variety of values and where values come from
- Children responding to others, engaging in discussion about values with increased confidence

- Children independently identifying values that are significant for characters within the drama sessions

(ii) How well can drama help children to think critically about values?

I might observe:

- Children showing an awareness that values can sometimes be in conflict and can change depending on the situation/context
- Children becoming aware of other perspectives, demonstrating an ability to change their minds
- A developing capacity to discuss how values can impact choices and behaviour

(iii) What are the implications of the research findings for reimagining the British Values agenda and for the development of a more transformative and relevant citizenship education programme?

I might observe:

- Evidence of motivation to engage with a common set of values alongside an acknowledgement of individual preferences
- Children expressing views on “what works” in values and citizenship education
- Evidence of a developing sense of community and belonging on local and global scale

4.1.3 Situating the Research

Irwell Bank is a fictional name for the school and all identifiable features and pupil’s names have been changed to protect the identity of the school and the pupils. Irwell

Bank is an inner-city primary school in Greater Manchester and the research involved approximately 100 pupils aged from 7-11 years old. The project ran over two terms from January 2018 to July 2018 and was centred around weekly drama sessions led by myself as teacher/researcher, with classes from primary school years three to six. Irwell Bank was chosen to locate the study as it is my place of employment.

There was a pre-existing research agreement with the school, which had favoured access for drama and had also enabled the preliminary studies to take place. In parallel with this research, a project ran alongside to establish the Irwell Bank “Core Values”. This research will continue to feed into this project in the future as these core values are established and embedded. The leadership team facilitated the research and this explicit support has been pivotal in shaping this project. The school has seen the potential of drama to engage the children and the leadership team have entrusted me to do this work. My experience in education has shown that this position is not typical; for some school leaders, it does not fit in with the drive for assessment and testing or with the perceived need for written evidence of attainment in books.

The school serves an area of high social deprivation according to measures by the Department for Education. Approximately 36% of children are eligible for free school meals. Currently, 20% of pupils have a high level of special educational need, including behaviour and language difficulties. The school has special provision for children with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) and currently 15 pupils access this. The school is increasingly diverse with 36% of children categorised as “BME” (black minority ethnic) according to school context data, with 6% using English as an additional language. The school has high levels of transiency, with approximately 16% of children being new to the school in any one academic year.

4.2 Research Design: Constructivist Grounded Theory

This project sits within Constructivist Grounded Theory research, a methodology within which multi-faceted and contestable concepts such as values and identity can be examined. Process drama was the method used for data collection. Values and identity are open to multiple social constructions, positioning this work within a relativist ontology. This position acknowledges that there are multiple diverse interpretations of the world and thus interpretation is always subjective. An interpretive approach centralises the construction of meaning by the participants (in this case the children) and seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the motivations behind certain behaviours and choices of the research subjects (Pring, 2004). Unlike classic grounded theory, the constructivist position centralises participant generated meaning and positions the researcher in context, making this methodology well suited to use alongside process drama. Within Constructivist GT, the role of the researcher is formulated as an active one in a process of co-constructing the final research product with participants. Charmaz (2014) argued that researchers are part of the world they study and thus construct their theories through their “past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices” (p. 17). All of these features have clear links to the framework of process drama outline in Chapter 3.5. Constructivist grounded theory assumes that neither data nor theories are discovered, but are constructed by the researcher as a result of their interactions with the field and its participants. The following quote from Charmaz exemplifies this way of working.

*“At each phase of the research journey, **your** readings of your work guide your next moves. This combination of involvement and interpretation leads you to the next step. The end point of the journey emerges from where you start, where you go, and with whom you interact, what you see and you hear, and how you learn and think. In short, the finished work is a construction-**yours**.” (Charmaz, 2014, p.xiv)*

Within Constructivist GT, the researcher is encouraged to become familiar with the literature prior to data collection. Charmaz (2014) makes the point that it is unrealistic to expect that researchers will start their research without holding particular perspectives and knowledge about its focus; delaying the literature review implies that researchers are uncritical in their reading. The researcher's ability to develop theoretical sensitivity is predicated on familiarity with relevant literature. I was already immersed in the literature of drama theory and values education. I had also already chosen to use the theoretical framework of critical pedagogy

The constructivist approach supports the exploration of contextual power structures central to critical pedagogical approach; what has long been 'hidden' and naturalized in children's lives could be seen as socially and historically constructed and therefore also 'political'. The method, like other qualitative traditions, looks for verbal accounts and uses open ended questions that are adapted to the participants particular experiences and ability to communicate these experiences. Typically, interviews are distinguished by their deliberate giving of power to the respondents, allowing respondents to reveal aspects of their experiences that are of high importance to them, yet may not be expected by the researcher. The openness in this approach put the child's experience at the heart of the work, as there are opportunities for the researcher to challenge responses and pose further questions for consideration. Participants are encouraged to look below the surface and to consider the origins of their views. In this study, the children were positioned as "partners in research". Reality was consensually validated through discussion with them during and after the drama sessions and in focus group interviews. There was no assumption of a need for consensus in any of the pupil discussions, which fits in with a critical pedagogical approach.

Data are co-constructed by researcher and participants, and coloured by the researcher's perspectives, values, privileges, positions, interactions, and geographical locations. The aim in this study was to gain a better understanding of the children's perspectives on values, whilst acknowledging that this is one perspective, grounded in the social and educational experiences of the children who took part in the study.

My choice to use constructivist grounded theory as a research method had implications for the types of data that would be collected and the way it would be analysed. In constructivist grounded theory, rich gathering of data is imperative. The data I had planned to collect was large and "messy". Data would be rich in depth and detail; therefore, an analysis of ranks or numbers would be inadequate. Qualitative data, when analysed rigorously, makes it possible to uncover and expose very complex issues with a great number of variables.

Constructivist grounded theory supports researchers to ask emergent critical questions from the onset of the work. It also encourages a deeply reflexive stance, which leads researchers to scrutinize their data, actions and analyses. A final important underpinning of this approach is the acknowledgement of the researcher's involvement in the construction of data and therefore the subjectivity of this data. I felt that the grounded theory approach would support and structure this critical self-reflection.

4.2.1 Practical Applicability: Teachers as Grounded Theory Researchers

Constructivist grounded theory rejects notions of a neutral observer and value free expert. Analysis is not necessarily an accurate rendering of the world; it is more a construction of it. Undertaking a constructivist enquiry requires the adoption of a

position of mutuality between researcher and participant in the research process, which necessitates a rethinking of the “original” grounded theorist's traditional role of objective observer (Mills, 2006). When teachers are the researchers, there is a considerable advantage, in that relationships have already been forged with the participants. Researchers do not need to erase subjectivity, need to engage with it. This makes it an ideal method for teacher-researchers.

Key to constructivist grounded theory is practical applicability in context (Dey, 2007; Nelson, 2015). This makes it a useful method for teachers pursuing critical qualitative inquiry. It offers a way to get started, stay involved and finish the project. Pragmatism offers ways to think about critical qualitative inquiry; constructivist grounded theory offers strategies for doing it. Charmaz notes that constructivist grounded theory “*demystifies the conduct of qualitative enquiry, expedites research and enhances excitement about it*”. (Charmaz, 2014. p.4).

4.2.2 Drama as Research Methodology

The landscape of educational research is ever changing; increasingly the arts are looked upon more seriously as a means of collecting research data (Norris, 2016). Drama education has much to offer educational research, as it is a process of meaning making and a presentational and representational form. Furthermore, there are ways of working and discoveries to be made that can only be carried out within practice. Whilst the arts have been often used to disseminate research, the full potential what drama has to offer in research has yet to be realised. Bolton (1996) states that the drama classroom uses highly complex meaning-making activities which are parallel to those of researchers. In process drama, participants are continually generating and testing hypotheses through the magic of “what if...?” Much of what is done in process drama helps to re-evaluate content, draw insights and make new meanings. This act can be considered a research tool. In a piece of

drama, participants articulate what they know (data collection), frame it in the improvisation (analysis) and present it to others (dissemination). Drama activities provide researchers with a lived understanding of phenomenon, analysed through discussion, where new understandings emerge.

“Drama becomes a complete research activity where data is collected, analysed and presented in dramatic fashion” (Norris, 2016, p.128)

Drama making can also be characterized in ways that have obvious links to constructivist grounded theory. According to Somers (2002), such research involves asking questions that are no longer just the concern of specialists but have become ubiquitous demands made on many people in many circumstances. These demands have social, political and moral implications. In addition, drama research could be said to employ "generative theory", being more interested in discovery rather than proof. The focus is on contextual findings and not generalisations. The practitioner-researcher can be said to be "indwelling" - being part of the spirit of the thing being studied. Somer's final points also have clear resonance for a critical pedagogical approach: the drama participant possesses both tacit (unarticulated) and explicit (appreciated) knowledge; the knower and the known are interdependent and cannot be detached. The process is one of joint exploration and meaning making, where the knowledge that the participants bring to the experience is of value.

Vallack (2018) notes that drama methodology takes on many of the recognisable features of grounded theory. For example, it uses the triangulating device of 'member checking'. Furthermore, drama can be compared to a focus group activity in that it is a method of eliciting respondent's perceptions, attitudes and opinions. However, unlike the focus group, there is no division between researcher and informant: each participant is both. This resonates with critical pedagogy in that it seeks to ameliorate

power imbalances and promote open critical discussion. Within articulations of drama as a research methodology, there are many questions about representation and truth that remain unanswered. However, when combined with constructivist grounded theory, I believe that process drama can offer a powerful research method for critical practitioner/researchers. The drama methods employed in this project will be examined in detail in Chapter 4.8. Some general points for consideration when using creative methodologies will be explored in Chapter 4.2.6.

4.2.3 Representing the Children's Voice.

"If children's voice is to be sought, then children should be positioned as participating subjects, knowers and social actors, rather than objects of the researcher's gaze"
(Smith, 2006, p.11).

A stated aim of the project was to represent the children's "voices"; it is acknowledged that claims to representation through "voice" are complicated and contested (see Chapter 1.4). The influence of the teacher as the researcher, power imbalances and the possible bias which comes from "working from within" must be acknowledged. Part of the appeal of mobilising 'the child's voice' within research is that it appears to promise unmediated access to children's views. However, claims of an "authentic" child's voice in research should be considered with caution (I' Anson, 2013). The production of 'the child's voice' is more complex than it appears because adults make the decisions as to what is included and how it is used. Although children's words quoted may be an accurate record of what children have said, the words and phrases have been chosen and arranged by the researcher to illustrate an argument or point of view. Rather than drawing upon the metaphor of a mirror, with the child's voice assumed to be reflected in what is written, the endeavour would be better described as joint meaning-making.

Constructivist grounded theory has much to offer researchers working with such concepts, as it offers a systematic and rigorous approach to data collection and analysis that allows for the construction of a theory that is grounded in participants' own views and experiences. Researchers need to critically scrutinize the way they represent children's voices in their work and the assumptions that underpin these representations. In this study, the children played a significant role in identifying themes from the data and were involved in iterative strategies to develop these themes from the onset of the project. The grounded theory approach supported my own critical voice when producing this narrative of lived experience; this internal dialogue has been defined as a fundamental imperative of critical pedagogy (Britzman, 2003).

4.2.4 Multi-method approaches.

In this study, data were collected with the children in various social grouping arrangements. These were chosen for the purposes of inclusivity, so as to maximise the involvement of the children and to take in to account dynamics that would build their confidence to express their views.

Four streams of qualitative data were used in this study (see section 4.5), making it a multi-method approach. Multi-method designs have the most potential for research with children, as they offer a diversity of opportunities to "hear" the children's voices. Although validity and reliability in qualitative research can be checked using a range of different approaches, triangulation of data sources is a popular strategy and this was another benefit of using this research design.

Being an experienced teacher with an existing positive relationship with all of the pupils, I felt that the methods of data collection should build on this strength. I felt this naturalistic setting was one where the children felt confident and would yield the

richest data. I also wanted to ensure that the methods of data collection would engage the children, promoting enjoyment and participation. The use of a diversity of approaches is a striking feature of research with children, helping to make the process engaging and ensuring that children have more control over the focus and agenda.

Punch (2002a) warns that care needs to be taken when selecting diverse or creative approaches, urging critical reflection on the part of the researcher. There is a danger that innovative methods may be used because they are “fun”, but they may not generate useful or relevant data (Punch, 2002a. p.330). I chose data collection methods that I knew from preliminary work would engage the children and which had proved to be effective tools for eliciting their responses.

4.2.5 Creative Methodologies

Tisdall et al (2009) note that a useful way to frame the question whether an approach is “child-friendly” is to simply avoid distinguishing between methods for children and methods for adults. This is too simplistic. Instead, it is more useful to think about the particular children with whom the researcher is engaging. The context, preferred types of communication and the characteristics of the children are better indicators of methods; *“simplistic, universal prescriptions for methods may be of limited use where different social, cultural, economic and historical factors intersect”* (Tisdall et al, 2009, p.7). Due to the cohort sample, it was important in this context to use methods that engaged both verbal and non-verbal methods of responding, along with a variety of grouping arrangements. This promoted inclusivity, ensuring that children were not prevented from participating due to language barriers.

Creative methods range from those that are visual and tactile to those that are performance-based (Coad, 2007). Advocates argue that creative methodologies give children the opportunity to build ideas and opinions in stages through the use of techniques that reconstruct the context of a memory, or build associative memories (Angell and Angell, 2013). Using creative methods provides the necessary thinking time for children to consider and review their responses. It is argued that many creative methods reduce the problems experienced when translating visual experiences into different forms of communication, such as writing or speaking. They can include artwork (Horstman et al 2008); picture collages (Vaughan 2005); map making (Darbyshire et al 2005); activity charting (Maunther, 1997); Lego (Gauntlett, 2007); photography (Darbyshire et al, 2005), and acting and puppetry (Sahoo, 2003). Some researchers have explored the idea that physical activity helps to stimulate body and mind in creative settings (Gauntlett, 2006). In addition, creative methods also are recognized for being suitable with non-English speakers or children who have learning needs and difficulty in communicating in the traditional manner (Angell and Angell, 2013). These techniques have proven increasingly attractive to researchers who seek a better understanding of children's beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions (Banister and Booth, 2005).

Researchers face challenges in interpreting this creative work. For example, it is now widely accepted that children's art, although influenced by some drawing conventions and familiar symbols, does not adhere consistently to conventional codes. When working with children, there always is a risk of misrepresentation due to the inability of adults to truly understand a child's world. In this study, constructivist grounded theory allowed for triangulation of the data, and children were invited to demonstrate their understanding in drama, during discussion and then through explanations of their written work, artwork and photographs which captured key events and actions in the drama sessions.

Difficulty in linking visual and written data may cause contributions to become fractured during analysis, with the result that one stream of data becomes separated from another (Angell and Angell, 2013). Constructivist grounded theory analysis allowed for a constant comparison method, with frequent opportunities for cross checking and triangulating the concurrent streams of data. To maintain the integrity of the data and to make links, there was detailed description in the researcher journal based around the children's own interpretation of their work. This written "commentary," was the main source of data from which codes and categories then emerged. This approach represents a significant advantage as the data were intrinsically triangulated (owing to the grounded theory approach), resulting in a more natural and holistic extraction of the observed phenomena.

4.3 Methods of Data Collection.

"The existence of other visions and other voices on childhood worlds is not a symptom of clutter or methodological chaos. It is a legitimate expression of the complexity and multidimensionality of childhood"

(Thomas 2009; cited in Gallagher, 2009, p.65).

The use of a variety of methods (see table 4.1) in this study is demonstrative of the complexity of researching children's understanding of values and identity and reflects *"the changing and integrated nature of the world and the phenomenon under study"* (Cohen et al, 2011, p.26). Comparing the sources of data allowed for connections to be made between many variables, and for comparisons to be made between them. Grounded theory principles give clarity when working with large bodies of data and enable researchers to *"select the scenes they observe and focus their gaze within*

them” (Charmaz, 2014, p.41). The four main bodies of data as shown below will be described in detail in Chapter 4.5 along with examples of each.

| Data Source | Summary |
|--|---|
| <p><u>Ongoing Reflections</u> 1a. Reflexive journal 1b. Notes from “drama huddle”</p> | <p>Personal journal containing reflections of drama session and discussions. Used during and after sessions throughout the study. Cross referenced with other work done in the sessions. Notes from drama “huddles” made at key points after sessions documenting the children’s verbally expressed ideas and views.</p> |
| <p><u>Ongoing Written Evidence</u> 2. Annotated photographs 3. Children’s Work</p> | <p>Photographs taken during drama sessions which were later annotated by the children using thought/ speech bubbles, captions and commentaries. Each class kept a drama “big book” which was a class book containing photos of sessions and evidence of whole class creative work. Children also had their own personal “Global Citizenship” books for related follow up work. Follow up responses in children’s books was in the form of poems, annotated artwork, writing, concept maps, word sort activities and post it notes. These were used to verify developing themes and clarify children’s understanding. <i>* a scribe was always available for children who struggled to write down their comments</i></p> |
| <p><u>Review Points</u> 4a. Focus group interviews 4b. “Values Day” discussion sessions</p> | <p>Focus group interviews held at three key points in the process: February, April and June 2018. 12 interviews (40 children in total) Values Day discussion sessions (January and June 2018): notes made by researcher during sessions led by an external provider for parents and children from all classes.</p> |

Table 4.1 Four sources of data used in the research.

4.4 The Four Sources of Data

The four main bodies of data will be explained and illustrated in this section and can be seen as an overview in fig 4.1.

Evidence Source 1: Researcher Reflexive Journal

In line with constructivist grounded theory, I collected data in the form of “memo writing” (Charmaz, 2014). This took the form of an ongoing commentary in a researcher journal, which included reflections, observations and notes from informal group discussions within the lessons. The journal referenced other sources of evidence such as written work, or annotated photographs. The observational notes offered insights and understanding of the context as well as offering a way of recognising non-verbal as well as verbal communications. This was particularly important in understanding the emotions being expressed by the children. Additional notes were made alongside the ongoing data after a reflexive period. The journal was often used explicitly at the end of a session with the children; I wrote in it as the

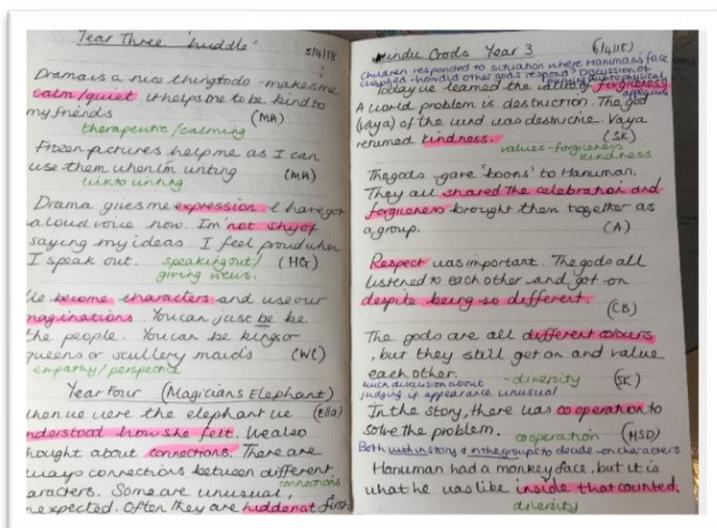


Fig 4.1 Example of researcher journal page

children shared ideas. This was a powerful tool as the children took their contributions very seriously and this shared class time elicited some of the most interesting data. It was also useful for clarifying their

ideas, as I would repeat back what

they had said to check meaning, or would ask questions such as “What should I write down?”, “Have I recorded that correctly?” or “Is there anything else I should add?”

Evidence Sources 2 and 3: Ongoing Written Evidence

Written evidence was collected from the whole class “Big Books” and from children’s personal “Global Citizenship” books, where follow up work was completed. These books were a celebration of the project and were frequently shared in discussions. They were, and still are, on display for parents and visitors. Some of this work was

also used for other linked projects such as “Show Racism the Red Card”, Autism Awareness Day, International Women’s Day and a performance poetry competition.



Fig. 4.2 to 4.4: Example pages from class “big books”

Annotated Photographs

Note Permission was given for the inclusion of all photographs used in this project by parents/carers and the children themselves. The children were pleased and proud to have the original photographs included.*

Fargas-Malet et al. (2010) note that using a mixture of stimulus materials when talking to children gives them time to think, so that they do not feel pressurised to give a rapid answer. Photographs served to capture attention, structure discussion and often evoked emotional and affectively charged responses when

referring back to the sessions. The visual prompts gave the children and control over how to express themselves and assisted engagement with complicated, sensitive and abstract issues. Photographs acted as prompts to a child's own particular story, and therefore helped them to express their understanding of the drama session in their own unique way. Inviting the children to annotate the photographs was a stimulus for post session discussions and an ongoing record of their interpretations of the sessions.



Fig. 4.5: “Hamlet” children’s annotations on the theme of “madness” following work in drama.

Children’s Work in Books

Children recorded work in their own personal books and each class had their own Global Citizenship “Big Book” which was on display in the classroom. The children’s books, like the photographs served as a useful and stimulating reference point in group discussions. The opportunity to write or create artwork gave children who were more reticent in class discussion a medium of communication through which to express their perspective and understanding. The children were particularly enthused by poetry, as there was an already established tradition of performance poetry in the school. Several drama sessions were followed up with poetry writing and the themes explored in the drama were developed further in the poetry composed (and sometimes performed) by the pupils. Looking through and reflecting on these books after the sessions gave another way of triangulating data and revisiting themes. This

was particularly powerful near the end of the project when there was a large amount of evidence in the books for the children to look back on holistically as a “learning journey”. It gave them an opportunity to reflect on their starting points and how their understanding had developed throughout the year.

Fig.4.6: Refugees-art work following drama session from “Story Like the Wind”

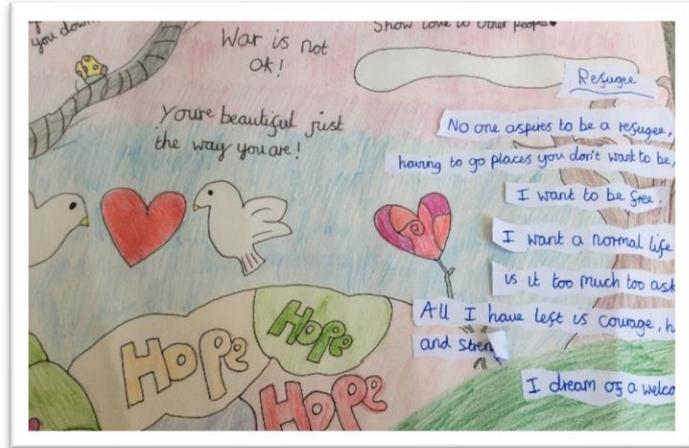


Fig.4.7: Collage made by whole class in Big Book. “Our Dramatree. This shows what we think about drama.”



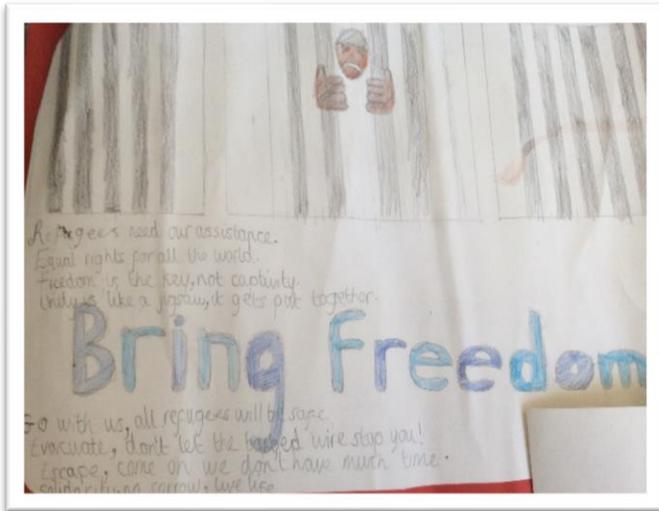


Fig 4.9: Art/poem following drama session on refugees.

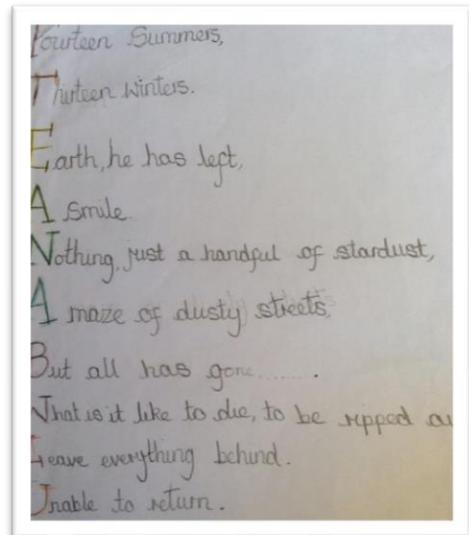


Fig.4.8: Poems following drama session based on "Story Like the Wind"



Fig 4.10: "Hope" artwork based on theme of solidarity

Evidence Source 4: Review Points (Focus Group Interviews and Values Days)

Focus Group Interviews

Data were collected from semi-structured focus group interviews with approximately six representatives from each class held at three key points in the process: February, April and June. A total of 40 children were part of the focus groups in 12 interviews, with some children attending more than one. More details about recruitment will follow in Section 4.5.2.

These group interviews were set up with the purpose of clarifying emerging themes and obtaining their perspectives on the accuracy and validity of my interpretation of the data. This was in keeping with a central principle of “theoretical sampling” in constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014, p.192). I also adhered to the principles of constructivist grounded theory when conducting these interviews, seeking “thick data” and actively pursuing interests and themes identified by the children. Thus, interview schedules (see Appendix 2) were short and open-ended allowing stories to be told without preconceiving the context; *“your first question may suffice for the whole interview if the stories tumble out”* (Charmaz, 2014, p.91). In constructivist grounded theory, participants are encouraged to reflect upon their experiences during the interview. A skilled researcher then identifies and pursues analytic direction, eliciting the participants definitions of terms, situations and events. *“The grounded theorist must remain active and alert for interesting leads, working from individual concerns”* (Charmaz, 2014, p.96)

Discussion was guided by the pupils; I asked a question then tried to allow the children to talk with each other whilst I just listened. Personal perspectives were encouraged: *“What doesmean to you?”* was a common way of structuring questions. I attempted to promote debate by using prompts such as *“Does everyone agree with that, or is there a different way of looking at this?”* The final question was always *“Is there anything else you want to add or say or anything important that I have missed out?”*. This was an opportunity that was frequently taken by the children and offered some valuable insights into what they felt was important. The class “Big Books” were used during the interviews as a discussion focus, so that children could refer to photographs or written work during discussions.

Whole School Values Days

One Values Day was held at the beginning of the project in January 2018 and another at the end in June 2018, with the purpose of establishing a set of “core” values for the school. These were an opportunity for children to discuss which values they personally felt to be important and why. Parents attended these two sessions and joined in the discussion. Although these sessions were not formally recorded, permission was granted for notes to be taken by the researcher and the participants left feedback on some artwork. The notes and feedback allowed for further cross-checking of emerging themes within the data and links were made to the drama sessions during the discussions.

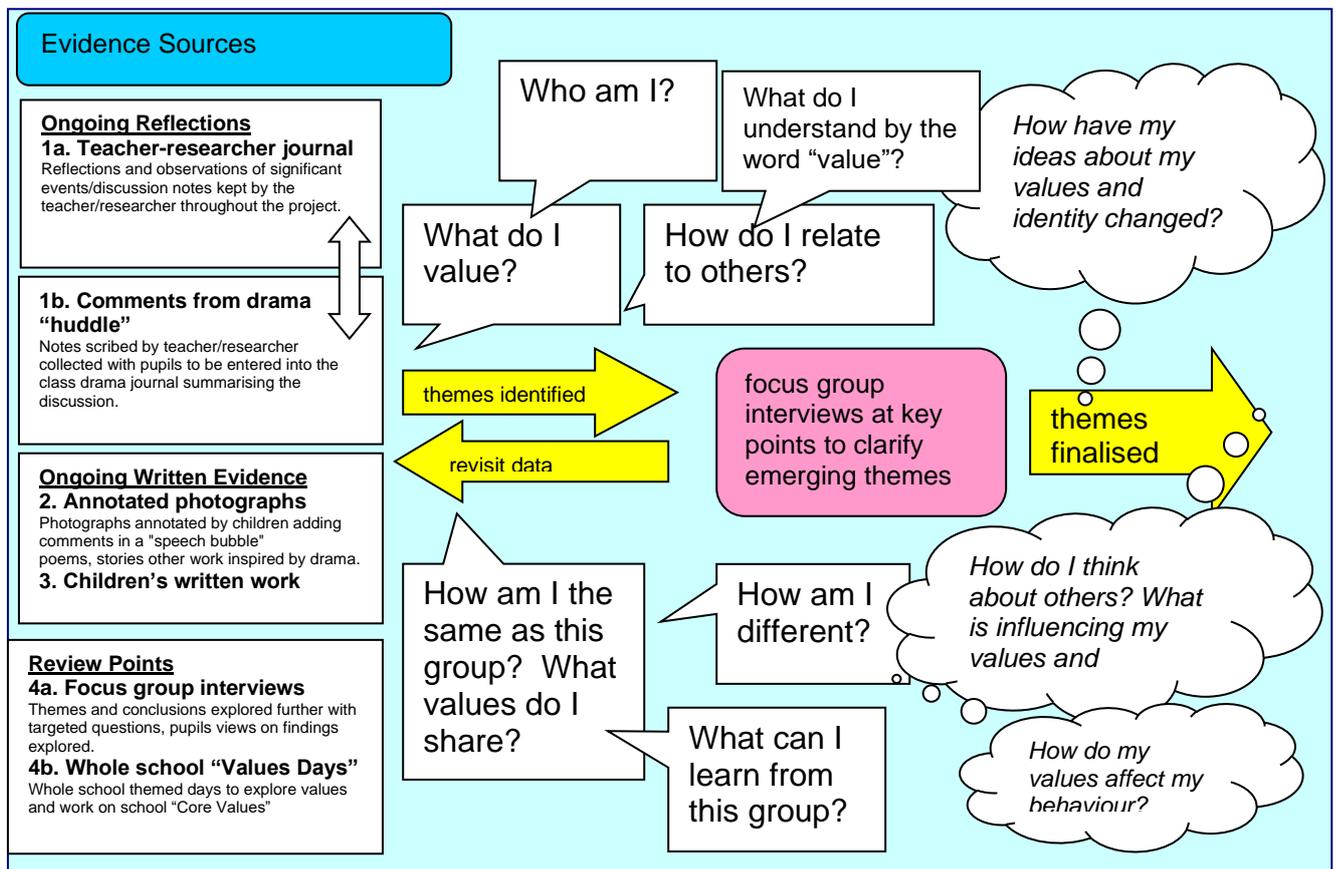


Fig 4.11 Summary of Evidence Sources

4.4.2 Recruitment

The aim of the study was to include the views of as many children as possible, and all children had the opportunity to participate in some way through the class discussions

and through follow-up sessions in class. The variety of creative methods used ensured that there was a diversity of channels of communication, both verbal and written. Children had the opportunity to talk in pairs, groups and in a whole class group. It was not possible to include all of the children in a focus group interview due to time constraints. Focus groups were comprised of volunteers, but sometimes invitations were extended to particular children in order to ensure the group was representative in terms of gender, disability and ethnicity. For example, there was liaison with the specialist teachers in the ASC "Bridges" unit to facilitate the attendance of two children they supported. The interviews took place in lesson time, not breaktime, to ensure that some of the children who had lunchtime clubs were motivated to take part. As the study progressed, it became apparent that although the focus groups were useful points to check in, they limited participation. The added complexity of written consent and the exchange of letters was often a barrier for some children (this was the case for many school events, not just this study). The two whole-class "Values Day" events ensured that all children could participate in feedback and discussion and some parents attended to work alongside and support their children to give their views.

4.5 Preparatory Work

Two smaller scale studies had already been carried out in the school in the previous year, which made the pupils more receptive to the main study (see table 4.3 below). The first study used a powerful graphic story about refugees as a prompt for drama to explore notions of identity and belonging. Pupils from the Year Five class explored aspects of the story through drama sessions and through follow up discussion groups. They produced art and writing to document their developing understanding of belonging, isolation, inclusion and identity, drawing up a list of "values" which they compared to the "British Values". The data, collected in the form of transcripts from focus group discussions and other written artefacts, were analysed for themes. This

allowed for an exploration of children's deepening understanding of the notions of values and identity. This small study demonstrated that drama was a very powerful tool in this setting to explore complex and sensitive issues.

The second study was a pupil-led evaluation of the impact of an "Inclusion and Diversity" themed week organised by the leadership team to promote the British Values. Ten pupils explored the impact of this week through focus group interviews, which they were supported to organise and lead throughout the school. They found that the issues in the school around inclusion and diversity were complicated and diverse, stretching much wider than the emphasis on religious tolerance which the British Values debate has become overly focused upon. The outcomes of the evaluation suggested a need for a more creative and global approach to citizenship education in order to better engage pupils. The pupils themselves made suggestions about what sort of citizenship education they would like to see in place in their school and these suggestions influenced this research proposal.

These two studies were well received by the school leadership team and led to the facilitation of further work through a change in role for myself in order to embed drama and Global Citizenship throughout the school. Another outcome of these two studies was that there now existed a significant number of pupils who had developed skills as collaborative researchers and there was already a well-established culture of pupil empowerment and pupil voice. Therefore, there was a firm foundation for future research about values education involving participatory work with the pupils themselves.

Prior to the commencement of this research project, all pupils in Key Stage 2 had been participating in a weekly drama session. The children were therefore already

familiar with many drama conventions and had developed some confidence in working in this medium.

| Dates | events/interventions |
|------------------------------|---|
| September 2016-December 2016 | Research project in Year Five to explore pupil's identity using drama and PHSE sessions centred around a book about refugees. Focus group interviews used. Submitted as part of ED.S851 (Understanding Social Justice Internationally). Pupil voice established and relationships established with parents and school leadership to support research. |
| February-March 2017 | Key Stage Two pupil led evaluation of "Inclusion and Diversity" project organised by school leadership team. Submitted as part of ED.S853 (Evaluating the Implementation of Social Justice Programmes) Pupils led focus group interviews throughout the school and collaborated in the data analysis and the written report. Pupils introduced to research skills and ethics. |
| March 2017-July 2017 | Work with leadership team to plan and initiate of "values-led" approach to education, staff CPD implemented. Sessions led in school by Global Learning Programme (GLP) on "framing the world" (addressing stereotypes) and the Global Goals. |
| June-July 2017 | New approach to citizenship education planned for September 2017 using pupil's ideas from the evaluation project. Curriculum development plan drawn up by PHSE and Creative Curriculum Team, built into School Development Plan. |
| September 2017-December 2017 | Weekly drama session begun with years 3-6. Specific teaching of drama skills and conventions. Children begin to acquire the "tools" of drama and apply them in response to stories within Global Citizenship sessions. Work in drama shared and celebrated through assemblies, Harvest Festival and Christmas Service. |
| Dec 2017-January 2018 | Ethical approval obtained from Lancaster University. Planning of project with leadership team. Focus books chosen and short-term planning completed for Feb-July 2018. Parallel project initiated to establish school "Core Values". "Values Day (1)"-session about values led by external practitioner from GLP for all classes. |
| January 2018-February 2018 | Research project commenced; data collection started. First set of focus group interviews with each year group. |
| April 2018 | Ongoing data collection. Focus group interviews (2) based on emerging themes. Ongoing data analysis, revisit and review themes. Begin to code data. |
| June 2018 | Focus group interviews (3) to clarify final themes. Values Day (2)- led by external practitioner to review school "Core Values" Further coding of data. |
| July 2018 | Follow up time to clarify and collect any outstanding data. |
| July 2018 | Final data analysis, results, conclusions and discussion of findings. |

Table 4.2 Chronology of Work

4.6 Research Ethics: Insider Research

Nolen and Putten (2007) state that although practitioner research has had increasing attention as a research method, insufficient consideration has been given to the ethical issues unique to insider research. In the case of a joint project between a school and an academic researcher, it is likely that there will be a formal contract delineating all aspects of the project, including roles, outcomes, ownership of data and funding. Where the school professional is the researcher, there may be a lack of clarity, or even a conflict, in roles. However, the advantages in terms of the already established working relationships, access and credibility are considerable. The rich data sourced can be of genuine use to the school and the local community, as well as the research field. In this project, there was a particular focus in supporting the school to establish its own “Core Values” with the children at the heart of the process.

Adherence to the ethical guidelines of Lancaster University ensured that roles were clarified and the project was planned according to recommended processes and procedures. Permission for the inclusion of photographs, field notes and other data collected throughout the project in the study was sought and obtained from both pupils and parents.

4.6.1 Conducting Action Research with Young People: Consent

The importance of negotiating informed consent with children themselves, rather than proxy consent from adult gatekeepers, is an important concern for social researchers (Tisdall et al, 2009, p.15). However, putting the principles of consent into practice is far from easy, particularly when practitioners are conducting research in their own place of work. Working in a school as a teacher is a useful access route, but this limits the pupil’s options for refusing to take part (Tisdall et al, 2009; Nolen and Putten, 2007). Children may not have the maturity or independence to withdraw from

participation. Power differentials may affect the pupil's willingness to decline participation. Furthermore, the boundaries between the research and normal classroom requirements may not be clearly defined, so it can be hard to make an informed choice about how not to participate.

This ethical issue was particularly relevant in this project, as much of the data were collected from timetabled drama lessons, which all pupils are expected to participate in. Therefore, care was taken to ensure that the pupils were fully informed of the right to withdraw from participation in the research and the contribution of data. Although all pupils took part in the drama sessions, there was a right to withdraw consent for the use of their viewpoints and other verbal contributions. Explicit permission was sought to include their comments in the researcher journal during whole class discussions, and permission was sought to include any work referenced in the journal (see Appendix 1). The issue of consent formed part of ongoing discussion with the children about the research to ensure that they had an understanding of what this meant and was renegotiated throughout the project.

The inclusion of photographs was carefully negotiated, with written permission obtained from parents, verbal consent obtained for specific photographs in the final selection and discussion about the inclusion of photographs with the children themselves. The children were very keen for their photographs to be included, even though they were aware that names had been anonymised. They were proactive in selecting their "favourite" photographs for inclusion in the final project.

There are ethical dilemmas associated with the need to protect children whilst encouraging maximum participation. Children need guidance, direct modelling and explicit teaching about their rights and the rights of others. The children continue to be involved in dissemination activities, such as presentations of certain drama

projects and in updating their class Global Citizenship “floor books”, which include their own commentaries. They are taking an active role in the ongoing project to establish and embed the school’s “Core Values”. Involvement of participants in dissemination offers a way of fore-fronting their voices, rather than the authoritative voice of the ‘expert’ researcher taking complete control (Manzo and Brightbill, 2007).

4.7 Reliability and Transferability of the Research

In this study, the extended period of data collection offered the opportunity for a dialogic reflexive approach, as there were ample opportunities for follow up and further exploration of key issues. An "ethical mindfulness" (Warin, 2011) was maintained in order to remain alert to relational influence, contextual pressures and to recognise and make explicit the emotional aspects of the research process. This principle underpinned the research and was one that I kept at the forefront of my mind. The coding principles of grounded theory ensures that the theory is constructed from the data, rather than from preconceived ideas. It enables the researcher to tap into assumptions, tacit meanings and implicit rules. Although the grounded theorist may come to the research with their own prior knowledge and biases, these are departure points and the researcher seeks to remain open to what is seen and sensed from the data, welcoming contradictions and complexity.

When researching with children, reflexivity has potential as a stance adopted by the children who participate in the research. Thus, children can think about their experiences and consider their part in the research and how they would like to contribute. Techniques can mediate and support communication between the teacher/researcher and the children (Christensen and James, 2000). The relationship between the researcher and the children was particularly important in this research. This enabled a continuing dialogue to be maintained over which the children had some level of control.

There are challenges when taking on this dual role in the classroom. I recognised my dual roles in the research in a positive way. I found advice by Briffett (2017) about approaching this position to be very useful. Briffett reconciled the roles of teacher and researcher according to the job of the moment, asking the following questions “(1) *Which role am I taking on at the moment* (2) *How is my perspective influencing what I am observing?* (Briffett, 2017, p.54). Following this advice enabled me to distinguish which role I was taking on at different times, recognising both the advantages and disadvantages of each position and obtaining a balance between the two.

In qualitative studies the question of transferability is challenging to address, as each context has its own specific characteristic. Ultimately such research should be understood from the context in which it was carried out, as producing transferable data from a single study may not be a realistic aim. It is the responsibility of the researcher to provide as much contextual information as possible. In this way the study can be repeated, even though there should be an acknowledgement that it is unlikely that the same results will be obtained. In providing rich, detailed description, the relationships and interactions come to life and can be better understood by the reader.

4.8 The Structure of the Drama Sessions

“Leaders of process drama are guides to new worlds, travelling with incomplete maps to the terrain, taking risks and not knowing what lies ahead... the outcome of the journey is the journey itself. The experience is its own destination” (O’Neill, 1995, p.67)

The following section outlines the exploratory drama practices that were commonly used and developed in the sessions with the children. These form part of ongoing teaching pedagogy and thus were not just research practices. Illustrations and

exemplifications are provided. The drama sessions were structured in a similar way to the preliminary study, as this had proved successful. Units of work for each year group were planned half termly around a text with a social justice theme and each one-hour drama session began and ended with an opportunity for reflection and discussion. Follow up work in class produced artefacts, such as short pieces of writing, art and annotations on photographs. All sessions were led by myself, as the teacher- researcher, but with some input from class teachers and teaching assistants in specific sessions. The planning was deliberately open-ended giving pupils the opportunity to lead the direction of the drama and any follow up work.

4.8.1 Use of Story

| Story Title | Key Themes |
|--|---|
| Jessica's Ghost (Andrew Norriss) | <i>Bullying, depression and suicide in young people. Solidarity and celebrating diversity and difference.</i> |
| Skellig (David Almond) | <i>Angels, isolation, despair, expressing emotions, flight. Links to work of William Blake. Friendship.</i> |
| Beowulf (retold by Michael Morpurgo) | <i>What is courage? What is loyalty? Should we always stand together?</i> |
| Anthology of Hindu Tales- Hanuman and Ganesh | <i>How do we treat someone who looks unusual or different? Tolerance, appreciating diversity.</i> |
| Wing (short animation from Literacy Shed) | <i>Solidarity, standing up and speaking out, what makes a bully?</i> |
| The Christmas Truce (Carole Ann Duffy) | <i>Who is the enemy? Peace and war.</i> |
| Hamlet (William Shakespeare) | <i>Grief, madness and betrayal of trust.</i> |
| Macbeth (William Shakespeare) | <i>Leadership, envy, power, trust.</i> |
| Winston of Churchill (Jean Okimoto) | <i>Climate change, environmental responsibility</i> |
| Jerusalem (poem by William Blake) | <i>Power dynamics, oppression, freedom.</i> |
| Invictus (poem by William Ernest Henley) | <i>Resilience, strength in the face of adversity</i> |
| Story Like the Wind (Gill Lewis) | <i>Refugees, what do people bring to their position, the things that unite us</i> |

Table 4.3 Examples of some key texts used within the research project

Half termly units of work were planned based on a story, play or poem. The text was then used as a springboard for meaning, or as a context for a dilemma to be worked through in the sessions. The sessions were never an attempt to re-enact the narrative, but more an interaction with the story to generate a new perspective. This is in keeping with “process drama” as described in Chapter 3. Drama encourages children to “peel away the layers” in a story (Booth, 1985; Rosen, 1984) and provides an incentive to keep on exploring the issues, relating them to real life. In both drama and story, the context is fictional, but the responses are real; learning occurs in the negotiation of meaning between in both modes (Bolton, 1984; Booth, 1985). Booth (1985, p.196) uses the term “*story drama*” to describe a process by which the teacher uses the issues, themes, characters, mood, conflict or spirit of a story as a beginning for dramatic exploration. Exploring characters who are in some sort of “struggle” or “crisis point” allowed the pupils to “stand on the shoulders of the story” to explore the values of the characters and how that might impact upon the choices they would make. These “dramatic moments” were built around the big issues within the stories and were used as a tool for unlocking the characters motivations.

Two Shakespeare plays were also used and again, there was an emphasis of exploration of the themes and the dilemmas, not just performance. This exploratory approach to has been widely used in process drama (for example Doona, 2012; 2013; Booth, 1985). The original text is not abandoned, but participants are given the opportunity to interrogate, confront and sometimes transform the text. The late John Doona has successfully implemented this approach into the “Children’s Shakespeare Festivals” project and many of his ideas were used in devising the drama sessions (Doona, 2008).

4.8.2 Pretexts and Frames

O' Neill (1995) describes the importance of a pretext or preliminary frame which is much more significant than a mere "stimulus". A pretext engages the participants effectively with the potential action, hints at previous events and foreshadows future occurrences. It determines the first point of action in a drama and scaffolds the participants. In the sessions a variety of pretexts were used: an illustration from the story; a letter to be read; an object or prop to be examined; a decision to be made; a puzzle to be solved. One example was a letter sent from a polar bear asking the children to talk to the "tourists" about the problems they were causing for the polar bears. Another was a wedding invitation to Gertrude and Claudius's wedding at Elsinore Castle, Hamlet's home. The children had to prepare a wedding gift to take and then engaged with other "visitors" to find out why the wedding was not all that it seemed. Book illustrations were used with the challenge "What is happening in this picture?" "What will happen next?" or "What happened before this scene?" (see fig 4.12 below)

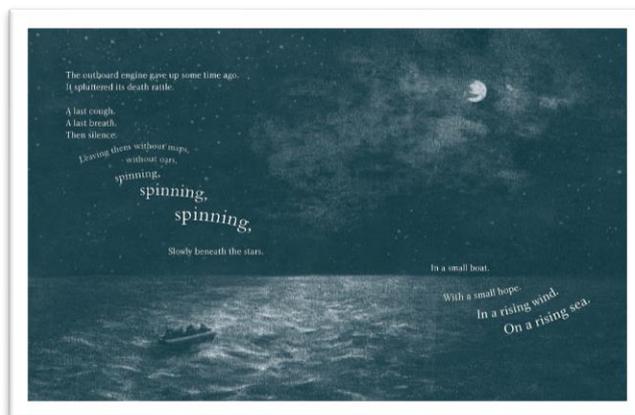


Fig 4.12: Initial illustration from "Story Like the Wind" by Gill Lewis (2017, Oxford University Press)

A good pretext will ensure that the problem of finding the initial focus should disappear as dramatic tension is already implied; roles are suggested and action is anticipated. Valuable pretexts occur in many folktales, myths and fairy stories as these classic texts resonate with "archetypes". Other "rituals" were built into the drama to act as pretexts and give structure and hold the characters together. Rituals used were weddings, trials, funerals, meetings of "elders", dreams or feasts and balls.

4.8.3 Rules of the Game

There was explicit and implicit agreement that all participants would buy into the role, and that the drama world would be a group creation, grown and developed through consensus. Cooperation is fundamental, as is acceptance of the rules. This was discussed with the children and they quickly realised that things were more enjoyable if they readily entered into the world that they were creating. Often the pupils began an activity by mapping out a world using paper labels, tape and chalk, physical positioning or with the use of simple props.



Figure 4.13: Mapping out the story world.

4.8.4 Teacher in Role

O' Neill (1995) emphasises the importance of the “teacher in role” as it is an effective and succinct way of framing the exchanges, initiating responses and inviting the children in to the world of the drama. The teacher can establish atmosphere, move the action and challenge the participants, provoking and withdrawing. Teacher in role is an aspect of process theatre that enhances the critical pedagogical nature of the drama as it inverts the assumptions of traditional pedagogy and disrupts the balance of power. As a participant, there is potential for the teacher to be rendered powerless

by the events of the action unfolding. There is also a call for spontaneity. I acted as chairperson and participant in meetings of various types in townhalls, forests, castles and underwater kingdoms. I sometimes came in role as a “character who saw it” to introduce key events in a story. When the whole group was working in role in a setting, I often worked alongside as another character placing key information or challenging with questions. For example, I was Macbeth’s servant from Dunsinane Castle spreading rumours and an advisor to the Chief Interrogator at Puck’s trial.

4.8.5 Freeze Frame or Tableau



Photographs 4.2 and 4.3: Freeze frame “rejection”

Frozen pictures or “freeze frames” can serve to strengthen the reflective element and arrest the attention of the viewers. There are multiple functions of a tableau, but one powerful function is that the spectator is forced to analyse the placement of the characters, their feelings and motivations. This increases critical activity and opens up discussion and an interrogation of meaning. Frozen pictures, when captured in a photograph, proved to be a very powerful way of promoting discussion in later focus group interviews. This was especially true when children had annotated them shortly after the photograph was taken. Visualization studies have shown that children benefit from the opportunity to use pictures when developing their thoughts and

feelings (Gauntlett, 2004). Traditional methods may rush them into unrepresentative responses or prevent them from forming any type of answer. Taking part in a “freeze frame” or observing one triggered more thoughtful responses and greater levels of participation in the discussion that followed.

4.8.6 The Drama “Huddle”

Most sessions began and ended with a “drama huddle” (see below) where the class reflected on the session.



Photo Montage 4.4 with questions: The Drama Huddle

Questions Used in Drama Huddle

- *What values do you think will be important in this story/ part of the story? (prediction)*
- *What values did you think were important today in the story/drama? (reflection)*
- *Did any of the characters values change today? (analysis)*
- *How did the character’s values affect the choices they made? (analysis)*
- *Have we encountered these values before? (making links)*
- *How does this relate to events in your life/our world? (citizenship)*

The children agreed upon the key points from the session from their perspective which would be recorded in the journal. This was in the spirit of including the pupils as collaborative researchers. They agreed what should be written down at the end of the session. Although the focus of the discussion during and after the drama sessions varied depending on the focus of the lesson, the theme of values and the questions below were frequently revisited.

4.9 Data Analysis

The analysis that was undertaken was intended to provide detailed rich description of the children's developing understanding of values and identity. Each of the journal observations, notes and reflections were examined for frequency or significance and were explored further within the focus group interviews or whole class drama "huddles". Data analysis began early in the study and a constant comparative method ensured that patterns and themes were verified. Patterns emerged through an iterative process, with analysis taking place as the data were collected with the children. Insights were re-tested to make sense of the emerging themes (Punch, 2015, p.214). Data from all sources were coded systematically and grounded theory approach was used to analyse them. This will be discussed in depth in the following section.

4.9.1 Data Analysis Using Constructivist Grounded Theory

The cyclical, iterative nature of the data collection process in constructivist grounded theory fosters reflexivity and allows for multiple opportunities to critically examine and revisit emerging themes. As values are undoubtedly a social construct, I wanted to investigate how the children worked together in the drama session to make sense of them. The grounded theory method, with its developmental participatory approach to the understanding of emerging themes facilitated such joint meaning-making.

In CGT, as data are collected, analysis can start immediately. The researcher can go backwards and forwards between the data analysis and the field in order to develop their theory and conclusions. It allows for multiple stages of data collection and the refinement and interrelationship of categories of information. This was an important advantage, facilitating the active participation of the children in identifying themes. In addition, grounded theory has a tradition of reporting the perspectives of the participants who have experienced the phenomenon. Thus quotes, commentaries and stories that add to the richness of the research are frequently reported.

4.9.2 Coding the Data: Initial and Focused Coding

Grounded theory data coding requires the researcher to stop and ask analytic questions about the data which have been gathered (Charmaz, 2014, p.109). This directs subsequent data gathering towards the analytic issues being defined. Data coding consisted of two phases: initial and focused coding. In all stages of coding, a constant comparative method was used to make comparisons at every level of analytic work. The data coded in the study can be seen in Table 4.5.

The first step in the process of data analysis was to type up the written notes from the journal and the focus group interview recordings. In initial coding the data were analysed in fragments, by words, lines, segments and incidents. It was coded with a short name that summarized and accounted for that segment of data. Charmaz recommends the use of action words or gerunds, which explicate how people enact or respond to events. *“Coding gives you tools for interrogating, soring, and synthesizing hundreds of pages of interviews, fieldnotes, documents and other texts. Interrogating your data means that you take them apart and examine how these data are constituted”* (Charmaz, 2014, p.113). Examples of initial coding can be seen in table 4.6.

| Data Source | Details and Examples |
|--|--|
| <p><u>Ongoing Reflections</u></p> <p>1. Researcher Reflexive Journal</p> <p>Notes from Drama “Huddle”</p> | <p><i>Journal (Jan 2018- ongoing throughout the project, including after data collection ended).</i></p> <p><i>This handwritten journal was used weekly throughout the project, both explicitly within the sessions with the pupils and for recording interesting or significant reflections. This was typed up at regular points for inclusion in the final research (see fig 4.1)</i></p> <p><i>Notes from the “drama huddle” were made in the journal after each session. Data were collected at the end of a drama unit, with notes from 12 “huddles” being analysed in total.</i></p> |
| <p><u>Ongoing Written Evidence</u></p> <p>2. Annotated Photographs</p> | <p><i>Photographs with annotations of drama sessions from January 2018-July 2018 (approximately 200 photographs). These were collected as part of everyday school policy/practice to record children’s learning in drama. Permission was sought to use these photographs as part of the evidence bank for this project. Children added speech bubbles with their own comments about what the photograph showed (see photos 5.1-5.25). These comments were analysed as part of the evidence.</i></p> |
| <p>3. Children’s Work; written work or annotations made on art/creative pieces.</p> | <p><i>Examples of children’s work from their “Global Citizenship” books from January 2018-July 2018.</i></p> <p><i>This was follow up work done in class based on the drama sessions: stories; diary extracts and letters “in role; follow up scripts; poems and annotated artwork. Approximately 50 pieces of independent or small group work were selected and analysed and 20 whole class collaborative pieces of work. Children who needed support to express their views in a written form were supported with a scribe.</i></p> |
| <p><u>Review Points</u></p> <p>4a. Focus Group Interviews</p> | <p><i>Focus group interviews were conducted with six representatives from each year group at three key points (Feb, April and June). In most cases, different children from each class participated in each one, although some children were interviewed more than once at their own request. There were 12 interviews in total, with 40 children taking part.</i></p> <p><i>These were recorded and transcribed for analysis by the researcher. Examples of the interview schedules and transcripts can be found in the appendices (</i></p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>4b. Whole School “Values Days”</p> | <p><i>Whole class sessions lead by an outside provider for one hour in January and June 2018 as part of a parallel project to establish the school’s “core values”. Researcher listened to discussion and made notes. Permission was requested from children to use quotes. Children produced artwork to represent the values which were important to them in June and these were analysed as part of the data set. Children labelled their art or were supported to do this by an adult. 80 contributions were analysed with the support of the outside provider to identify themes.</i></p> |
|--|---|

Table 4.5 Data coded in the study.

| Extract from Interview | Examples of Initial Codes |
|---|---|
| <p><i>Drama helps people to have a louder voice. Like in year five Charlie was very shy and so was Sophie, but now Charlie is not shy. He has a lot of emotion in drama. If someone is unkind in the playground, it gives you a louder voice to say “stop it” you can raise your voice and be heard.</i></p> | <p>Drama giving confidence to speak out (not shy). Practising standing up for oneself. Rehearsing assertive language (saying stop)</p> |
| <p><i>if you don’t usually get along with someone and then you are in a group with them, well you have to get along. And if you are in a group with them for a few weeks you start getting used to them. You know what they are really like. Sometimes they behave in a certain way on the playground because of maybe something that has happened at home or a problem, but in drama you really get to know them for who they are.</i></p> | <p>Getting used to working with different people (getting along) Building tolerance/ acceptance (getting used to) Thinking of the “back story”/unknown (maybe something happened..)</p> |
| <p><i>We imagined what it would feel like. We made the boat (in Story Like the Wind) and all of us were the passengers on it. Just imagine that wide ocean stretching out before us and one tiny boat. The war went on and everyone had to go on an overcrowded boat. It was dangerous, I would not want people to be in danger like that.</i></p> | <p>Powerfully imagining (just imagine). Feeling like I was there (when I was) Feeling emotions (fear). Living the situation (I could see)</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p><i>When I was doing the drama, all I could see was me on a boat with everyone else and the sea RIGHT THERE. Literally where you were. I could see it. The vision of drama was giving me the realism. What happened was actually happening to me. I imagined I was on the boat and the sea was right there. We were in that situation.</i></p> | <p>Seeing the perspective, empathising with the danger (I would not want)</p> |
|--|---|

Table 4.6 Examples of initial coding

The large body of children’s work and annotated photographs which formed the ongoing evidence was photocopied and sorted in line with emerging themes. Relevant quotes from annotations were typed and coded in line with the initial categories. The ongoing work served to clarify, verify and illustrate themes. If a contradiction or conflict was noted, then this was taken back to the children in discussions in order to gain further clarification. Categories were redefined several times over the six months and at this point some initial themes had to be discarded because of the huge amount of data being analysed. I was guided by the children at every point, as the themes that were pursued were the ones that excited them in discussions and the ones that they wanted to talk about. Naturally, these were the categories for which I had the most data. For example, initially I began a category which related to “local /national /global” identity, but it became clear that children’s understanding of “global” citizenship had its roots in concepts such as “family” and “friendship”. The idea of engaging with viewpoints and making connections on a personal level was one that resonated with them much more than talking about countries, states and nations. Another example was the notion of collaboration and relationship building within drama; “getting along”, “negotiation and compromise” and “solving arguments” became increasingly important within the data. In the focused, selective phase, the most significant or frequent initial codes were used to sort,

synthesize, integrate and organise the large amounts of data collected. This type of coding condensed and sharpened the previous work, highlighting what is important in the emerging analysis. The focused coding advanced the theoretical direction, but that is not to say that all codes were fully explored. The scope of this research limited the depth of exploration, but an attempt was made to saturate the codes that were explored by constant comparisons.

4.9.3 Theoretical Coding: The Emerging Themes

Twelve significant themes were selected in consultation with the children (see Fig 4.14). They were organised for ease of discussion under the headings of the most relevant aspect of the research questions. Within each of the three research questions, I included a theme that was particularly resonant for the children. The children's themes were those for which I had large amounts of data because the children had kept coming back to them. In the final stage of the project, when I was discussing the outcomes with the children, they helped me to summarise these themes.

WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL OF DRAMA TO ENGAGE CHILDREN IN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND TO ENABLE THEM TO THINK CRITICALLY ABOUT VALUES AND IDENTITY?

- Theme 1: A Chance to Shine. Empowerment through drama.
- Theme 2: A Safe Space For Challenge. Exploring challenging ideas through drama.
- Theme 3: Getting on and Falling Out. Compromise and conflict resolution
- Theme 4: An Inclusive Space. “Teaching” and exploring values.
- Theme 5: Awareness of Values. Drama can broaden children’s awareness of the values that they might then choose to prioritise.

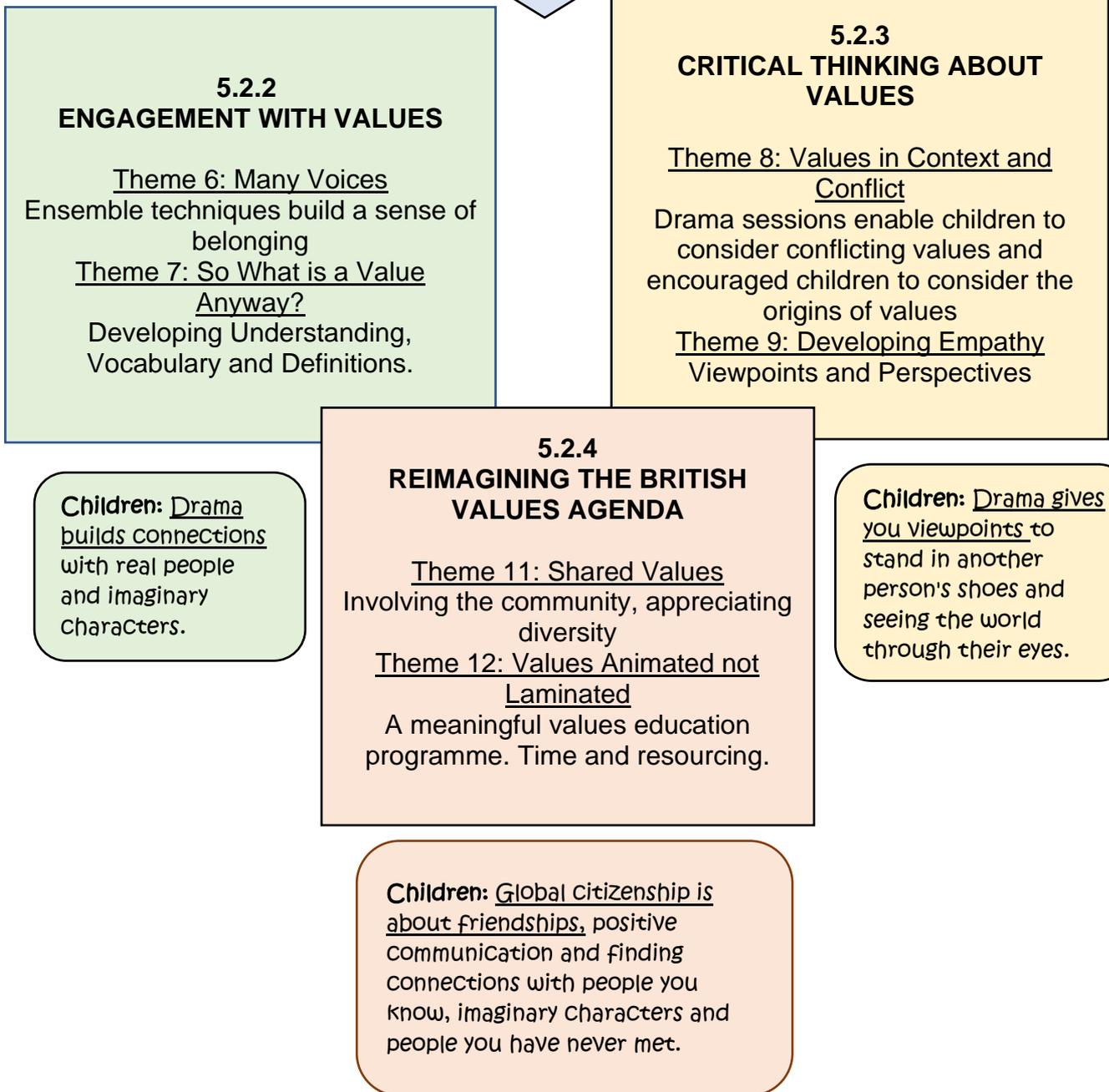
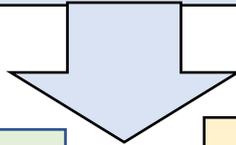


Fig 4.14 Themes Identified from Data

4.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter began by restating the research questions and then went on to identify the researcher's position and the framework for the research. The study was positioned within the framework of constructivist grounded theory using drama as a methodology. Creative methodologies were explored, with discussion of how these methods could be used to further a critical pedagogical approach. There was critical reflection on the ethical issues when working with young children, the influence of contextual power imbalances and claims to "representation" through pupil voice. The four methods of data collection were outlined with exemplification, along with an overview of previous work done leading up and facilitating this project. The structure of the drama sessions was outlined, with examples of the key drama "tools" that were used in the sessions. Finally, there was a description of how the data were analysed and coded using constructivist grounded theory to arrive at the themes identified in Fig 4.13 and described and discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

Chapter Five: Findings

5.1 Structure of Chapter

This chapter will examine the main research question in the light of the findings, identifying the key themes that emerged from the data and relating these to each of the three sub-questions (see fig 4.14). The focus for discussion in this chapter will stay close to the findings from the data and will focus on the school context. The reason for staying grounded in practice in this chapter is to ensure that the children's voices are centralised; a more thematic organisation of the findings might risk losing their voices. As the aim of the research was to centralise the voices of the children, each section begins with the children's perspective. In Chapter 6, the findings will be re-examined and discussed in a wider context, with reference to relevant research and the theoretical framework.

5.2 Key Findings

The key findings are presented under the headings of the research questions and sub-questions and organised within the themes identified in Fig 4.14.

5.2.1 What is the potential of drama to engage children in global citizenship education and to enable them to think critically about values and identity?

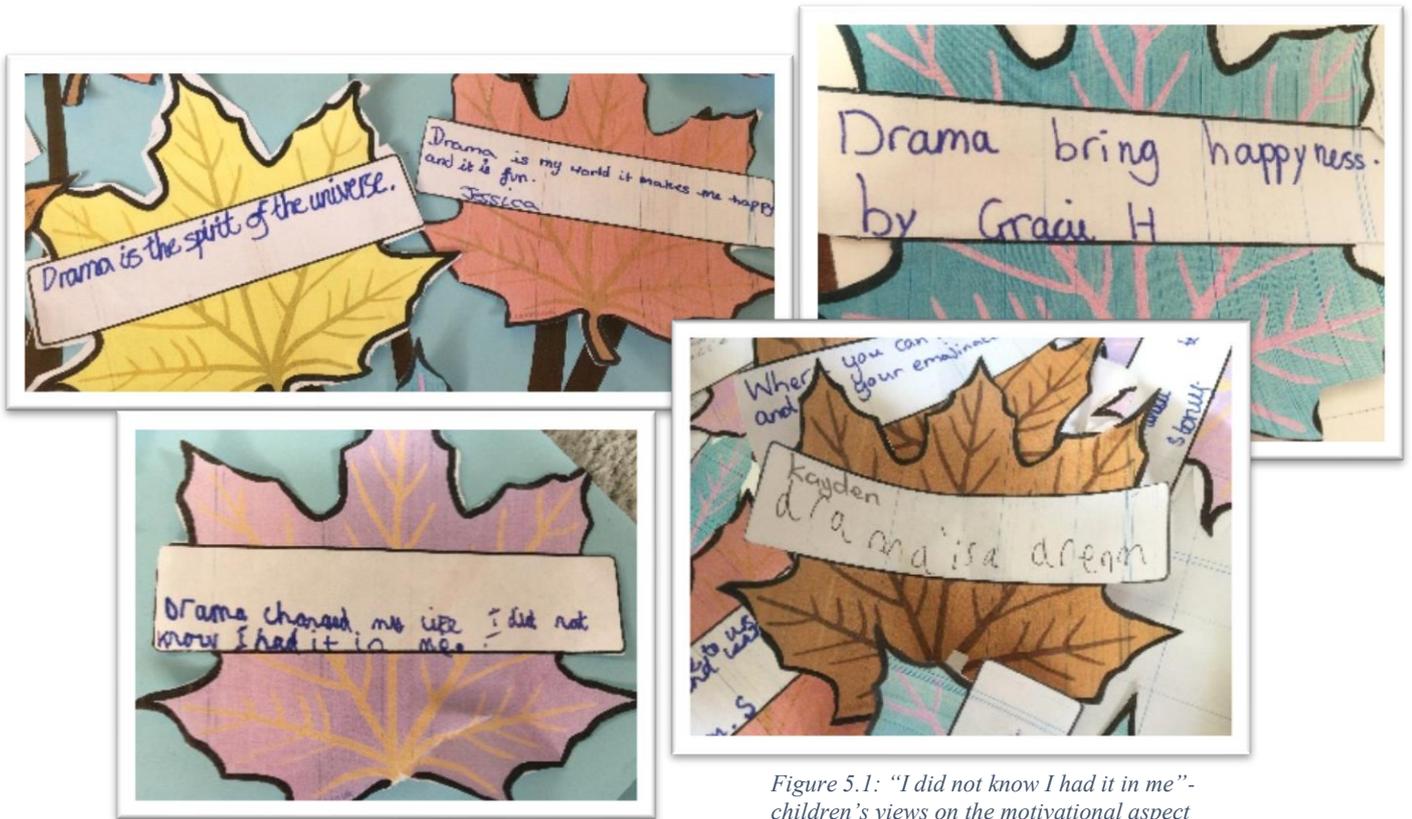


Figure 5.1: “I did not know I had it in me”- children’s views on the motivational aspect of drama.

Children’s Voice: Drama is Fun and a “Right”

The children’s views consistently showed that drama was a powerful tool to engage their interest and from their perspective, highly motivational. It was a “*fun way of exploring the world*” (Kay, 7). This theme was reflected in my own observations.

Another unexpected, but key finding from the children’s voice was the strong feeling that access to drama was an entitlement or a “right”. It was seen as a way of learning that was as much part of the curriculum as maths or English. Alongside this there was a strong sense of “responsibility” to one’s group in the drama sessions. Strong references to rights and responsibilities began to emerge after work on human rights and the role of the United Nations. In the drama huddle, children began to use the word “right” and “responsibility” both in the context of the focus scenario or story and in their discussion and social interactions within the drama sessions. They also referred to this right when discussing the access they had to drama in the curriculum.

“In drama, everyone has the right to choose how they “do” their character and no one has the right to tell other people in their group who to be. It has to be fair” (Lauren, 8)

“Everyone in the group has a responsibility to make sure that everyone feels included and is happy with the decisions. If one person does not have a “line” then it is everyone’s responsibility to help them.” (Mary, 9).

The following comments were given in response to a discussion where some children in the class said that friends in other schools don’t do drama:

“That’s terrible. Children should have the right to do drama as it really helps them to get on with other people. Drama is important as children can learn to speak out and be confident. They should make it ‘be’ on the curriculum for all children.” (Lewis, 9)

The children looked forward to the sessions and frequently stopped me around school with the question *“Are we doing drama with you today Miss?”*. The children’s comments reinforced my own observations, which strongly suggested that there were high levels of engagement and enthusiasm for the drama sessions.

Theme 1: A Chance to Shine: Empowerment Through Drama

A significant and interesting theme related to perceptions of attainment or “success” in drama, both from the perspective of the children and the other staff. Children who proved to be particularly confident in drama, taking on challenging roles in presentations were often children who struggled in other subjects. When discussing the drama sessions with other staff, I was frequently surprised that my impressions of particular children contrasted with the perceptions held by the class teacher (this worked both ways, negatively and positively). For example, Amelie, a new child was perceived by staff to be very far behind academically. She was unable to write a decipherable sentence and was struggled to read age-appropriate texts. However, in

the first drama session she attended, she gave a thoughtful contribution in an

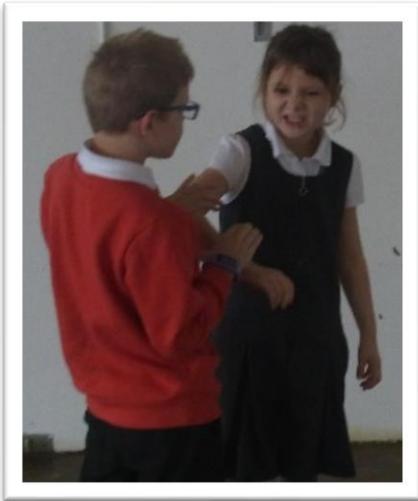


Photo 5.1: Amelie playing Beowulf "I sacrificed that soldier to save my friends. Now I will rip off your arm"

"encounter" between Beowulf, his soldiers and the monster Grendel. She was able to articulate the conflicting feelings of the soldiers at Beowulf's cold-hearted sacrifice of one of their men in order to distract the monster. In the "huddle" her contribution was genuinely praised by the rest of the class and the teaching assistant struggled to hide her surprise. The same child frequently had anxiety attacks where she would cry, or completely withdraw from learning, but she has since flourished in the drama sessions.

The headteacher, with an overview of all of the progress of all of the children at Irwell Bank commented that one of the most important benefits of drama was that it gave different children a chance to "shine". I observed pride in the children when they had worked "successfully" on a character or scenario. Evidence collected within this theme demonstrates that the motivational aspects of drama created a "safe" space. The playful nature of drama excited and engaged the children, so that they were confident to express themselves creatively and imaginatively without feeling anxious about "getting it wrong".

"Drama gets your attention and lets you shine...it helps you believe to achieve...it lets you see different life stories...drama gives you connections with people you did not know and opens the door...is a way of understanding new situations...it is a story of different religions and beliefs...drama is about friends and getting on...it is about working together to look after the world...drama is a way that everyone can join in and do well." (soundbites from year three drama huddle, children aged 7-8)



Photos 5.2 "Drama is joy. It makes me happy"

Theme 2: A Safe Space for a Challenge

Drama provided a space to experiment with ideas and engage imagination through the process of "playing about" with characters and situations. Questions opened with phrases such as *"What if...? Just imagine... What would happen if...? I wonder what happened before this moment?"* Through such questions, I was able to introduce relatively challenging concepts such as the afterlife, sacrifice, bereavement, suicide and war. The experience of participation in a scenario opened up discussion and gave the children the confidence to speak out on topics that might not have been otherwise addressed in school. It also gave children an outlet to express their own emotions, shaped by their experiences both inside and outside of the drama sessions.

In the project "A Mountain in Tibet" children worked to create the Buddhist "Wheel of Life" and consequently shared some moving ideas about their own encounters with death and their ideas on the afterlife. In the drama huddle they discussed how one could support someone who is grieving. We talked about the way that the subject is often avoided so as not to upset the person who is bereaved. Many children opened up about their own experiences and other children were able to ask questions and offer comfort.

The project on “Jessica’s Ghost” with the older children opened up discussion on teenage suicide and the impact of feeling isolated. Through work in both “Beowulf” and “The Christmas Truce” the children were challenged to rethink their ideas about going to war, about fear and courage and how war is glamorised in the media and entertainment industry. They were also able to understand that the conceptions of “friend” and “enemy” are not clear cut and the notion of who “is” the enemy can be conflicted and complicated.



Photo 5.3 and 5.4: Facing the monster “Courage does not mean that you are not frightened. The warriors had to go. They owed it to the king and their families. But they had doubts.”

The drama “huddle” after the sessions allowed for an exchange of ideas, further discussion about how preconceived ideas had been challenged and what values motivated the characters. Because the children were speaking from experience, they were able to engage, debate and argue from a position of “expertise” as they had stood in the shoes of the characters and experienced their emotions.



Figure 5.2: Children's views about drama as a safe space.

Theme 3: Getting on and Falling Out

The desire to share something with the class was a strong motivation for cooperation. I observed a gradual shift within the sessions where children were more likely to compromise when they had different ideas.

"Ok, we can both be Hamlet. What shall we say to the ghost?"

"Let's work together and we can all make the monster. I'm going to make the head, why doesn't someone be the eyes".

"In scene one I'm going to be Beowulf, but then we can swap in scene two"

There was also a significant improvement on children's ability to accept working with new people who were not their "best" friends. The children's comments reflected their understanding that getting to know other people in the class and forging new bonds was a positive way of working.

“If you don’t normally get along with someone and you are in a drama group with them for a couple of weeks, well... you have to get along. And after a couple of weeks you get used to them. You know what they are really like. Sometimes people behave in a certain way on the playground. But it might be because of something that has happened at home or another problem. But in drama you get to know them for who they are and you see a new side to them. You make a connection. (Anthony, 11)

On a small scale, I believe that this shows that the children were learning the skills of tolerance, friendship-building, conflict resolution, empathy and acceptance as they applied them in the sessions to make the drama “work”. This has strong links to theme six which explores the power of “ensemble” work. There will be further reflections on the motivational aspects of collaborative “ensemble” work and building “stories of identity” in Chapter 6.

Theme 4: An Inclusive Space to Teach and Explore Values.

The drama huddle at the end of the session led naturally to an exploration of what motivated the characters and it was here that most discussion around values took place. In these discussions that I was able to introduce and revisit the language of values, relating the vocabulary back to the events in the drama itself. It was a time to teach and develop the children’s understanding of values as well as a time for reflection. In using the word “teach” I do not imply that I believe it is possible to “teach values”. I feel that the drama huddle was a time where I could give the children the vocabulary to describe the experiences that had been part of in the drama. It was also a time where I could challenge through questioning, encouraging the children to reflect critically on the experience. Consideration was given to the views of others and children reflected on how their own ideas might have changed and developed.

In “The Mobile Phone” children created a piece of drama about bullying which occurred due to owning a mobile phone which was “out of date”. This promoted discussion about “value” (how much something is worth in monetary terms) and “values”, which the children found hard to disconnect. I was also aware through discussion that children had identified “good” and “bad” values. Through further challenge, questioning and reflection in the huddle, children came to the realisation that there were not necessarily “bad” values motivating the characters. The impact of any value can be negative in the way that that value manifests in behaviour. They understood that the desire to belong and to be accepted can encourage people prioritise material possessions and exclude those who don’t have the “right” brands or labels to secure their own place in a group. This realisation can be seen in the following quotes:

Week 1: “Some people have bad values like they value outside appearance, or selfishness. Like if you had an out of date phone, no one would be your friend, because many people value expensive possessions over friendship” (Charles, 11)

At the end of the project the same child said: “The media is what makes us worry about what people think. You have to watch out for it. We all value wanting to belong and friendships, so we try to fit in by having the right stuff. The people who write the adverts want your money, so they trap you using your values”

Researcher: “So after doing the drama, would you now feel confident about being accepted in year 6 if you did not have the right phone?”

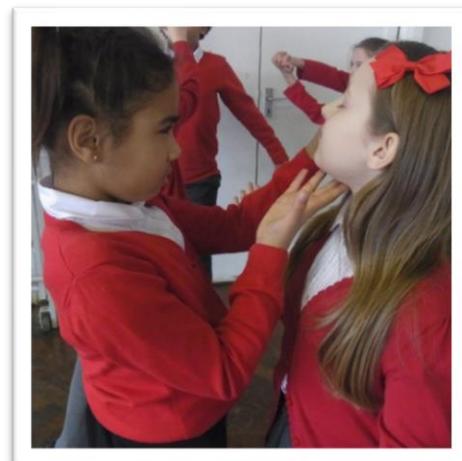
Charles: “Well... I still want a good phone (laughs). But now we know what is going on in our heads. Maybe some people would think again about the meaning of friendship and why we exclude people from the group. It’s hard though”

The above quote also illustrates the children’s developing understanding of how the media influences and shapes our values. They began to understand that the need to belong to a group and the values that we hold about friendship and belonging are played on by media, which creates feelings of insecurity and gives us the urge to conform. In discussion, children realised how both social recognition and social success were important to them and often “controlled” their choices. This was new learning, as they had not previously recognised or articulated this.



Photo 5.4 and 5.5: The Mobile Phone-Exclusion “Ignore them, it doesn’t matter about your phone. You can hang out with us”

The “Wing” project gave the children a deeper understanding about the root causes of the undesirable and anti-social actions of others and the impact of standing up for someone who is vulnerable. We explored a “prequel” and I asked what might have led up to the bullying crows behaving in this cruel way. The children came up with imaginative ideas: the destruction of their forest home, their parents killed by a predator, food shortages and bullying by other birds who did not like their colour.



“The wicked, greedy humans have destroyed our forest. Where are we going to live now?”



“Your music has no place in this forest of sorrow. Our hearts are too dark with despair. We will crush you in our anger”



“We will stand by you and defend you. Together we are powerful, alone we are weak. SOLIDARITY for the creatures of the forest!”

Photo Montage 5.6: Wing

In drama the children showed the way that the small “weak” character who the crows intimidated was defended by a sprite in the forest. They used a frozen picture where they stood by him in a protective pose to show support. In the following “huddle” I gave them the word “solidarity” and they understood it from experience. This word

frequently came up again in discussions and the connection to the drama gave them a powerful understanding of what it meant.



Photo 5.7: Solidarity “It means standing by someone and saying NO!”

In “Macbeth”, Year Six considered the king’s desire for power and social recognition and the need to please the wife he loved. They showed understanding of the pressure on him to impress her and explored the idea of “courage” and “manliness”. In the drama huddle this was applied in a wider world context to understand the values of world leaders. They discussed Donald Trump’s need for power and recognition on the global stage and related this to the threats exchanged between Trump and Kim Jong Un.

Researcher Theme 5: An Awareness of Values

Evidence from the focus group interviews showed that as the project progressed, the children’s comments increasingly referred to the multiplicity and variety of values and the idea of “choice” (we can choose the ones that are most important to us). They were able to talk about their own “special values” and acknowledge and understand why others had chosen to prioritise differently. Between the interviews in February and the interviews in June, the children were able to discuss a wider variety of values. There was also evidence that understanding had developed so that the children understood that values we choose to prioritise can vary depending on the

situation. The children showed this in role as a character and also on a personal level in discussions.

“I value being fit and healthy, as I want to be better at football. But I also want to make my friend happy by sharing their birthday cake as I value friendship and belonging”. (Anthony, 11)

“We said that honesty is important and also trust. But sometimes we lie for kindness, like if your friend was wearing a horrible orange spotty top, you would be kind over being honest and not say it was horrible” (Oliver, 9)

5.2.2 How well can drama help children to identify, understand and engage with values?

Children’s voice: Drama Builds Connections with Real People and Imaginary Characters

The word “connection” really resonated with the children and they frequently revisited the theme of how we can be a diverse set of individuals, whilst also seeking connections. The children referred constantly to their enjoyment of playing characters that are very unlike oneself and spoke with pride about their ability to swap gender, age, or form in order to play an animal or a god in the sessions. I was prompted to consider this theme further, as the children gave it such importance. It became very apparent how adept the children had become in this “fluidity” when we had new children join the school who were completely unused to taking on a different gender in drama.

“In drama we can find out the hidden connections. The ones that are secret. When I played the magician’s elephant, I understood how she might be connected to the boy, the magician and maybe even other worlds. Sometimes connections are unusual or hidden at first, but they are always there if you search.” (Ellie, 9)

There is a difference between what you see on the outside and what is going on inside. Like in “Wonder” drama project, the boy lives in a creative world of imagination, although everyone else thinks that he is just a bit slow! When you use your imagination in drama you can begin to see what is going on inside other people’s heads” (Aaron, 9)

“When we did Winston of Churchill, I was a polar bear. My imagination made me feel like one. I really felt worried about the melting ice and my family and how they would suffer. And when I looked down, I ACTUALLY SAW big white paws instead of my own hands” (Mitch, 10)

“It is important to make people feel included, to see them as they are on the inside. Even if they have an elephant’s head like Ganesh or a monkey face like Hanuman. Everyone should be able to belong in their own way” (Laurina, 7)

“The gods are all different colours, some have got animal faces, but they share forgiveness and celebrate together. It is what is on the inside that counts and they connect through their values like kindness and being generous” (Sara, 8)

Upon reflection, I believe that the above quotes and this theme identified by the children evidences further that the drama sessions were building empathy, tolerance and were a way of forging connections with others.

Researcher Theme 6: Many Voices: Ensemble Techniques Build a Sense of Community Cohesion

If children are better able to get on as a class and find connections with each other, they are more likely to get on in a wider community. As well as accepting fluidity in roles, the children frequently worked “ensemble” style, collaborating in twos, groups or sometimes a whole class to create one character. Working collaboratively to build a character enabled them to reap the benefits of a peaceful resolution to conflict. Through collaborative working they quickly realised they could produce a piece of drama that was very powerful. They were also able to identify where relationships had broken down when their group did not “succeed”. In particular the idea of “many voices” (the basis of techniques such as conscience alley, mind-trap and choral character building) gave an opportunity for children to learn how to support each other so that everyone could contribute in the way that was best for them.

“In drama, you have to co-operate. We don’t argue as much now, as we won’t have anything to share at the end. We know that if everyone wants to be a main character, like the magician, we can do that by playing them together. We can all speak as one!”
(Henry, 8)

“Drama is nice to do. It makes me happy. It makes me calm. It helps me be kind to my friends when we all make a character together. In Beowulf, I was Grendel’s eyes.”
(Mina, 7)

“If you are not so confident you can speak with someone else. This helps people with quiet voices to get their voice heard”. (Tazmin, 9)

For some children, the opportunity to speak with someone else was very empowering and allowed them to contribute ideas that they might not have shared if asked to work

alone. The possible reasons for the power of “ensemble” techniques will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

Theme 7: So, What is a Value Anyway? Understanding and Definitions.

Throughout the project, the concept of values remained one that was sometimes intangible and often led to confusion. There is no doubt that values education presents a great number of challenges. The word “value” itself frequently perplexed the children. Even when their definition went beyond monetary value, they tended to focus on close relationships or concepts like “home”. However, there was evidence of a developing understanding, that can be illustrated by the following quotes:

February 2018

“A value is something big, something that means a lot to you. Say if one of your friends or relative died and they gave you something that would be a value.” (Amelia, 9)

“Something really special, like a necklace that is valuable, or something really special to you.” (Lewis, 10)

“Something given to you by a family member, you have to keep it safe at all times.” (Mitch, 10)

However, as the project progressed, there was an improved awareness of a wide variety of values and a developing understanding of how the characters were motivated by their values. In the huddle children were increasingly able to respond to others and engage in discuss about values. Discussion was often more productive when we talked about “what is important to the character” or “the motivation of the character”. The children began to define a value using their own words and their understanding at the end of the project can be seen in the following quotes:

June 2018

“A value is an action. It is the way we treat one another and what we do. Values help us make good choices about how we want our lives to be.” (Jenson, 11)

*“A value...it’s like your heart and everything you do and everything you deserve.”
(Jonah, 11)*

“Your values are like your guidelines, they are like the lights that shine to show the way” (Benjamin, 7)

*“A value is what is important to you in your life, what you choose to make important”
(Sara, 11)*

Although it was certainly was a significant challenge to establish a shared definition of what exactly a value *is*, these quotes illustrate that there was a gradual deepening in understanding of this concept. The introduction of the language of values in the context of drama did support the creation of meaning. The words “solidarity”, “inclusion” and “isolation” were new to the children. After a unit of work on “Wing” and on “Jessica’s Ghost”, they knew exactly what these words meant. The children could show, both in frozen pictures and through the creation of dialogue, the concepts of “standing up and speaking out” or “standing by” someone who is feeling afraid.

The words “activism” and “social justice” came alive in “Malala’s Magic Pencil” after the children worked in role as scavengers on a rubbish dump in Malala’s village in Pakistan and then had their lives transformed as a new school opened in the village.



Photo 5.8: "Solidarity". Drama allowed children to understand a value concept "in action" - what it actually looks like.

Some values (such as love, friendship, honesty, kindness, respect, creativity and peace) are undoubtedly easier for younger children to understand. They were more commonly cited and discussed. During the project, I began to introduce children to more complex ideas such as empathy, tolerance or solidarity. I think it would be wrong to assume that younger children cannot deal with these challenging concepts. It is undeniable that teaching values takes time and careful thought. The children's understanding developed gradually over several months through experiential learning. The children needed to see and understand that value "in action" and exploring stories through drama allowed them to do this.

5.2.3 How well can drama help children to think critically about values?

Children's voice: We stand in the shoes of others and see the world through a different pair of eyes.



Photos 5.9 to 5.11: Hamlet's Ghost "I could see the sea and the castle. Actually see it. I knew what Hamlet went through."



The children spoke frequently about working in role as diverse characters and enjoyed the challenge of speaking through different voices. They quickly understood the idea that when "in role" you might express views that are not necessarily the same as your own.

"In drama you can just BE. Imagine. Be the people. Think like the king, the queen or the scullery maid. Then you truly understand them and act out their lives." (Susie, 8)

This quote from Susie reminded me of some words by Edward Bond:

"Shakespeare...created his characters from inside their minds. He knows what it is 'to be' the king, the servant, the nurse, the child... the condemned man, the monster- and to find what is human in all of them, even the wicked and the damned." (Bond, 2012b)

The children frequently used the words “perspectives” and “viewpoints” when speaking about work in drama. They began to articulate changes of opinion, reflecting on the views of others and the events in the drama sessions. Sometimes a small “signifier” such as a cloak or hat supported a change of character, but as the children became more adept at taking on a role, they used a change of space or position to indicate a new perspective. I believe this physical movement to signify a new perspective was really helpful in supporting the children to think from “within” a character and empathise with their position. It was also a useful device to support the children in considering how a character’s position might change over time. Drama gives children the opportunity to physically “be” a character. It scaffolds their imagination so that they can look at events from an alternative perspective and thus think more critically about the situation at hand.



Photos 5.12 and 5.13: “Hamlet was in pain. He punished Ophelia and it was not her fault. We learned what it was like to be pushed away and rejected and how it feels to be betrayed. The drama gave realism to their pain”



Photos 5.14-5.16: *Wing-The Prequel* “Years before, the crows lived happily in the forest. Humans came and destroyed the trees they lived in. The crows and their children were starving. Their anger led them to seek revenge on humans. They became bitter and twisted. The sound of music filled their souls with hate. They attacked the boy out of desperation”

Researcher Theme 8: Values in Context and Conflict

Drama supported children to consider the origin of values and how that led to actions and choices. A frequent discussion in the “huddle” centred on what motivated the characters and whether a value led to good or bad choices. For example, the need to belong might cause someone to lie or cheat; ambition to be a leader might motivate them to behave ruthlessly.

“Macbeth loved his wife and wanted to impress her. He wanted to make her proud, but he also was loyal to his king. He knew that killing the king was wicked and would make God angry.” (Sarah, 10)

Children began to articulate and understand how values can guide a character’s actions, thus helping to understand why people might act in ways that can be shocking or distressing. Values can also cause conflict, pulling a character in opposite directions. The children began to relate this to their own experiences in the world.

“People have dreams and they want their family to be proud of them, and do the right thing. But sometimes they try new things like they might drive a motorbike which is

not good for the environment or is dangerous, but they want to do to try a new experience and have adventure. That is a conflict of values, you don't know what you want to do" (Ellie, 11)

"Like I am sitting down now, having a drink and biscuit, having a talk and being part of our community. Being sociable conflicts with the value of being healthy" (Anthony, 11)

Researcher Theme 9: Developing Empathy- Viewpoints and Perspectives

Global citizenship has been linked to an ability to empathise with others in order to feel a sense of solidarity and responsibility. It could be a way of engaging with the world where trade and economic gains are not the priority concern. Empathy is strongly linked to imagination (you need to be able to imagine what life is like for someone else) and tolerance (which is reliant on a sympathetic and curious understanding of others). Investing in a character or scenario meant that children were able to get below the surface and really understand the character.

In the project "Story Like the Wind", the children worked in role as refugees to describe a fear of the huge ocean waves, a sense of hunger and deep isolation and loneliness. They created lines for their character that illustrated sadness at the loss of "home comforts" such as their pets, their mother's food, toys, their bedroom. They shared this piece of drama with the whole school and the sense of pain at separation from family was palpable and very emotional.

"Drama makes you imagine what it would feel like. We made the boat and all of us were the passengers on it. I just imagined that wide ocean stretching out before us and one tiny boat" (Keni, 10)

“It makes you see what it was like to be in their situation. When we did the drama, everyone actually understood what the refugees went through. I thought about my own bedroom and my dog” (Amia, 10)

“When I was doing the drama, all I could see was me on a boat with everyone else and the sea RIGHT THERE. Literally where you were. I could see it. The vision of drama was giving me the reality. What happened was actually happening to me.” (Mitch, 9)

“I agree with Keni. I imagined I was on the boat and the sea was right there. We were in that situation” (Katie, 10)



Photo 17: Story Like the Wind “Spinning slowly on a rising sea”

I wish that my family was here.
 I hope I survive.
 I want peace and Justice.
 I feel sad and lonely
 I believe in happiness.
 I need some food.
 I have lost everything and everyone who I love.

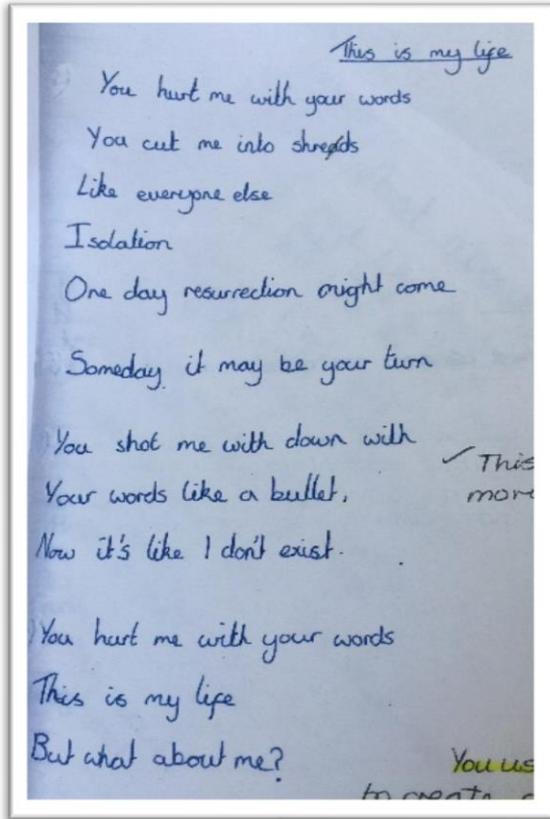
I wish that I was still at home
 with my family. Smelling the
 sweet, scent of freshly made
 food. I hope we stop a
 piece of safety. I
 want to go home.
 I feel traumatized
 I believe in time we
 will get there.
 I need a place to feel
 secure. I have
 lost everything
 I loved behind

I believe in hope. I feel forgotten.
 I wish I was home I hope for home.
 I feel like a balloon floating like a leaf
 away, never to be seen again. I have
 lost friends, family, toys, my house, and
 my town.

I wish that we will find somewhere safe
 and somewhere to live.
 I hope we will be welcomed if we find some-
 where to live.
 I feel like I've been travelling on this boat for
 over a year. I believe in hope.
 I need to find land.

Figure 5.3: "A Story Like the Wind" Letters composed in drama "in role" as refugees.

In "Jessica's Ghost", the children showed their understanding of the deep need to belong and be accepted and the impact of exclusion and isolation. Their letters in role as Jessica, a young girl who had committed suicide showed how their own experiences had informed their work in drama and given them a powerful understanding of the how the behaviour of others can cause terrible pain.



For younger children, the Easter Story gave them an understanding of the complexities of friendship, divided loyalties, peer pressure and fear of belonging to the wrong group. Betrayal, loyalty and regret are complex words, but came to life through dialogue and action in the drama.

Figure 5.4: Jessica's Ghost- "Isolation" example of poem from Year Six pupil written after a drama session.



"Dear Jesus, please forgive me. I was frightened of the soldiers. I did not want to die. I have a family. I do love you, but I was too afraid. Love Peter"



"I betrayed you for a bag of gold. I know it was wrong. My family are starving, I needed the money. I did not think that it would end up like this. I thought they would let you go. Forgive me! Judas"



Photos 5.18-5.20: Betrayal and Denial- The Easter Story

Researcher Theme 10: Drama as a Rehearsal for Protest

Drama sessions gave an opportunity for me to model new language and for children to try it out in a safe space. They were able to rehearse ways of intervening in situations of injustice, developing the confidence to speak out and raise an objection.

| Examples of “Language of Protest” |
|---|
| <i>(Taken from researcher journal observation notes, drama huddles and scripts devised by children)</i> |
| <i>“We demand that you tourists take note of what we say. We polar bears are in crisis. You are responsible.”</i> |
| <i>“Our homes are melting. How would you feel if your home and family were being destroyed though someone’s carelessness? We must join together to take action”</i> |
| <i>“We insist that you take notice of our demands. The creatures need our protection. The forest is fragile.”</i> |
| <i>“No, what you are doing is not right. I am standing up for friendship.”</i> |
| <i>“Ladies and Gentlemen, we are gathered here today to discuss the issue of the beast Grendel. Many would say that courage is all, but is this worth risking our lives for?”</i> |
| <i>“We will stand together to fight for ice. Ice is nice. Your thoughtless behaviour must stop”</i> |
| <i>“We respectfully request that you listen to our views. Your plastic is destroying our habitat.”</i> |

Table 5.1 Examples of Language of Protest from Researcher Journal

“Drama gives me expression and a loud voice. I’m not shy of saying my ideas. I feel proud when I speak out” (Harry, 8)

Although this study does not extend to the children’s behaviour outside of the drama sessions, echoes of lines used in drama were frequently heard in the children’s writing and in focus group interviews. In particular, the words spoken chorally in drama frequently appeared again in other drama situations and in poems and stories.



Photos 5.21 and 5.22: "Jerusalem" performance poem. "The grinding cogs oppress my soul. I want to break free"



"We should stand up and shout out for what we believe in and we should not be afraid"



Photo 5.23-5.25: Invictus "I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul"

5.2.4 What are the implications of the research findings for reimagining the British Values agenda and for the development of a more transformative and relevant citizenship education programme?

Children's Voice: Global Citizenship is about Friendship and Connections

I was interested in the children's understanding of what this term meant and how they would describe a "good" global citizen. I explored this with them in focus group interviews and also in class discussions. The children frequently revisited the theme of "connections" and talked about finding connections and commonalities with people you did not know. They spoke with pride about this attribute, and for them this was what exemplified a "good" global citizen; the ability to seek out these common threads, whilst respecting the unique characteristics of individuals and groups.

"Global citizenship is about finding connections with people all around the world who you might not know. It's also about finding out about how they live and their traditions and religions. It's about friendships and asking questions. It's also about being fair and sharing the planet. It is like being a world family." (Year 4 group comments on artwork).

For me, a more surprising theme was that of "family" when applied to global citizenship. It became clear that the deep connections that children felt with their own family was a useful metaphor when thinking about the global community. Whilst they did not have that intimate connection, the idea of family for them represented values such as loyalty, care, responsibility, the opportunity for friendship and co-operation. It also resonated with environmental awareness work that they had experienced as part of the "eco school" award over the years.

"Global citizenship means working together as a one world family to look after the earth" (Ami, 9)

Researcher Theme 11: Shared Values

In the parallel “Irwell Bank Core Values” project, the children were able to agree a set of values which were then used in further workshops with staff and parents. In discussing this work with the children, they were able to explain how they could agree on a shared set of “school” values, whilst respecting and acknowledging personal differences and celebrating individual unique identities. Their comments showed that their understanding of values had at its heart the idea of “choice” and that whilst there were shared values that we could all agree upon, this agreement does not prohibit personal preferences and loyalties.

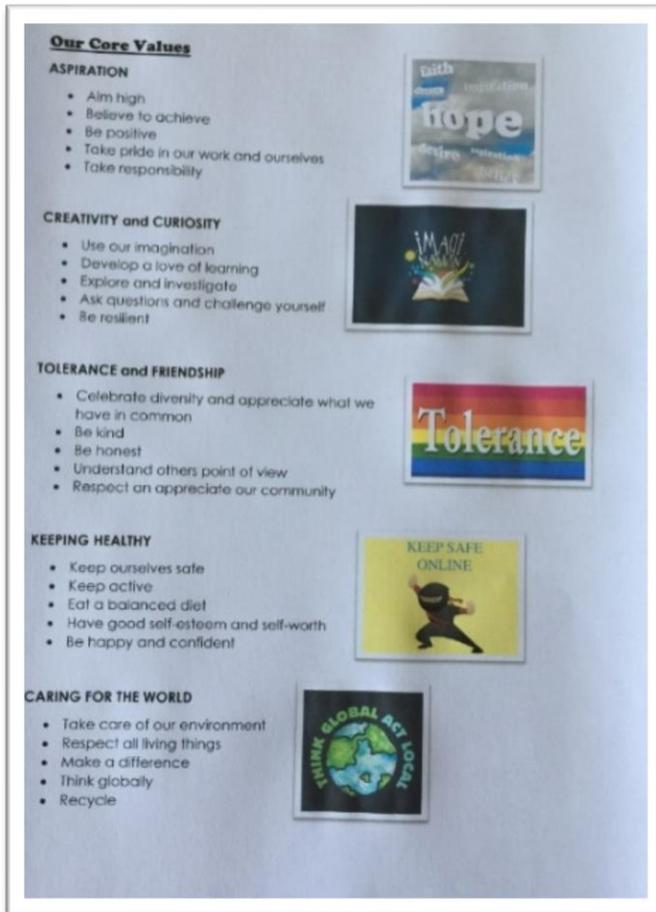
The children’s viewpoints showed that they understood that there were some benefits of working to a set of shared values in school. They sensed that this would foster a positive community. However, there was a strong belief that in agreeing to work towards these shared values there was no obligation to forfeit one’s own strongly held values (see Table 5.2).

There was room for individualism; the group identity and values need not be in conflict with personal identity and values. Both can exist in parallel.

“Actually, it is very important that we do have different values as we are all different and equal. If we were all the same it would be like looking in a mirror, it would be all the same” (Maysie, 9)

“If everyone had the same voice it would be boring, it’s good how we are all different but also in some ways we are all the same. We all have hair and eyeballs, but different colours. We all have different hobbies and values” (Oliver, 8)

“All being different is the thing that makes us the same!” (Maysie, 9)



“To be honest, peace is at the top of my list of values, and peace is so many values. It is peace individually, in the community and with the world. Peace towards people you do and don’t know. It is also tolerance. And friendship. At Irwell Bank, we all agreed on tolerance and friendship as a school value” (Michael, 11)

Fig 5.5: Values agreed by children and other stakeholders on “Values Day, June 2018.

The children in the final focus groups agreed that the following statements could be used to summarise their views about whether values should be shared or personal.

| Sharing Values | |
|----------------|--|
| (i) | There are many values to choose from <i>“everyone is unique”</i> |
| (ii) | It is a positive that we all choose to rank them differently <i>“good to be me”</i> |
| (iii) | We can agree some values as a school community to make this community a happier place <i>“shared values”</i> |
| (iv) | We can talk about values and weigh them up <i>“disagree with respect”</i> |

Table 5.2: Statements Agreed about Values (Focus Groups: June 2018)

The children's comments on this theme also indicated that they felt ownership of the school values, as they had been developed with the children themselves throughout the project. The values had not been imposed from "outside" and the vocabulary was their own and within their understanding. When the children discussed the "British Values", they did not express negative opinions about the values themselves, but they felt that the vocabulary made them difficult to understand.

"The British Values, in fact all values are difficult to understand and hard to explain. Maybe it would be better to make it easier, like "The Golden Rule"- always treat others like you would wish to be treated- or just a slogan like "One Big World Family". Because actually lots of values overlap and they all mean that we treat everyone as family: friends, relatives and strangers who might be your friend. It's just about getting on with people" (Jenson, 11)

Researcher Theme 12: Values Should Be Animated Not Laminated

Mary Myatt in her book "Hopeful Schools" (2016, p.14) emphasizes that considerable work needs to be done to bring values to life for the school community; values cannot just be displayed on a poster on the wall. *"In a time when everyone is talking about values and plastering them on their marketing or painting them on their walls, we need to be careful interrogate how the values are being lived"*. Indeed, it could be said that in many schools, the processes and procedures that are in place contradict the stated values or "ethos" of the school. The values that apply to the children may not applied consistently in the way that staff are treated.

In this project, there was support from the school leadership. However, there were also undeniable pressures that conflicted with the agreed "core" values of the school such as the need to achieve certain standards in end of year written tests, staff performance targets and some of the procedures for managing behaviour in a busy

school that is stretched for resources and support. There is no quick fix for “animating” values. The evidence collected in this project showed that a developing understanding of values was a long and complex process. It was not achieved over a few lessons and considerable resources were set aside to support the work. It needed a long-term view and constant revisiting, reviewing, reinforcement and opportunities for discussion.

5.3 Insights from the Children

Throughout the project, the children were asked in classes and in focus group interviews “how can drama help children to understand values and become good global citizens?” At the end of the project, the children were shown the twelve themes that form the basis of this section. They were asked which themes were the most important to them and to talk about the findings. The themes below were prioritised and will be expanded upon in the following section. Links to the main themes are shown in brackets; the children grouped some of them and gave them new headings in the discussions. It is interesting to note that the children were particularly concerned with the themes that related to social and emotional development: friendship, empathy, collaboration and confidence building.

| Children’s Priority Themes | |
|---|--|
| Confidence (<i>themes 1,2</i>) | <i>“Drama builds my confidence”</i> |
| Performance (<i>themes 1,6</i>) | <i>“We love to perform our own ideas”</i> |
| Friendship and Teamwork (<i>themes 3,6</i>) | <i>“Drama is about friendship and teamwork”</i> |
| Compromise and Collaboration (<i>themes 4,6</i>) | <i>“In drama, we learn to sort things out and work together”</i> |
| Seeing Another Viewpoint (<i>themes 3,9</i>) | <i>“We see the world from a different view”</i> |

Table 5.3: Themes identified by the children as being of highest importance.

“Drama builds my confidence”. This theme was frequently revisited and was really important to the children. Feeling confident to speak out and overcoming “shyness” was of high value to them. It was surprising to me how many children, some of whom were perceived by staff as “confident”, expressed anxiety about speaking out in class and in front of their peers.

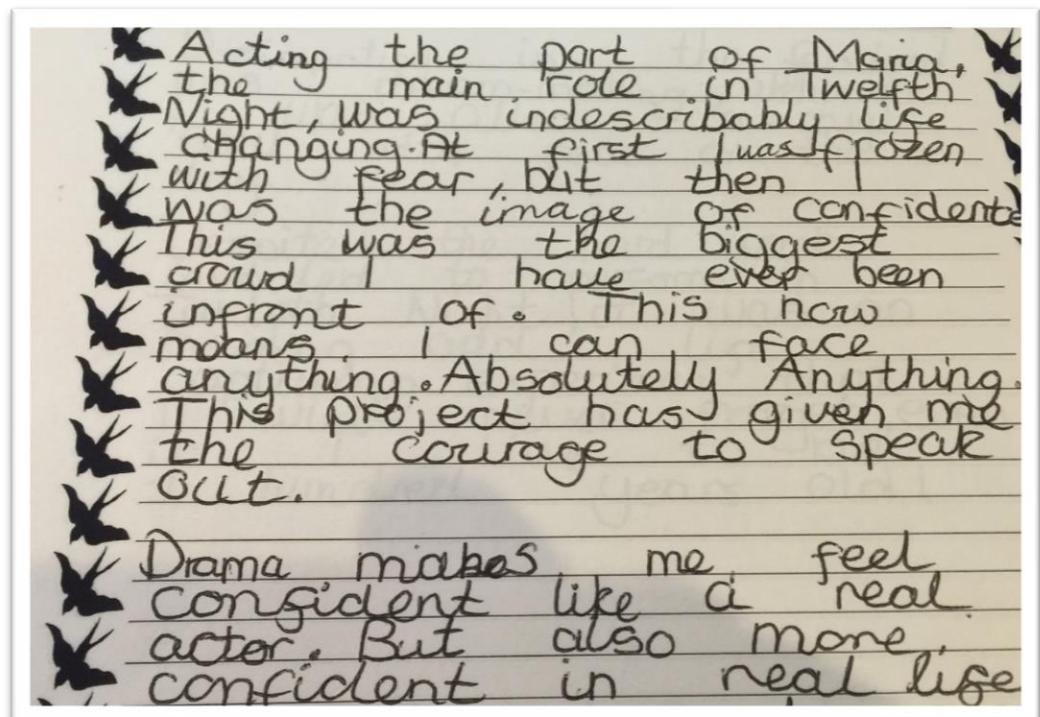


Fig 5.6: Children's Writing "I can now face anything. Absolutely anything."

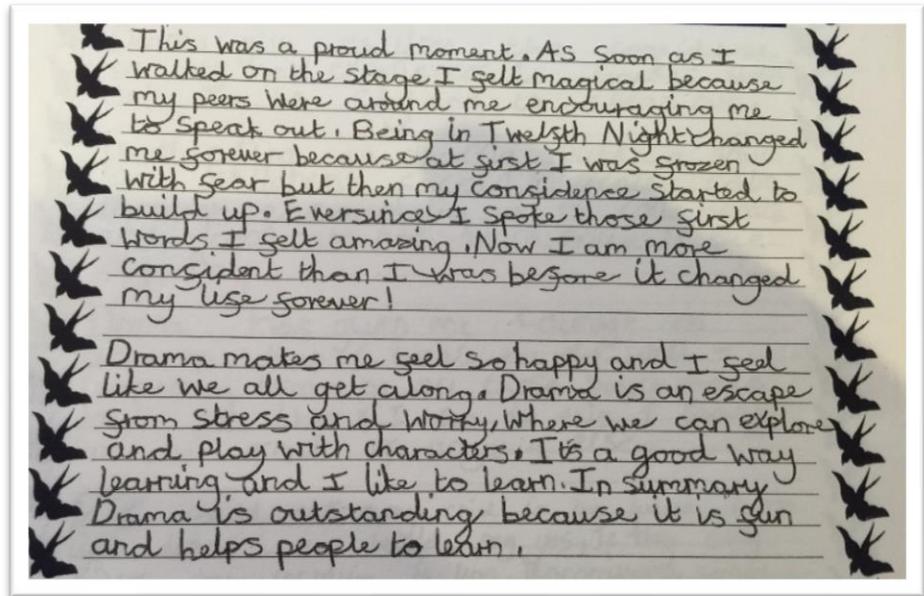


Fig 5.7: "Drama is an escape from stress and worry where we can explore and play with characters"

"We love to perform our own ideas". The impact of "performance", either with a formal audience, or within the drama lesson was really powerful. The children were really motivated to identify their "key" message and then interpret and communicate this in their own way. At the end of the project, the children expected that when they needed to present something to the school at key points in the year that they would be asked to write their own ideas. They did not expect an adult to just give them readings for assemblies or special "services". The word "interpret" was used frequently by the children (*how should we interpret this idea?*) and the children were especially proud of their achievements in devising and creating their own presentations within a given theme.



Photo 5.26: *Performance*. "I have learnt more about expressing (myself) and I can now speak up with a loud voice. Normally I was shy at school, and I'd never do drama in front of everyone, but now I have learnt that you do not need to be shy in front of people, you just enjoy it. And when everybody claps me I feel really happy"

"Drama is about friendship and team work". The interpersonal skills developed by the children in order for the drama sessions to function was not a theme that I had expected to be significant before the project started. However, for the children, the learning and progress that took place here was as important as the content of the sessions. The children felt strongly that drama helped them in working with new people, getting on with each other, and working things

out together as a team. The required organisation gave them a sense of responsibility towards each other and an understanding of how to work with individual's strengths and weaknesses to make a success of a session.

"Drama gives us trust in each other. Sometimes you need to trust people to make friends. And if you don't make friends, no one will be nice to you. We learn to do that

in drama and it helps outside drama" (Matthew, 10)

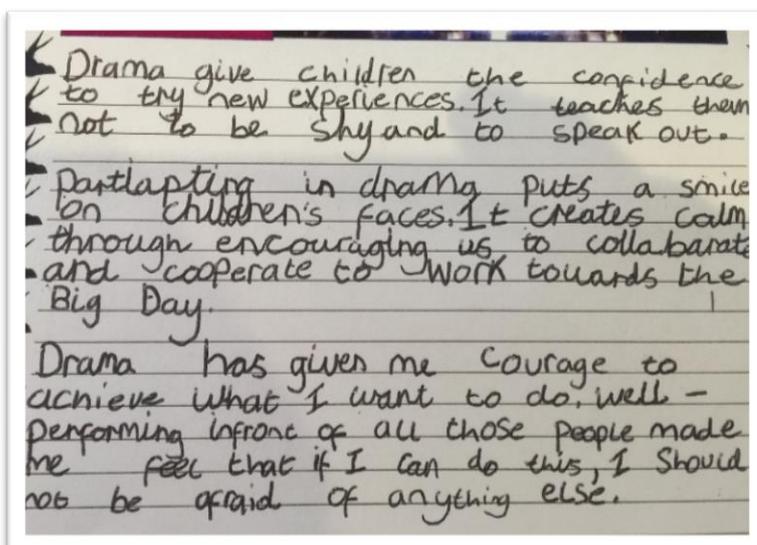


Fig 5.8: Children's Writing "It creates calm to encourage us to collaborate and cooperate towards the Big Day"

I believe that as teachers we often forget that for children the social aspect of school is so important.

Without a sense of friendship and belonging children will not flourish, no matter how good the teaching or the infrastructure.

“In drama, we learn to sort things out and work together” The use of choral techniques in drama really empowered the children and gave them a sense of satisfaction and a feeling of community. They found the notion of “many voices speaking as one” really powerful and frequently chose these techniques when devising their own work. They recognised the powerful impact it had on an audience and delighted in this, carefully selecting the “key message” and rehearsing how they would convey this using the power of many voices. On more than one occasion in a more formal “performance” in an assembly or special event, members of their audience were seen to give a very emotional response which was noted by the children with great pride.

“In our play, Hamlet, we have loads of people playing one character, like loads of Laertes, loads of Hamlets and so on, it helps you to be one with each other and the character. It also helps you not to feel alone, or be afraid of the crowd. You can experience it with other people and that builds a whole lot of trust, love and friendship” (Levi, 10)

The audience were stunned and some people were crying. Miss Roberts said she had a tear in her eye. We did that.” (Amie, 10)

Choral techniques also enabled them to overcome barriers, such as a lack of confidence or conflict in choice of roles. This was really satisfying for them, as in drama there was a workable solution to key social challenges, such as turn taking,



Photo 5.27: Devising a script together for “The Problem of Plastic”

who should take the lead and how to deal with being pushed aside. This opportunity for peaceful conflict resolution was a motivating factor in drama sessions.

“Drama makes me calm with my friends.” (Mila, 7)

“I think in drama we have to work with different people and it makes you explore new friends, people in your class that maybe you don’t talk to. It builds up your trust. Like at the start me and Mitch weren’t really the best of friends until we worked together in drama. Now we are literally like brothers”

“Yes, and you have had fall outs, but you have stuck together. Yes, like me and Amia have had fall outs, but this week we need to be friends to do the dance in drama, so we try.” (Levi and Katie, 10)

“We see the world from another view” The playful aspect of drama really appealed to the children. They described how the opportunity to imagine how it would be like for someone else was non-threatening, because in the world of make believe anything is possible and there are no right or wrong answers. The children often spoke about imagining how a character would feel and then responding as that character and finally seeing the consequences of that action. They could try out social stories and imagine the consequences, developing the ability to “look beyond”.

“It’s because working together builds trust and the power of imagination. With drama, you can do it alone and just feel how Hamlet, Ophelia, Polonius, Claudius are feeling. You know how they felt in the events. You feel it at the time of acting it out but then you remember. You get into that character’s position. And you can feel it as a group too” (Levi, 10)

“Drama helps us get on better with other people in the class. In drama, you work together and then you build up friendship and trust because there is no right answer. It’s like two people who never met before do drama. Then they meet each other as the characters and from then on they can be friends because now they know



Photo 5.28: “Planning it Out” Working to decide on who should take on which role.

something about each other” (Katie, 10)

“Drama is about collaboration- sharing roles and working with new people in the class. It is sorting out disagreements

about which parts to play, turn taking and speaking together. It helps people get on better in school- then maybe in the wider world.”

(James, 11)

5.4 Challenges and Hurdles

Drama is obviously less structured than some lessons. It is done in an open space, it can be noisy and children need some element of freedom from usual routines in order to be creative. There are inevitable challenges in managing this for any teacher.

There were occasions where the lesson was unsuccessful due to behaviour issues, the task demands, or a lack of additional support. The school cohort contains a number of very vulnerable children who come to school with high levels of emotional challenge. Social problems originate in the community and then get brought into school where they can fester and impact upon learning. Drama is built upon relationships and sometimes issues from outside the drama sessions were an overwhelming challenge which disrupted the session.

“At the start of drama sometimes it is hard, because things have already happened or been said over dinner. Sometimes drama helps to resolve things, but sometimes it gets worse.” (Angel, 11)



Photo 5.29: Getting on and sorting it out.

“I think drama can help because if you don’t usually get along with someone and then you are in a group with them, well you have to try get along. But sometimes it is impossible, you are just too far apart...this actually happened with me and C.” (Leanne, 11)

“At the end of the drama, when we was lining up C came from behind and linked arms with me and she asked if we could be like the people we was performing like who made up. Obviously, I said yes, because I did not want to be like the people in the drama who were negative. So yes, it sometimes helps. But sometimes people are just too angry” (Leanne, 11)

I do believe that the work done within this project has had an impact outside of the sessions, but there is no magic solution to issues around social cohesion and tolerance. There are still incidents of racism, bullying and exclusion. Drama is not a miracle cure, but it does open dialogue.

Researcher: Have things changed outside drama?

Jonah (11): “Not always, there are people who feel for it in drama, but then go and do the bad things to other people. They change for a bit then go back to their old ways”

Another challenge throughout the project was deciding when to intervene. As a teacher, there are moral obligations to uphold when countering attitudes which stereotype or glamorise violence. Children are often in the position of being pulled in different directions by home and school expectations and values. They are influenced by the local sub-culture. I wanted to respect the way that the children wanted the characters to behave, but felt an obligation to challenge certain ways of thinking. In these instances, I intervened with a challenge or a question, but sometimes felt that the issue had not been addressed. One example of this was related to gender stereotypes, relationships and expectations between boys and girls, particularly with the older pupils. For example, the scenes devised often suggested that for girls, physical appearance and “beauty” were priorities and events did not position girls as agents of change. Male characters in scenes often responded with physical violence and they were often viewed as the key protagonists. The issue of gender stereotypes

is an ongoing issue for the school and one that has been discussed with the leadership team, as I feel that stereotypes are often unwittingly reinforced through the language and behaviour of staff. I have found this to be especially frustrating in dialogue around “boy friendly” texts, which assume that boys need a certain type of reading material in order to engage them. This limits their reading experiences and reinforces gender stereotypes by communicating certain expectations of what should interest boys and girls.

A final challenge is that of behaviour. Unstructured sessions such as drama can be intimidating for teachers to manage. Children will push boundaries in challenging subjects and initially revelled in “violent” actions during the sessions- they were never too far away from devising a “fight scene”. I worked through this by establishing clear boundaries, by discussing authenticity and believability with the children and through my own interventions “in role”. With thought and preparation there are some practical solutions, but this is an area to which any practitioner should give careful thought to before embarking on a drama programme.

Drama is about creative problem solving; bringing the children on board to articulate and solve these practical problems is helpful. It is an ongoing, reflexive process and ground rules will have to be reviewed and revisited as issues arise. Creative work with younger children can be messy, noisy and unpredictable, but the challenges are not insurmountable.

5.5 Summary of Findings

The research findings were outlined under the headings of the twelve themes identified through analysis of the data (fig 4.14). The findings suggest that drama is an effective way of exploring values and identity as it provides a space to explore

challenging issues and gives all children a chance to express their views in a way that is non-competitive and supportive.

Drama supported children to engage with values, enabling them to see connections between characters and to work collaboratively to understand and interpret values in a range of contexts. Drama also supported critical thinking about values by developing the capacity to understand multiple perspectives in a given situation and by building empathy through imagination.

Insights from the children were discussed: themes that they chose to prioritise emphasized the importance of social relationships in school and the power of collaborative work around a shared goal to build a shared “story”. The evidence also suggests that children’s understanding of citizenship begins with concepts such as “family” and “friends” and these metaphors might be a more meaningful way of supporting children to feel connections with, and tolerance towards “others”.

5.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter began with some thoughts on the position of teacher/researcher and consideration was given to how far it is possible to interpret children’s voices in a way that represents their views as accurately and honestly as possible. The findings were outlined, with insights from the children, who were asked to reflect on the final themes and share their own priorities. The final section of the chapter considered some of the challenges and hurdles of using drama to explore values. The following section will contextualise the key findings within the current political climate and the relevant literature.

Chapter Six: Analysis and Discussion

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will now relate the key findings to theory, framing the discussion around the readings of critical pedagogy discussed earlier and with reference to research in drama and citizenship education. The contribution to knowledge will be discussed, considering how this work could inform future policy makers, researchers and practitioners in the field.

6.2 Discussion of Key Findings

Discussion will include personal reflections from my “insider knowledge” of the school, drawing upon the relationships that I have with the children and my knowledge of their individual circumstances. These insights might not be available to an outside researcher and therefore I feel they are worthy of inclusion.

6.2.1 How Far Does Drama Support Engagement with Citizenship and Values Education?

This research aimed to find out whether drama could support educators with the challenges of values and citizenship education. The children’s high level of engagement with the drama sessions was undeniable and this facilitated the introduction of these challenging and complex “values related” themes.

Drama “Pathways” to Understanding

Throughout the research it became clear that drama was an effective tool for exploring values and identity in the context of highly challenging and often contentious scenarios. The content material allowed the children to engage with alternative perspectives and different worlds. In “living through” these imaginary experiences, the children were able to empathise with the characters and their

predicaments, their values and motivations. The term “metaxis” (Bolton, 1985; see Chapter 3) describes the interplay between the real and fictitious, which can be held in the mind simultaneously. The experience of drama supported children to make personal meaning and sense of universal, abstract, social and moral concepts. As noted by Boler and Zembylas (2003), this exploration of difference creates opportunities for students to understand their own values and attachments, whilst placing these within larger social and political structures. In introducing the “dilemma”, the children were able to engage with the “discomforting emotions” (Zembylas, 2013) associated with issues such as bullying, bereavement, suicide and violence. This opened up discussion both in the flow of drama and in “the huddle”. In this way taken for granted and deeply embedded views were challenged.

The experience of participation in the drama sessions also supported the children’s ability to collaborate and communicate as a community. The opportunity to develop skills of empathy, tolerance, respect and conflict resolution within this micro-community enhanced the wider work on values and opened up dialogue. In giving the children the opportunity to explore and realise a range of values and identities through experimentation with alternative visions of humanity in the imaginary world, they were better able to achieve a deeper understanding of social encounters in the real world and “problematise” this in discussion. This form of drama education “difficultates” (Wooster, 2016. p14). It facilitates thought, presents dichotomy and encourages critical analysis of the status quo. This can be understood as “informed discontent” (Bloch, 1991) and resonates with forms of critical pedagogy which emphasize the value of discomfort. The introduction of the “dilemma” in the drama session was a practical way of introducing and practising “cultures of dissent”.

The affective element of drama stimulates the imagination of the participants. They bring their own experiences and meaning-making is demanded. Thus, they are

working in the “zone of proximal development” (Vygotsky, 1986). The drama did not lead to a sudden moment of epiphany or self-realisation, but the evidence demonstrated a developing reflexive attitude and an increasingly sophisticated dialogue about values. In the sessions we “stirred knowledge around together” for new insights and experiences. I believe that this dialogue and exploration was possibly more important than the values themselves. Some might view this approach as lying in opposition to the “British Values” requirements, where particular values are advanced as the “right” ones, but a critical pedagogical approach aims to teach children to *think* independently. Amsler (2011) warns that even democratically intended form of education, such as values education, can become authoritarian, even “tyrannical” in attempts to produce right-thinking “moral” students. By allowing the children to “weigh up” the significance of the values in the drama context, they were better able to make independent choices about their worth. As noted by Ellsworth (1989), this work did not lead to a utopian moment of “empowerment”, but the children were able to explore power relations and contextual influences, developing an awareness of their own ability to challenge the forces that impact upon them.

Building Shared Stories

Throughout this project, I have been struck by the importance that the children gave to process of collaboration within the drama. The act of participation in the drama projects, regardless of the content, was important in building shared memories referred back to again and again in discussions. This project has emphasized to me how crucially important it is to give children structured opportunities to practice collaboration and negotiation in school. I have been surprised by the overwhelming desire that children in this cohort have to feel emotionally connected by working “as one”.

I believe the importance that the children attributed to fostering harmonious relationships within the sessions was indicative of the social challenges they face in their personal lives. This is an important reminder to any practitioner working with children; the power of friendships and teacher/student relationships within the school setting is pivotal to the experience of education as a whole. It is a common thread through readings of critical pedagogy (for example, Albrecht-Crane, 2005; Darder, 2003; hooks, 1994). If we want to ensure that any intervention has impact, we must consider how friendship can be used positively to influence their motivation to engage. The relationship modelled by the teacher is also highly significant, as this can promote positive connections rather than relationships of conflict and opposition. This aspect of school is of high importance for children who may not have the opportunity to experience stable and consistently positive relationships in other aspects of their lives.

Critical pedagogy in neoliberal contexts requires new ways of being together. Transforming the teacher/student relationship is an important tenet of critical pedagogy, as summarised in Chapter 1. Albrecht-Crane (2005) noted that we can engage difference more positively by exploring the localised, contextual possibilities of working “between and through” the challenges of the situation, supporting students to meet passions “side by side” not “face to face”. This fluidity has great potential for manifesting powerful affective connections, described as a form of “friendship”. There are many identities in a classroom, clashes cannot be avoided. However, teachers can model more positive relationships; they have the power to legitimate or refuse what can be spoken and can work with students to create an environment respectful of difference. This is a way of addressing some of the issues around representation and “voice” outlined in Chapter 1.4.6 and 1.4.7.

Social Collaboration and Group Identity “Stories of Belonging”

Nussbaum posits that story-telling plays a central role in expanding our empathy and as such, is a necessary part of a just society (for example, Nussbaum, 1996; 1997). In relating social collaboration to identity, Amit (2002) emphasizes the emotional bonds that come with personal networks forged in present situations. These are possibly more powerful than bonds that are built on collective history, as there is an immediacy in the lived experience. Identity is a creative narrative, with interwoven threads. For the children, these moments of collaboration were memorable and frequently referenced with high levels of animation. Anecdotes from conversations with parents and teaching assistants suggests that children spoke of them long after the event. Comments collected from children after some larger projects, such as the performance of “Hamlet” and “Twelfth Night” at the Royal Exchange Theatre, or “Beowulf” in school, suggest that this collaboration was life changing because of the emotional bonds that were cemented through the projects.

Increasingly I feel that there are less opportunities for collaborative work because of the narrow curriculum and the pressures of testing. This is having an impact on the forging of positive group identities. The current plight of our children and their families means that the children need these collaborative opportunities more and more in schools. A feeling of shared identity and better community cohesion are best cemented through shared experiences.

As noted by Earl (2014), in understanding “education as resistance” outside of political movements and within the classroom, we must first question the purpose of education, dispelling the myth that education is about qualifications and employment. Education is emotional; the emotive nature of the student should come through and they should change in a way that is good for them and good for society. Any model of education that claims emancipation should be cooperative, collective and community minded, discouraging competition. Earl notes that a critical education prepares young

people to engage in social transformation, but also serves as an experience of the type of social relationships that are at the heart of a better society.

Empathy and Imagination

Drama supported children to consider the motivations that might be behind a character's actions. The vocabulary of values, identity and belonging were introduced in discussions about these motivations. The context is fiction, but the responses are real: "*imaginary gardens with real toads*" (Booth, 1985). Thus, there is an immediacy and relevance that is very powerful in building both imagination and a desire to understand the "other". Children began to articulate and understand the origins of values and identity. A sense of "global citizenship" is dependent on an ability to empathise with others in order to feel a sense of solidarity. This emphasis is central to Nussbaum's work on the importance of the emotions in moral philosophy (Nussbaum, 1997). Empathy is strongly linked to imagination and is reliant on a compassionate and curious understanding of others. Investing in a character or scenario meant that children were able to get below the surface and really understand the character in a way that acknowledged the conflict and complexity in our relationships with each other. This includes the social pressures that stem from the need to feel a sense of belonging and forces the "characters" engage with uncomfortable feelings such as fear, shame, loss, exclusion and isolation.

Zembylas and McGlynn (2014) note that some have questioned whether an examination of ethical issues and dilemmas with a view to producing feelings of "discomfort" have any place in the classroom. Indeed, this point could be especially pertinent when working with the younger children. Encountering injustice invokes emotion, but it is problematic to reduce this experience to teaching children to feel the "right" emotion. Social justice operates through emotional connections to certain values and beliefs and the drama space is a way of allowing younger children to

explore uncomfortable emotions in a less threatening way. Although the existence of a “safe” space can be questioned (see Chapter 1.4.7), Zembylas and Glynn argue that it is possible to open up a supportive learning space to push children outside of their comfort zones. This requires a high level of commitment, responsibility and compassion from teachers. Skilfully managed, the drama space, which sits outside of the normal classroom routine, can be a powerful forum to challenge students to practise active empathy.

Teaching Values

In this section, I feel that it is important to again reflect on the notion of “teaching” values and the importance of politics and pedagogy in educational practice. As discussed earlier in Chapter 2, a serious problem with the implementation of the FBV agenda was the lack of reference to any theory. There is no coherence between the desired goal and wider value structures in society. National values need to be “thick” to sustain the demands of citizenship, but also “thin” to satisfy the liberal demands of freedom of choice and diversity (Healy, 2018). The “British Values” politicise, positioning the state as the source and owner of control. The value systems of the most powerful group have been privileged. Teachers have then been put in the position of patrolling these values, with little guidance about what it actually means to “actively promote” them.

In undertaking such work with children, the motivation of the researcher or practitioner and what they hope to achieve must be considered. As noted by Britzman (1991), there can often be a very real and painful conflict between the personal ethos of teachers and the imperatives of the wider structures of the institution. The questions of whether values can be “taught” or whether teachers should be “instilling values” are at the heart of this research. My stated aim was to support the children to become “values literate”, to give them the opportunity to explore and think critically

about values, not to “teach” a set of prescribed values. However, schools may not feel confident to put forward an alternative values discourse in the light of Ofsted requirements; such an approach could put practitioners in conflict with the management system in certain contexts.

“*Time*” is also a crucial word here; so much of what is expected of teachers does not lend itself to “*taking time*”. In the present educational climate, there is often a “tick box” culture due to the pressure of targets and limited resources. Without sufficient time for reflection and discussion, attempts to engage children with values cannot succeed. This resonates with the work of Britzman (1991), Ellsworth (1992) and others who have narrated the “crisis” felt by teachers when the educational context imposes pressures that conflict with their desires for a “critical” education.

Choral Work: “The Ensemble.”

The children gave high importance to opportunities for small group choral collaboration: the “ensemble”. I have given much thought to this theme, but found few references in the literature. If given the choice, children would usually include some aspect of choral speaking or movement “as one” in their work. The evidence suggests that this was partly due to the confidence that resulted from utilising this peer support, but I observed a very clear joy and emotional connection when the children collaborated in this way. Upon reflection, I wonder if this is the same sort of joy that comes from singing or dancing together; collaboratively engaging in something creative is uplifting for the spirit.

This observation resonates with two themes which have been widely reported in the media in recent times: children’s increasingly social isolation as a result of social media and the potential of the arts in schools to address issues of mental health and well-being. The power of creative collaboration and engagement with the arts for the

promotion of emotional well-being is well documented across many disciplines and has been the subject of several collaborative research projects in recent years (for example: Ings, Crane and Cameron, 2012; Sellman, 2013; APPG Enquiry, 2017).

“Creativity is also well recognised for its potential to heal people, express hidden emotions, reduce stress, fear and anxiety, and promote a sense of autonomy...It can stimulate a young person’s ability to question and connect with the world around them, and nurture positive aspirations, confidence and the capacity for autonomous critical thought”. (Duncan, 2013, p.3).

Alongside this, it has been widely reported that our children are spending less time playing physically, creating imaginary games, and interacting with others (Campell, 2018; Rawlinson, 2014; Hinsliff, 2018). Schools are increasingly concerned about this social isolation and its impact on well-being. There is not capacity within this piece of work to fully explore research on the power of creative collaborations across the arts to develop children’s social skills, but there is consensus that such work improves behaviour and social bonds. It is likely that the ensemble work addressed a very real emotional need for the children in this project, which they might not be have been able to fully articulate or understand. However, they recognised this as something positive which made them feel happy.

“By communicating freely with the voice, face, and body, children learn to express ideas with confidence, empathise with others from different cultures and backgrounds, and feel at home in their own skin. Song, music and dance can help children become more imaginative, self-aware and collaborative global citizens”
(Marsh, 2015, p.1)

I would suggest that the power of the ensemble was so important for the children in this project as it helped them to bond. In creating a character as a group, there was

the opportunity for positive physical contact. I feel confident to conclude that this interaction was therapeutic for the children and was in some way fulfilling an unmet need.

As noted in Chapter 1.4.3, critics have problematised the use of the arts as a therapeutic intervention without addressing the root causes of the mental suffering. Some of the social and emotional needs of the children in this project stemmed from outside of school. However, it cannot be denied that many of the struggles faced by the children are a direct result of the educational system within which they are placed. This will be discussed further in section 6.3 and in the Concluding Reflection (Chapter 7).

Devising Scripts Collaboratively

Of all of the arts, drama is one of the least “individual”. According to Bolton, drama is not child centred self-expression: *“It is a form of group symbolism, seeking universal, not individual truths”* (1985, p.1). The purpose of this research was to investigate how meaning was created socially, and through the devising of group “scripts” the children developed their understanding of values and identity. They did this through the characters and the events, but also through the social process of collaboration in group work.

O’Neill (1995, p.29) discusses “ensemble texts”, a theatrical text that evolves from improvised activities. There are some similarities here to the “devising” that the children used in the drama sessions. O’ Neill describes a strong sense of ownership and “belonging” which arises from the imagination of the participants. With reference to “paratheatrical” experiments, the “ritual and communal sources of theatre experiences” are outlined. Such events reverberate with great power in the participants and are extremely memorable. When devising in groups, the sense of

ownership and the collaborative creation of the work brought the children together and cemented feelings of cohesion in the joint endeavour.

In their discussion of critical teaching methods, Kincheloe and Steinberg (1998) note that a student-centred pedagogy moves the focus from curriculum coverage and test scores to engaging collaboration, joy and curiosity. Children are enlisting as co-creators of the knowledge that will be included in school; teachers and students are producers of knowledge. Devising scripts together and collaborating on a piece of drama is a practical and powerful way of achieving this goal.

6.2.2 How Far Does Drama Support Critical Thinking About Values and Identity?

The evidence suggests that drama encourages diverse ways of thinking and promotes critical discussion. Becoming “values literate” gave children the opportunity to consider how we can be motivated by or manipulated through our values, some of which can be in conflict or given more or less weighting, depending on the situation.

The children agreed statements about individual and group values (see Table 5.2), which illustrated that having both shared and personal values did not create insurmountable conflict. This resonates strongly with the discourses of Appiah (2006), Schattle (2008) and Birk (2014), as described in Chapter 2; loyalties and belonging can exist on different levels and scales, allowing for diverse and simultaneous forms of belonging.

hooks (2010) states that transformative teaching and learning is encapsulated in a classroom where everyone is responsible for classroom dynamics, everyone influences and everyone contributes. Dialogue rests on mutual recognition, respect and love. Alexander (2018) notes that the task of the critical educator is to prepare

students with the skills and attitudes to defend a common life that allows differences to prosper. Pedagogy worthy of the designation “critical” must offer exposure to alternative perspectives, whereby students learn to examine their own perspectives, but also weigh these up according to alternatives. There must be a willingness to engage perspectives with which one might disagree; drama is an ideal forum for this work.

Social Identity

Identity can be an individualistic concept, but in this project, identity has been explored through social constructs and the drama sessions facilitated this. As stated in the previous section, I believe that for the children, the roots of identity emerge from positive interpersonal relationships. It should be acknowledged that there are theoretical tensions when attempting to separate individual and group identity. This has been summarised by Warin (2010), who notes the importance of maintaining the interwoven connection between the two, as “*the self is essentially a social concept*” (Warin, 2010, p.34). We can only construct the self when we are able to interpret our behaviour through and with others.

I prompted the children to work together to question the “reality” and modelled a questioning, reflective way of talking and thinking to establish a sharing of ideas that produced knowledge “socially”. I see success in this project as opening up awareness, promoting debate, deepening understanding and beginning a dialogue. This is how I would define being “values literate” within a critical pedagogical approach. This resonates with Alexander’s (2018) notion of “dialogue across difference”.

A “Rehearsal for Protest”

A strong theme within this project that resonates with a critical pedagogical approach was the way that drama served as a “rehearsal for protest”. Traditional readings of see the goal of critical pedagogy is emancipation from oppression through an awakening of the critical consciousness. It can be challenging to see the applicability of this in a primary school. However, taking the definition of critical pedagogy proposed by Katz (2004) “rooted in what students know based on their daily lives”, we can see that if students are supported to explore their own reality, build upon what they know and share experiences, they will begin to make links to their socio-political context.

In contexts that the children could engage with, I introduced and modelled “language of protest” (see Table 5.1) and the children played with this language in a safe space. They were able to rehearse ways of intervening in situations of injustice, developing the confidence to speak out, raise an objection and use the vocabulary of protest. It is not hard to see how projects on truth and lies, bullying, loneliness and betrayal can be extrapolated to resonate with much bigger global issues: our “imaginary gardens with real toads” (Booth, 1985). This has some links to Boal’s work on “Theatre of the Oppressed” (1979) and whilst not quite “*a rehearsal for revolution*”, it certainly demonstrated an engagement with ideals of fairness, justice and democracy.

This project did not seek to measure the children’s responses and behaviour outside the drama sessions. However, from a social justice perspective it can be seen that work has been done that might empower them in situations where they might feel that injustice is being done or where there is a need for the resolution of a conflict. The children in this cohort often struggle to resolve issues peacefully. Being able to achieve some level of success in resolving conflict was motivating for the children, as this is a real issue for them in their everyday lives.

The Balance of Power: The Role of the Teacher and Teacher in Role

Teacher “in role” and teacher as a “role model” were hugely influential in the project. I explicitly modelled critical thinking, using language such as *“I am confused; I have changed my mind; I need to find out more; I wonder why?”*. In modelling this language, it would have been clear to the children that I valued it and gave it worth. This influence is an inevitable result of working alongside the children and illustrates the complexity of the teacher/researcher role.

O’Neill (1995) describes “teacher in role” as a complex tactic used as a means of engaging children in active contemplation, linking the real and the imagined world. *“This act of conscious presentation casts the watchers in functional roles, invites them to respond actively, to join in, and if necessary, to oppose and transform what is happening”* (p.126). This practice inverts traditional teacher/student power assumptions. As O’Neill points out, the “rules of the game” in drama prevent teachers subverting the drama to their own ends: *“kings can be replaced, prison governors killed, captains thrown overboard and leaders disobeyed”* (1995, p.62). This way of working gave an important implicit message to the children about their own ability to make changes and take responsibility. It gave them courage. As noted by Albrecht-Crane (2005), encounters that shake up notions of teacher/student identity are crucial events of political intervention and they can illuminate the contextual possibilities of working between and through positions of identity.

Critical Awareness

Another important aspect of the project which links to a critical pedagogical approach is the development of critical awareness: Freire’s (1996) notion of “conscientisation”.

“Drama cannot teach anything, but if you deny them this confrontation you deny them all education. You may pack them with knowledge, but they will be dead as a book that is never read.” (Bond, 2012b)

The quote by Bond illustrates how the power of an event in drama can challenge children to think deeper, examining power, motivation and influence. Through the exploration of side events, prequels and sequels, children became more aware of the values that influenced them and how powerful forces in media and advertising play on these emotional connections. They showed an openness to more critical perspectives and a developing ability to recognise and speak out when someone was treated unfairly. They began to reflect upon the complexity of a character’s identity, situation, motivations and values, moving beyond the idea of “good” and “bad” characters.

Supporting the children to develop this critical awareness has an important social justice function as it gives them the opportunity to recognise and resist powerful influences that may not have their best interests at heart. I know from my interactions with the children that social media and advertising is hugely influential in a way that is often detrimental to their emotional and physical well-being. The children in this project are particularly vulnerable because of their social circumstances and the sense of isolation that their families often feel as they struggle emotionally and financially. It is well documented that austerity has hit the poorest people the hardest (Tucker, 2017; Portes, 2018). The contextual data shows that the community that the school serves is typical of those hardest hit by cuts to services, welfare and in particular, children’s services. The lack of security, even fear, caused by these falling standards of living and an increased sense of struggle can erode a community’s sense of belonging, giving rise to protectionism and distrust. In the worst case, it fuels prejudice and extremism. Developing a critical awareness of values, belonging and

identity is an important aspect of safeguarding, and a powerful way of promoting tolerance. It is not currently receiving enough attention in educational policy.

"Children need safeguarding, but one of the most important safeguards is the capacity to critically analyse messages... while a countries' security comes partially from counter terror activities, in the long term and educationally, it comes from citizens being able to exercise critical doubt about the communications they receive, and to argue for change through democratic non-violent means.... if there is such a thing as a British value, then the tradition of scepticism, satire, gentle mockery and self-deprecation is one to cherish. A healthy doubt about what both politicians and religious leaders tell us is the best safeguard against dogmatism and acceptance of authoritarianism....healthy doubt cannot start too young"

(Davies, 2014, BLOG)

Children and young people need to be able to evaluate messages and information and drama can facilitate this critical thinking.

6.2.3 Re-imagining the British Values Agenda: What should Citizenship Look Like?

This research aimed to find out whether drama might support the formation of an alternative response to questions of identity and belonging to that of the FBV agenda. The evidence in this project suggests that the imposition of a set of values is problematic; values are complex and challenging and identity is multi-layered and fluid. Children responded to the opportunity to explore values collaboratively and imaginatively, building on the relationships and friendships that were already part of their experience to make connections with “the other”. They also benefitted from a long-term project which took place over several months, with multiple opportunities for revisiting and further exploration. Values education needs a holistic and well-

resourced approach and this was not acknowledged in the introduction of the FBV agenda.

Teaching the FBV seems to have replaced citizenship education in primary schools. Educating children about values is a huge undertaking and the capacity of schools, already stretched in terms of resources, is a prohibiting factor. The impact of tokenistic and ill thought out lessons about a limited set of values which mainly emphasizes the police, the Royal Family and British landmarks is of little use to children in developing tolerance and respect for each other. However, many schools do not have the capacity for further work; time and budgets are increasingly limited and focus shifts to what is measured and monitored. If all that is required to evidence values education is a display about British institutions and a laminated poster of the British Values, then that is all that is likely to be done. There is a danger that teachers feel voiceless and lacking in agency. Teachers should feel empowered to engage in a form of citizenship education that is inclusive, underpinned by theory, promotes free speech and engages a critical dimension.

Thinking Globally

How can we develop such a citizenship curriculum? This is particularly challenging for younger children, who have limited life experience to draw upon. However, children are curious and have an immense capacity for imagination. This project shows that by giving children experiences within the drama sessions, they could develop empathy with characters and situations removed from their immediate experience. The children in this project cared about the environment, were curious about the natural world, were interested in other religions and understood the notions of “fairness” and “sharing”. “Global” citizenship education has been described as “*A way of living that recognises our world is an increasingly complex web of connections and interdependencies. One in which our choices and actions may have*

repercussions for people and communities locally, nationally or internationally.”

(Ideas Forum, 2019). I would suggest that a citizenship education curriculum underpinned by such justice concerns, rather than security policy, might be one that both educators and children could engage with more meaningfully.

This project showed that the children used an understanding of “belonging” on a very local scale (families and friends) as a way of understanding belonging on a much bigger “global” scale. The FBV agenda does not acknowledge the different layers and scales of belonging, choosing to focus on “Britishness” above all other forms of belonging. This notion of “Britishness” is of questionable relevance to children as it often centres on concepts that have little relevance to their immediate concerns.

“It is not that we don’t need a home, it is that we deserve, and have, better homes than the grotesque theatre of nation: our families, our friends, the community of those sharing our values around the world. We are many, and we have a wonderful place to care about, the Earth and a marvellous variegated tribe of brothers and sisters with whom to identify, and with whom to feel at home here” (Rovelli, 2018)

An alternative, yet complementary way of envisaging the interconnectedness of multiple identities, which resonates with the findings of this research, has been described by Dunn (2014) using the metaphor of “roots and wings”. Educating the “roots” fosters notions of belonging at the local level and “wings” are the way that children develop global awareness. Dunn uses this to critically investigate how the concepts of local, global, belonging and becoming are held in tension. For the children in this project, there was little evidence of “tension” in holding these multiple identities, although it was clear that the children’s primary connections were with immediate family and friends. However, this strong bond, love and affection was a

useful metaphor when exploring loyalties and obligations to the global community.

The children tended to use vocabulary centred around the notion of family and friendship when discussing global issues, for example using term such as “our global family”, “fairness” and “kindness”.

Pedagogies of “difference” have provided the conceptual groundwork for many theories within critical pedagogy (see Kincheloe and Steinberg 1989; Keith 2010).

Central to this work is the idea of listening to and learning from diverse discourses of people from around the planet. This can begin in the classroom, for the attitudes and dispositions that flourish in the classroom are the ones that will be reproduced in society tomorrow.

Shared Values

The British Values agenda assumes that by encouraging the people of Britain to adopt to a predetermined set of values prescribed by the government, a sense of community cohesion and belonging will be fostered. Many of the values that the children saw as important at the end of the project had strong links to the “British Values”, but the important difference was that there had been an opportunity for exploration of a wide range of values over an extended period of time. The children were very open to the idea of negotiating a set of shared values for the school, and again, these values were not in conflict with the British Values. However, the children strongly advocated individual choice, demonstrating a more sophisticated level of understanding and critical engagement. This has to be a more meaningful endeavour than prescribing a set of values which children do not understand from within their own life experiences. “Critical” values education implies a need for practical ways of learning, the use of both reason and emotional engagement to solve problems and the opportunity to reflect and share ideas.

This project demonstrated that if children are going to intellectually and emotionally engage with a set of “group” values they need to be involved in experiencing, defining and articulating them. They need to understand why a set of shared values will benefit them as a community and that a shared identity does not prohibit other expressions of identity, which may uphold a different set of values. After completing this research, I believe that a greater task in citizenship education, and a more valuable one, would be raising the children’s awareness of the *influences* on their values and identity. Supporting children to recognise the motivations of those seeking to influence them would serve them better. It would help to protect them from the influences of the media and advertising, but also from those who seek to promote extremist views and religious hatred. I would describe this as an “empowering” education.

6.3 What Does Critical Pedagogy Look Like in the Classroom? Theory into Practice.

As previously noted, critical pedagogy has developed along a highly abstract utopian line and we must examine how it can be applied to the daily workings of the education its supporters advocate. Ellsworth (1989) states that we need to work through and out of the literature’s highly abstract language and “myths” of what should, or should not be happening in the classroom. I have examined how it is possible to make claims of empowerment, voice, dialogue and critical reflection within the constraints of the current education system. Just because these concepts are challenging and contested, we should not become despairing and cease striving. This study has attempted to narrate context specific classroom practices that can support an education that is more socially just.

Earl (2014) posed the question of what education as resistance looks like outside the context of political movements and within the classroom. She notes that any model of

education that claims emancipation must be cooperative, collective and must discourage aggressive competition. She also suggests a repositioning to a problem posing model, allowing for the centralising of young people's views. Education should encourage and facilitate the making of critical decisions and moral judgements. I believe that through the use of drama in this project, I have made progress in fulfilling those aims.

I believe that a critical education should push students outside of comfort zones within a safe space. This requires educators to consider a number of ethical responsibilities and takes a high level of professional integrity. How teachers and students speak, how they listen, when and how they confront each other matters a great deal. Empowerment can be understood as *"legitimizing the unique contribution to the global community in the present moment"* (Kincheloe and Steinberg, 1989, p.262). In the current educational and political climate, I believe that classroom practice that seems the most capable of accomplishing social justice is one that facilitates a kind of communication "across" difference.

Educators must seek "renegade knowledge" (Britzman p.43), contradictory discourses which form points of departure. These moments are opened during times of spontaneity, improvisation, interpretive risks, crises and when one reflects upon taken for granted ways of knowing. Teachers positioned as researchers can be authors of these lived experiences. Skills practiced during research, such as analytic thought, taking on perspectives of others, reflexivity and raising questions can help teachers to design their own pedagogy.

"And in this struggle, this pedagogy will be made and remade" (Freire, 1987, p.33)

The practical application of critical pedagogy is not an argument about the romanticized perfect classroom where wonderful things happen, it is about the complicated and compromised spaces of classrooms. It is about finding ways to implement your vision within a school system whose rules, regulations, systems and philosophies are often in conflict with your own intuitions and beliefs. I offer this study as one example of this undertaking.

6.4 Contribution to Knowledge

This thesis contributes to research on values education and global citizenship education. It identifies key points about values education that could make such work more socially just, relevant and inclusive than the current Fundamental British Values requirements. This work also contributes to research into how drama can support the everyday practice of critical pedagogy, bringing critical theories alive in classroom practice.

It is hoped that this research will lead to an improved understanding of how values could be articulated in statutory, pastoral and curricular frameworks in primary schools.

There are three main implications for educational practice that have emerged from this project. Firstly, there is a pressing need for a more balanced curriculum, with a more holistic approach to education and measures of success. There should be an emphasis on collaboration and cooperation, not competition and individualism. This research supports the concerns expressed by many academics, educators and parents about the content and focus of the curriculum itself and measurements of “success” in primary education in England.

Secondly, I believe that this project shows that drama is a very powerful practical tool to develop children's critical understanding of values and identity. If properly resourced and funded, drama could address the issue of "how" such challenging work could be done. The majority of resources produced for schools to fulfil the FBV agenda lack any critical dimension and are often simplistic and reductive. This study shows that drama holds real potential for a practical, engaging and accessible way of developing citizenship within a critical pedagogical framework in schools. *"In future years, drama may become one of the most important means of dealing with the pressing concerns of society"* (Bolton, 1985, p.156). It should certainly be explored further when considering how citizenship and values education could be enacted in primary schools.

Finally, I believe that this research shows that values and identity cannot be imposed, but must be built through shared stories and fostering an appreciation of difference. There is a need to engage with new narratives of belonging that have relevance to the young people of today. The notion of community identity is an idealised symbolic construction, often used in a sentimental way by politicians to paint a picture of cohesion, shared interests and local loyalties. The evidence in this project contributes to a redefinition of identity and community, one that is not defined by territorial boundaries such as the nation. The strongest sense of belonging might come from the social groupings and memorable events that younger children experience in school, rather than predetermined social categories such as race, gender or religion. Common avenues for forming a sense of belonging are realised through modest daily practices with friends, neighbours and workmates. They are limited in time and space to particular situations and activities, because people make connections with others who have experiences and interests common at that moment in time. This project demonstrates that identity is created and performed in dialogue with others and this

should be recognised in the way that schools teach values and citizenship and in the way that the wider curriculum is structured.

6.4 Limitations of the Research

This study was conducted within one primary school and whilst participation levels were high within this cohort, the findings represent work done in this particular setting by one teacher/researcher. There were a particular set of circumstances that made this project successful. Firstly, the support of the headteacher allowed resources and curriculum time to be committed to the drama project. It is unusual for primary schools to have a timetabled weekly drama or citizenship session as they are not specified core or foundation subjects in the National Curriculum. Such work would usually be done where appropriate within PHSE, RE, English or through other foundation subjects. The work was given high status and was reflected in the ethos of the school.

Secondly, the school placed a high value on pastoral support and emotional well-being. There are high levels of special educational need and considerable disadvantage in the community which means that there is a nurturing ethos. I do not believe that such a project could succeed in a school which does not give such high value to fostering a creative, supportive environment.

As a teacher/researcher, I was fortunate to have had the privilege of working with inspiring specialist drama practitioners from North West Drama over several years. This was a considerable advantage and enabled me to creatively plan and teach the drama sessions, drawing upon everything I had learned from this team. However, I believe that the tools of drama can be used by any teacher who is prepared to undertake some professional development and can be open to the possibilities that drama can offer. The evidence in this project gives me the confidence to firmly

advocate that teachers are given this support, so that there is good quality drama practice in all primary schools.

I believe that I have provided sufficient rich contextual detail so that other researchers can judge the relevance of this study to their own concerns and situations.

6.6 Directions for Future Research

There is a need for further research on creative strategies to support schools in the implementation of a more “critical” form of values education if it is to make a real and positive difference to social cohesion and tolerance in our communities. The promotion of social justice through the development of critical thinking and dialogue can be achieved through drama, but there are other creative avenues such as art and film. In seeking to develop a values-based approach to education, it is likely that schools could draw upon a variety of strategies that engage children emotionally and kinaesthetically. Further research on values education through the arts is therefore needed.

This project has demonstrated the value of practitioner research in schools. Traditionally, teachers are seen as consumers rather than producers of research. In this traditional model of the researcher-practitioner relationship, those who produce research and those who use it are two different categories of people, doing very different jobs. There is an urgent need for more participatory teacher-led research in schools to improve citizenship education. Flutter (2007, p.4) notes that the key to improving teaching and learning lies with those closest involved: the teachers and pupils. Collaborative projects involving young people and their teachers have the potential for obtaining an “on the ground” perspective. There is a pressing need to reconnect with young people when making policy, particularly in matters around identity, belonging and citizenship. In this project, there were many findings that were

not anticipated and would have remained hidden without the involvement of the children. There needs to be incentives and resources to encourage teachers to engage in such professional research with their pupils.

Currently, there is much debate about how curriculum balance, curriculum content and assessment systems impact upon the well-being and inclusion of children in school. There is clearly a need for research which looks more holistically at the curriculum that is currently imposed upon schools, the way that success is measured and the impact that the current education system has on wider society. More specifically, it would be interesting to further research the value of collaborative work in “process” drama with younger pupils. After completing this work, of particular interest for me would be a focus on “ensemble” techniques and the power of exploratory work in “lived through” drama experiences. Ultimately, it is necessary that research should reveal more conclusively the extent to which drama can have a positive impact on current teaching and learning practices and the benefits that accrue to children, the community and wider society.

6.7 Summary of Chapter

This chapter relates the evidence from the previous chapter to wider research on drama and citizenship education making links with the theoretical framework of critical pedagogy. Discussion addressed each of the research questions and revisited the practical application of critical pedagogy in the classroom. There was a statement of the contribution to knowledge and implications for educational practice were outlined. The limitations of the study were made explicit. Future work was suggested, relating this study to the need for more teacher-led research to inform pedagogy and wider government policy.

Chapter Seven: Concluding Reflection

In the last months, the nature and purpose of education has once again come under examination. The current hegemony of utilitarianism, a seemingly universal acceptance that education is about preparing children for the global marketplace, is now being questioned. This is not least because of the social and political climate within which young people are growing up. The gap between what children need and what governments expect from them is ever widening, with a negative impact on the mental health of both teachers and pupils which is now finally being acknowledged. In May 2019, the new inspection framework for English schools was released (Ofsted, 2019). This new framework still requires schools to teach the British Values, but also contains some notable additions, which have implications for citizenship education and wider social, moral, spiritual and cultural provision (SMSC) in schools. There is a new emphasis on a “broad” curriculum which extends beyond the classroom and focuses on the development of wider interests and cultural capital. More significantly there is now a specific reference to “character education”. Under “personal development” the framework states that the inspectors will look at the provider’s “*wider work supporting learners to develop their character – including their resilience, confidence and independence – and help them know how to keep physically and mentally healthy*” (Ofsted, 2019, p.12).

This has already begun to have an impact on schools: commercial resources, training packages and support from outside providers are increasingly visible. Some of these, such as “Commando Joes” (<https://commandojoes.co.uk>) have a distinctly militaristic underpinning, with the organisation employing ex-military personnel and using DfE funding to become a highly popular resource in the primary sector. The notion of “virtues” seems to be replacing “values”, with an expectation that schools take action

to develop a range of virtues in their pupils in order to foster “character”. It is too early to predict where these developments will take schools or whether this new emphasis will prove positive. However, the current education secretary, Damian Hinds, has created an advisory panel made up of teachers, charity heads, academics, union leaders and notably, young people (Snowdon, 2019). Pupil’s mental well-being and their entitlement to a rich and creative education may once again be on the agenda.

Wooster (2016, p.8) notes that *“the world has never needed a creative and authentic teaching approach more than it does today”*. In seeking to foster such creative and innovative pedagogies in the quest for a more socially just education system, strengthening the research role of practitioners is key. The decisions that teachers make about how and what to teach have profound consequences for the lives of their children. As this new Ofsted framework is implemented, educators and pupils must make their voices are heard if there is to be a positive impact.

To conclude, I would question whether the notion of “British Values” is useful or relevant in current political times. In an attempt to promote cohesion, does the agenda merely serve to create isolation and division? Nationalist policies are spreading across the world and there is increasing hostility, tension and conflict in our communities. Each individual school is best positioned to choose the stories that will engage that community and each school should be allowed to develop the values that will resonate within it.

7.2 Coda

I began this project five years ago, at a time in my teaching career where I was questioning whether I could even remain in the profession. I needed to take time out, to reflect on what had happened. I felt broken. I wondered if I could reconcile my love of teaching with the need to work within a system where my own beliefs were in conflict with the prevailing discourses. This PhD is in some ways a narration of how I have come to terms with these events, *“the making of emotional significance from the ruins of experience”* (Britzman, 2003, p.19). I hope that I have written something interesting, creative and emotionally alive, which will give hope to countless others in the profession who are wrestling with similar feelings of despair.

I stepped back from the system, working part time in a temporary position and immersing myself in the drama project described in this work. I knew this time was finite, but it was a joyful experience to enter the classroom each day to know that what I was doing was morally good, was something the children needed and would help them to flourish. hooks (2003), when describing leaving a toxic teaching position, narrates the pain of leaving, but also the value of this dislocation and disillusionment, moving *“beyond illusion, to see reality in the round”* (p.21).

I have still not answered the question of where I need to be. For now, I am back in the classroom, in Year Six, in an area of Greater Manchester truly on the margins. I am once again facing the all-encompassing Standard Assessment Tests alongside a group of children whose life worlds are utterly chaotic. Six months ago, when I accepted this position, the undercurrent of violence present in the school shocked me; the levels of racism, the lack of any cohesion within the classroom the complete disregard for education was breath-taking. This class had three different teachers in the previous year all of whom left, and one of whom told the children that they were “unteachable”.

An anecdote from bell hooks sums up my feelings in September: *“entering the classroom, I began to feel as though I was entering a prison, a closed down space, where no matter how hard I tried, I could not create a positive context for learning”* (2003, p.12). I wondered what application the work of the preceding four years could possibly have in this context. Most of my energy was spent breaking up fights or trying to persuade children not throw objects, tear up their books or to simply walk out of the classroom.

What I have learned is that the relationships within the classroom matter more than anything; these forged relationships lie the heart of a socially just education. In getting to know the children, their lives, their hopes, their unique ways of being, I realised there was hope. Hope comes from love. I was asked many times “Are you going to stay Miss?”. These children had been rejected so many times, they had lost hope, so I could not.

Over the last six months, I have tried many approaches and strategies. The system does not help these children, but the management is compassionate and supports why I am trying to do. This journey has many challenges; every day I ask myself whether I honestly believe that I am doing some good, whether I am making a difference to these children and the future they will inhabit. As teachers, we must give honest and thorough accounts of the constructive (and not so constructive) interventions that have accrued as a consequence of our efforts to create justice in education. Openly and honestly talking about the way we work for change illuminates the space of the possible and sharing these stories is an antidote to despair.

“Despair is the greatest threat. When despair prevails, we cannot create the life sustaining communities of resistance. Without a vision for tomorrow, hope is impossible” (hooks, 2003, p.12).

Recent social decline is said to be the loss of the human capacity or the will to desire hope itself, either because individuals have lost the ability or desire to imagine alternative ways of being or because they are deprived of the structural possibilities of agency that might have otherwise made this hope possible. Many critical educators are now asking what relevance this approach to pedagogy might have in situations where the desire for individual transcendence and social change appears to be absent, devalued or denied. Critical pedagogy in neoliberal societies is not just about raising consciousness about the possibility for personal and social change, it must take up the task of educating people to believe that an interest in these possibilities is worthwhile. In the words of bell hooks, teachers must be “keepers of hope”.

I hope that this PhD does justice to the emotional experience of teaching itself. Teaching opens the heart; it sometimes breaks the heart. As noted by Palmer (2017), the courage to teach is the courage to keep one’s heart open in those very moments when the heart is asked to hold more than it is able.

“As good teachers weave the fabric that joins them with students and subjects, the heart is the loom on which the threads are tied: the tension is held, the shuttle flies, and the fabric is stretched tight. Small wonder, then, that teaching tugs at the heart, opens the heart, even breaks the heart—and the more one loves teaching, the more heart-breaking it can be.” (Palmer, 2017, p.11).

The term ended for my current class with a Poetry Slam. Groups of children collaborated in a project to write and rehearse performances of poems about issues that they really cared about. Within the repertoire were poems about knife crime, racism, homophobia, global warming, hunger, forest fires, endangered species, “designer” labels, consumerism and homelessness. They wove short pieces of drama

through the performance to illustrate, through their eyes, the sort of world they wanted to live in. Their final performance had quite an impact. The biggest surprise to most of the adults present was the way that the children conducted themselves; their pride, their dignity, the collaboration and the support they gave each other to perform their work. When education is meaningful, when children can engage collaboratively in a project that builds on their experiences and their passions, when they can stand with pride and share something that they have created, then that is an education that builds hope. The last words then go to the children, for they are the source of my hope.

Hope

Written and performed by Amy and Autumn in the Y6 Poetry Slam (February 2020)

*Hope is **fearless***

*An **axe** that breaks down doors*

*To hope can be **dang-er-oussss***

*It's the **opposite** of fear*

*Make sure you don't get **too** hopeful*

It may not come true

You may be disappointed

*But **maybe** not...*

Hope is possibility

Hope is standing proud

Hope is dreaming and believing

That something good will happen

In bad times

Hope is taking a risk

***Wish**..... your wishes*

***Dream**..... your dreams*

Do... not... be... afraid

*Of **hope**.*

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Consent Forms 1a Letter to Parents (school)

Educational
Research

Lancaster
University 

11.1.18

Dear Parents and Carers,

As some of you will already be aware, we have an exciting new part to our curriculum this year entitled "Global Citizenship". You may have noticed from our letterheads that we are now part of the "Global Learning Programme". This is a national network of like-minded schools who are working to improve global awareness and children's understanding of sustainable development.

We are now teaching some aspects of our RE and Personal Health and Social Education (PHSE) through Global Citizenship. Central to these sessions will be drama, pupil talk and critical thinking. The theme of "values" brings it all together and links what the pupils are doing in class to assemblies and key social, religious and cultural events throughout the year. We are interested in social values; the children will be asked questions such as "what is important to you?". We will explore values such as friendship or peace. Mrs Binns will be leading these sessions throughout the school.

Some of this work forms part of Mrs Binns' PhD research with Lancaster University's Department of Educational Research. A key part of this will be the involvement of the pupils in an exploration of values and identity. The aim is to deepen their understanding of the values which they feel to be important. Pupils will be involved in collecting data, taking photographs of the drama sessions and contributing art and writing to the class drama journal. They will lead assemblies and their views and ideas will be central to the success of the project. **You have the right to withdraw consent for your child to participate in the data collection using the attached slip.** although we do hope that if you have any questions or concerns that you will speak to either myself or Mrs Binns first.

Involvement in the project does not affect the pupil's assessments or grades in any way, as it is a totally separate piece of work. However, we hope that there will be many aspects of the project that can be shared and celebrated in school and with parents/carers.

We will keep you updated throughout the year in newsletters and through assembly presentations. At key points there will be interviews with pupils about the project and their developing understanding of global issues, values and identity. Permission will be sought from parents at this point for the children to be involved.

We hope that you will agree that this is a relevant and important part of the curriculum, ensuring that Mersey Drive pupils grow up to become informed, compassionate and engaged global citizens.

If you have any further questions or comments please contact Mrs Binns at school, who would be delighted to tell you more about the project. Alternately you can make contact via email d.binns@lancaster.ac.uk

Further information can be requested and any complaints or concerns can also be discussed directly with the University. The contact details are as follows:

| | |
|--|---|
| Dr Jo Warin Research) j.warin@lancaster.ac.uk Lancaster University Bailrigg Lancaster United Kingdom LA1 4YW | Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Educational +44 1524 594266 |
|--|---|

Thankyou for your ongoing support with your child's education.
Mrs A Ridley
Headteacher.

Request for withdrawal from research project

Name of child _____ Class _____

- I **do not** wish my child to participate in the project or for their views/comments to be included in the data.
 I would like to discuss the project further with school.

Signed

Date

1b Letter to Parents (focus groups)

Educational
Research

Lancaster
University



Dear Parents and
Carers,

As some of you will already be aware, we have an exciting new part to our curriculum this year entitled "Global Citizenship".

We are now teaching some aspects of our RE and Personal Health and Social Education (PHSE) through Global Citizenship. Central to these sessions will be drama, pupil talk and critical thinking. The theme of "values" brings it all together and I have been leading these sessions throughout the school.

Some of this work forms part my PhD research with Lancaster University's Department of Educational Research. A key part of this has been the involvement of the pupils in an exploration of values and identity. At this point in the project I would like to interview groups of the children about their experiences in the drama sessions and their understanding of the values that we have been discussing.

_____ has volunteered to be part of the focus group interview for his/her year group.

The interview data will be used as part of my final thesis, although it will be anonymised so that the children will not be identifiable. The purpose of the research is to further understand how children develop their own identity and values through citizenship education and how drama can assist in the development of this understanding.

If you are happy for your child to take part in the focus group interviews, please sign the permission slip below. I would be more than happy to discuss this further in person if you would like more information. If you have any further questions or comments please contact me at school. Alternately you can make contact via email d.binns@lancaster.ac.uk

Further information can be requested and any complaints or concerns can also be discussed directly with the University. The contact details are as follows:

Dr Jo Warin
j.warin@lancaster.ac.uk
Lancaster University
Bailrigg
Lancaster

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Educational
Research)
+44 1524 594266

United Kingdom
LA1 4YW

Thank you for your support,
Mrs D Binns

Appendix 2: Focus Group Schedules

Example Focus Group Schedule (i) (start of project)

Qu 1) What does the word “value” mean to you?

- Are any values important?
- Are some more important than others?
- Where do values come from?
- How do values affect our choices and behaviour?

Qu 2) What does the word drama mean to you?

- What sorts of things might we do in drama?
- How can drama help children with their learning and understanding?
- What skills are important in drama?
- How do you feel about drama?

Qu 3) What does the word identity mean to you?

- How do you think about yourself? How would you describe yourself?
- What characteristics do we share as a group?
- What groups do you belong to?
- What is important to those groups?

Qu 4) What is a global citizen?

- What do we learn or think about in Global Citizenship?
- Where does drama fit in to Global Citizenship?
- What makes a good citizen?
- Why might learning about citizenship be important?

Qu 5) Now you have heard about the drama project, is there anything you would like to ask?

- What would you like to find out in this project?
- Is there anything important that you think I need to know about values?
- Is there anything that I need to think about when planning the drama sessions?
- Would you like to add anything important about your thoughts or feelings at the start of the project?

Example Focus Group Schedule (ii) (mid-point of project)

Qu 1a) Can you explain what is happening in these photographs?

- How are the characters feeling?
- What are they saying?
- Why are they doing this?
- What message does this photograph give?
- What have you learned that was new in our drama project?
- Have you changed your mind about anything?
- Do you think that some of the events in the story happen in real life? Can you give any examples?

Qu 1b) Can you tell me about this piece of writing/art/poster etc

- What does it mean to you?
- How did you create it?
- Does it have a message?
- What did you talk about before or when you were making it?

Qu 2) What do you understand by the word "value"

- What values are important to you?
- Are there any values that you think are important to everyone?
- Do people share values or is everyone different?
- Do your values change how you act or think?
- Have any of your values changed recently? Can you explain?
- What might influence your values?
- What values have been important in drama this term?

Qu 3) What does drama mean to you?

- What do children think about drama at Irwell Bank?
- Do children enjoy drama? Can you talk about how children feel about it?
- How can drama help children? Can drama help you with your everyday life? How?
- Can drama be challenging? Does it sometimes go wrong? Can you talk about a time when you have found the session difficult?

Qu 4) What do you think it means to be a "global citizen"

- What do you think makes a "good" global citizen?
- What does it mean to "think globally"
- How does drama help children in Global Citizenship?
- Is it good to be the same as other people, or different, or both? Can you explain or give some examples?
- How do you belong? What groups do you feel that you are part of?

Qu 5) What do you think that schools should do to make people feel that they are included and belong?

- What does your school do?
- Does it work?
- What are the difficulties?
- Is there anything more that teachers could do?
- Is there anything more pupils could do?

Qu 6) Could you tell me about a drama session or project that is memorable?

- Why was it memorable?
- What did you learn?
- How did it change you?
- How do you think it changed other people?

Qu 7) Is there anything else you would like to talk about or say?

** on most occasions the prompts were not needed, as the children had a lot to say about each of the main questions*

Example Focus Group Schedule (iii) (end of project)

Qu 1) How has your understanding of values changed since January?

- Should we have shared values?
- Is it ok if we have different values?
- Are there any values that you think are the most important?
- Can you talk about a time in drama when you explored or thought about a value?

Qu 2) What might influence our values?

- How do our values form or change?
- Who or what might affect our values?
- How do you think you have affected the values of those around you in school?

Qu 3) How might drama help children?

- How can drama help children think about Big Issues?
- Can you talk about some Big Issues from the drama sessions?
- How has drama changed or helped you?
- What have you not enjoyed or found very difficult?

Qu 4) In January, children were not sure about the word “identity”. What does this word mean to you now?

- What makes up your identity?
- How do we belong?
- Why do we need to belong?
- Can we belong in different ways?
- How can we make people feel like they belong?

Qu 5) What do you think about the themes on the list? (referred to themes generated from the data in child-friendly language)

- Is there any you disagree with?
- Is there anything important missing?
- Which is the most important to you and why?
- Can we agree a summary for each of the groups that represents children’s views?