

EDD

An exploration of how creative arts lecturers in higher education talk about reflecting on their teaching

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An exploration of how creative arts lecturers in higher education talk about reflecting on their  
teaching

by

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A thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of EdD

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## Abstract

There is considerable literature on the concept of reflective teaching and the importance of reflective practice for developing as a teacher in higher education. However, few studies have explored the content and premise for reflection - how and what lecturers reflect upon in relation to their local contexts for teaching. Without an appreciation of these stimuli, academic development initiatives to encourage teacher reflectivity may lack authenticity in the setting of everyday teacher reflection. This thesis takes a unique stance to this gap in knowledge, by exploring how creative arts lecturers talk about reflecting on their teaching through their own words, phrases, metaphors, events, experiences, and incidents. The focus on creative arts provides an opportunity to gain a critical understanding of some of the forms, interpretations and underpinning values of teacher reflectivity that are more attuned to creative arts educational practices.

The research inquiry uses a qualitative-interpretive methodology to explore the reflective teaching talk of ten lecturers working in two specialist creative arts universities in the south of England. To align with the intention of the research to gather more contextualised responses to reflection, a social-constructivist theoretical framework has been developed. This framework is based on existing literature, which takes into consideration the socio-cultural (teaching and learning norms and practices, cultures, and conventions) and structural conditions (institutional policy and practice, external regulations, and environment) mediating the talk.

The research findings highlight that pedagogic theories and concepts used in reflective teaching can be alienating for dual professionals in higher education, where reflection and practice may be understood through a disciplinary or practitioner-based lens and where lecturers may be seeking more meaningful pedagogic expressions that relate to their values and beliefs in creative education. The research encourages a foregrounding of disciplinary discourse (and associated practices), as a means of more authentically engaging academics in conversations about teaching that are embedded in the context of real-world relationships, opportunities, and constraints. By highlighting the socio-cultural contexts and structural conditions of the reflective teaching talk, the research presents new forms of practice-based academic development for developers working in higher education settings.

*Keywords: reflective teaching, creative education, dual professionalism, reflective dialogue, practice-based academic development, social constructivism.*

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

The aim of the research is to explore how creative arts lecturers working in higher education talk about reflecting on their teaching. The focus on creative arts provides an opportunity to examine the socially situated reflective discourses of lecturers teaching art, design, creative and performance-based subjects, where educating students to become reflective practitioners is considered essential to their development (James, 2009; Orr *et al.*, 2010). The study is important because it offers fruitful insights into the socio-cultural and structural contextual influences on teacher reflectivity, which are 'mediated, influenced and shaped by individual understandings and values as well as external constraints and expectations' (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014:19).

This chapter introduces the topic and provides a reflexive account of my own experience and existing professional knowledge about the reflective teaching development of creative arts lecturers that has led to the research questions posed in this study. I outline my role and interest in the research, which is drawn from 21 years of working in creative arts higher education settings, firstly as a library manager and then as a head of learning and teaching leading a distributed academic development unit (ADU). The chapter includes a brief outline of discursive repertoires for explicating teaching and learning and the 'wicked problem' (Rittel and Webber, 1973) of reflective teaching in the creative arts, followed by the research aim and questions, methodology and original contribution to knowledge. The chapter concludes with an overview of how the thesis is structured and what is covered in each section.

### 1.2 Role and interest in the research

As a head of learning and teaching, leading an academic development unit (ADU) in a creative arts university, I am engaged in a wide variety of educational change tactics to improve pedagogic practices for the benefit of the academic community. Such tactics have ranged from developing individual teachers' practice (for example, introducing a continuing professional development framework for learning and teaching in the creative arts), through to developing the institution (for example, writing teaching and learning policy and practice). While these structural change initiatives all share a common purpose which is to stimulate reflection on teaching, I am also mindful of my institutional image as a head of professional education in teaching and learning. I might idealistically assume my change initiatives are fostering cultures of teacher reflectivity which 'look back to go forward' (James and

Brookfield, 2014:27), but there is also a realisation that my intentions may be coloured by my organisational positioning. This situation is exacerbated by the complex relationship between creative arts practice and reflection on that practice (Orr *et al.*, 2010) which I cannot fully appreciate because I do not have propositional knowledge of these disciplines. Therefore, as an educational researcher, undertaking this research inquiry provides an opportunity to expand my knowledge of teacher reflectivity in the creative arts and to be reflexive about my own practice in academic development.

### *1.2.1 Critical incidents in fostering teacher reflectivity*

The focus of this thesis arose from two key critical incidents in fostering reflective teaching in a creative art, higher education context. These incidents have prompted me to think differently about the interplay between generic and discipline-specific pedagogic discourse and to explore what I see as a 'wicked problem' (Rittel and Webber, 1973) in reflective teaching development. I define this problem as a disconnect between theory and practice: the theoretical discourse of reflective practice espoused on teacher development programmes and the practice-based, reflective teaching discourse embodied by higher education lecturers. Because teacher development often requires time away from collegial contexts, its discourse might be viewed as independent of the practices and contexts in which lecturers engage. Conversely, situated discourse which takes place in the contexts in which practitioners teach, may be more dependent on the epistemological positioning of the practitioner.

#### Incident 1

The first incident took place during a reflective teaching discussion about Schon's (1983) construct of reflection and action in teaching. An acting and performance lecturer began relating Schon's ideas to a concept in drama education referred to as "autopoietic feedback loop". While it is not unusual for a lecturer to interact with reflective schema introduced in academic development, I was struck by the preference to view educational concepts through the lens of their own discipline. I found it intriguing that by talking through their own preferred terms for reflection this encouraged the lecturer to see elements of their own practice in common with Schon's (1983) view of reflective practice.

#### Incident 2

The second incident was one in which a creative arts lecturer contested the use of the term 'practice' in reflective practice, asking to what practice I was referring. This

incident highlighted to me the extent to which educational ideas used in academic development can feel alienating and invite difference. I remember empathising with the lecturer, as I recalled my own professional transition from librarian to educational developer. I was in a constant state of reflective doubt and hesitancy, as I absorbed added terms and references in the field of academic development. These early experiences even inspired me to author an article for the *Art Libraries Journal*, in which I reflected on acculturation from one professional field to another (Appendix J: Research articles and work in progress presentations).

In response to these two teaching incidents, I have developed an interest in socio-cultural forms of teacher reflection (Boud and Brew, 2013; Loads and Campbell, 2015; Pilkington, 2016; Roxa and Martensson, 2009; 2012) which encourage university teachers to continually construct and develop an understanding about teaching and learning in conversation with 'significant others' (Roxa and Martensson, 2009; 555). Such forms of teacher reflection acknowledge that lecturers address teaching challenges collectively through shared sense-making (Boud and Brew, 2013; Brookfield and Preskill, 1999; Roxa and Martensson, 2009, 2012). The interest in this type of academic development has been informed by my immediate challenges as a head of learning and teaching, co-ordinating a distributed model of educational development (Gosling, 2001) with limited staffing resource. By exploring alternative models for developing academics' teaching, this potentially invites a more authentic engagement with academic development to fuse reflective pedagogy with local practice.

### *1.2.2 Locating socio-cultural forms of teacher reflection*

The quest to locate more socio-cultural forms of teacher reflection which connect and ground reflective pedagogy in the practice of local events and activities, has been a regular theme throughout my doctoral study. In my first year, I examined the use of 'peer supported review' (Gosling and Mason O'Connor, 2009) as a collaborative, reflective tool to initiate critical and transformative conversations about teaching and learning. In my second year, I explored the literature around educative mentoring as a collegial change mechanism for building cultures of teacher reflectivity. The insights gathered from these explorations have resulted in structural interventions to improve professional learning in my own university. For example, I re-wrote organisational teaching and learning policy, introducing peer supported review as a more practice-oriented framework for teacher observation. This recalibration of thinking inspired me to contribute a chapter to a Staff Education and Development (SEDA)

Special on Reflective Practice entitled 'Reflective conversations through peer-supported review' (Appendix J: 'Research articles and work in progress presentations').

However, while my interests as a head of learning and teaching might be to develop socio-cultural initiatives to stimulate teacher reflection, it is important to recognise my position in relation to the creative arts. Not unlike other academic developers, who come from a range of diverse educational backgrounds (Bostock and Baume, 2016), I am a professional librarian who has drifted into higher educational development work. I do not have a degree in a creative arts discipline, or any experience of teaching creative arts subjects. This means I do not have knowledge of how these lecturers are imbued with the 'assumptions and practices of their culture, the demands and expectations imposed by the educational institution, and the attitudes and ways of operating' (Boud and Walker, 1998:196).

The perceived lack of authenticity in creative arts is further compounded by my role, which might be regarded at the epicentre of a reflective teaching "bandwagon" to encourage all lecturers to achieve a teaching qualification or professional recognition (Gibbs, 2013; Finlay, 2008; Land, 2001; UKPSF, 2011). Even if I feel that a key objective of an ADU is to stimulate authentic forms of teacher reflectivity, I am mindful of my strategic positioning which is centred around teaching accreditation (Spowart *et al.*, 2015) and where I may be identified as an educational expert aligned to institutional goals for teaching excellence. Many of the learning and teaching development activities I have introduced in the last few years have been to encourage creative arts lecturers to write reflective accounts of practice, in order to achieve either an academic qualification or professional recognition for teaching. More recently these reflective outputs have assumed an institutional importance, as part of quality agendas to improve higher education teaching metrics and teaching quality (Copeland, 2014; Locke *et al.*, 2016). What might be inferred from this reading of events, is that the pressures of responding to institutional targets for teaching performativity can result in un-reflective teaching accounts from lecturers. Accounts may be generated to appease organisational directives rather than enhance individual pedagogy. This perception of events also contributes to the current identification of a wicked problem in reflective teaching.

### *1.2.3 Wicked problem of reflective teaching*

Rittel and Webber (1973) characterise 'wicked problems' as problems that include a large number of complex variables, all of which are dynamic, contextually bound, and interdependent. Within the field of academic development, several studies have examined the role of reflection in academics' professional and pedagogical growth (Ashwin *et al.*,

2015; Appleby and Pilkington, 2014; Boud *et al.*, 2006; Kahn *et al.*, 2006), but few studies have explored epistemic orientations to teacher reflection (Boud and Walker, 1998; Clegg *et al.*, 1999; Kreber and Castleden, 2009). It is also acknowledged within the literature, that reflection is a complex, loosely defined term that has not been examined critically and reflexively within the disciplinary teaching contexts it could most usefully serve (James, 2007; Orr *et al.*, 2010).

In the critical incidents highlighted earlier, I describe the divergent and varied interpretations of reflection and lecturers who are sometimes suspicious of reflective pedagogies used in academic development. The individual lecturers who take part in reflective practice workshops in my own university appear to talk about 'reflection' and 'teaching' as an additional practice or language to be enacted, suggesting a disconnect between theory and practice. This discourse seems at odds with the importance given to reflection in arts practice, where 'reflection, the arts and education go hand in hand' (Burnard and Hennessey, 2006: ix) and where lecturers encourage students to reflect on their practice through learning journals and sketchbooks (Orr *et al.*, 2010; James, 2007; Orr and Shreeve, 2017). I hear creative arts lecturers espousing the value of critical reflection with their students but am puzzled as to why they do not connect to this student reflectivity when partaking in academic development.

Reflecting on my assessment of teaching portfolios, there would appear a world-weariness around generic reflective schemas, where lecturers engage in a kind of teacher reflection at the 'front stage' (Roxa and Martensson, 2009) for the benefit of institutional measures of performativity. At the 'back stage' (Roxa and Martensson, 2009), within their teaching communities, tutors seem to engage in more divergent reflective practices. Some creative arts lecturers for example, cite actor-network theory, as an alternate means of reflecting on practice (Lautour, 2005); other lecturers feel more comfortable with the use of stories and metaphors to elicit reflective thinking (Kerchner, 2006). These assumptions have led me to ponder whether introducing generic models of reflection invites a lecturer response of a 'right way to reflect' (Hjelde, 2012), rather than the opportunity to utilise familiar reflective practices. This seems at odds with the aforesaid centrality of reflection in the creative arts (Orr *et al.*, 2010; Orr and Shreeve, 2017). As I do not have a degree in the creative arts, and do not teach in these subjects, it is difficult to discern whether this tendency is because teaching is considered a separate practice by dual identity professionals (Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims and Shreeve, 2012), or whether this is a strategic response to meeting the requirements of reflective teaching targets (Copeland 2014; Di Napoli, 2014; Locke *et al.*, 2016). Without a knowledge and understanding of the socio-cultural contexts (disciplinary



cultures, norms and practices) and structural conditions (responses to institutional policy and practice) at play within creative arts teaching and learning cultures, it has proved difficult to nurture a lecturer commitment to reflective teaching within these communities.

#### *1.2.4 Why the sole focus on creative arts reflective teaching talk?*

The reasons for using creative arts as a context for this research inquiry are two-fold. Firstly, as a head of learning and teaching working in a higher education creative arts setting, without a degree in a creative arts subject, I wished to expand my knowledge of reflective teaching practices within these disciplines. This also echoes calls within the academic development literature, for developers to gain a 'more accurate understanding of the actual experiences, needs and concerns of the individual' (Locke *et al.*, 2016:81). I am keen to explore the "back-stage" reflective teaching discourses (Roxa and Martensson, 2009) of these practitioners, to be able to locate development opportunities which are contextualised, addressed in collaboration with the work group and which might be enacted in situ (Boud and Brew, 2013). Undertaking this research, provided an opportunity to think reflectively and critically about the work I do as an academic leader supporting teaching and learning cultures across a range of creative arts disciplines. The findings from this exploration contribute to the development of my own practice, for the benefit of my employing university, developer colleagues and potentially for the wider profession of academic development.

The second reason for focusing on the creative arts, is that it provides an opportunity to contribute to the body of knowledge on teacher reflection in a higher education context. A considerable proportion of the research on reflective teaching focuses on the operationalisation of reflection in teaching, but does not explore the 'interrelated sayings, doings, relationships, meanings, artefacts, and emotions' (Boud and Brew, 2013, quoted in Loads and Campbell, 2015: 356) affecting lecturers' dispositions to reflect on their teaching. Building on the critical incidents recounted earlier, I am interested in exploring some of the more divergent and varied accounts of reflection in creative arts using conversational approaches which place an emphasis on multiplicity and shared sense making, rather than the notion of a 'right way to reflect' (Hjelde, 2012). This exploration will be helpful in my quest to evolve a more 'authentic practice based academic development' (Loads and Campbell, 2015) that shows an understanding of everyday work in the creative arts and which is embedded in the social context of real-world relationships (Boud and Brew, 2013; Boud and Walker, 1998; Loads and Campbell, 2015; Roxa and Martensson, 2009). Developing such an understanding might also be helpful in building trust in academic

development practices because reflection is being stimulated that ‘connects with colleagues’ values because they concern things that really matter.’ (Loads and Campbell, 2015:356). Within the literature, creative arts lecturers are often characterised as academics with strong industry and creative practice backgrounds, who may be more receptive to reflective pedagogies which fuse their personal beliefs and values in teaching and learning (Drew, 2004; Meyer and Wood 2016; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Shreeve, 2009; Souleles, 2003).

### 1.3 Discursive repertoires for explicating teaching and learning

In this research inquiry, ‘discursive repertoires’ (Trowler, 2001; 2008) are utilised as a way of exploring the range of dialogues on teacher reflectivity that are constructed in conversations, and to discuss these in relation to socio-cultural and structural contexts in higher education. “Discourse” is used here to mean the production of talk about reflective teaching which gives priority to words, phrases, metaphors, events, experiences, and incidents. For example, the discourse associated with “industry” in the creative arts uses discursive repertoires associated with inducing students to succeed; of simulating design practices; of justifying vocational curricular experiences. Given the gaps in my own knowledge of disciplinary teacher reflectivity, examining the ways that lecturers talk about teaching and learning offers some helpful insights into the ways that lecturers think and reflect about their pedagogies.

### 1.4 Research aim and research questions

This research project aims to explore how creative arts lecturers working in higher education talk about reflecting on their teaching. The research topic has arisen from a desire to gain a critical understanding of some of the forms, interpretations and underpinning values of reflective teaching that are more attuned to creative arts pedagogies.

The project has been designed to address the following research questions (RQ):

- RQ1: What words, phrases and metaphors do creative arts lecturers use when talking about reflecting on their teaching?
- RQ2: What incidents, experiences and events do creative arts lecturers refer to when talking about reflecting on their teaching?
- RQ3: How might creative arts lecturers talk about reflection on their teaching be helpful for a head of learning and teaching?

The research questions detailed here are constructed to enable a more nuanced exploration of the ‘interrelated sayings, doings, relationships, meanings, artefacts, and emotions’ (Boud

and Brew, 2013, quoted in Loads and Campbell, 2015: 356) from the reflective teaching talk, to discern what might be helpful from these conversational encounters for a head of learning and teaching. The first research question enables a focus on the conversational organisation and multivocality from the talk: the words, phrases and metaphors used by creative arts lecturers when talking about their teaching in higher education. The second research question enables a focus on the respondents' communicative contexts and narrative positioning from the talk: the events, incidents, and experiences that lecturers referred to when talking about reflecting on their teaching. The third research question has grown out of the first two questions and, with this being a professional doctorate the awareness that contributions to new knowledge must be manifested in professional practice. The question invites a reflection on the 'matches and mismatches' (Akerlind, 2007) between the reflective discourse of creative arts/disciplinary practitioners and the reflective understanding of heads of learning and teaching.

### 1.5 Methodology

The methodology for this research inquiry employs an interpretive-qualitative design which is influenced by elements of social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978). The nature of knowledge gathered in this study is relative and subjective knowledge, generated through 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973) to describe events in context. The findings are exploratory with a search for patterns and themes which theorise the socio-cultural contexts, and structural conditions of the individual accounts (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

The data for the study was collected through extensive semi-structured interviews (Cousins, 2009; Holstein and Gubrium, 1995) with lecturer participants recruited from a full range of creative arts disciplines. Interviews (n=10) were conducted at two higher education institutions, with comparable creative arts provision and similar staff and student numbers. To ensure a varied insight into how creative arts lecturers talk about reflecting on teaching in line with the research aim, and to contribute to the authenticity of the findings, participants for this study were recruited using 'purposive and convenience sampling' (Patton, 2002). The intent of this study not to generalize but to explain, describe, and interpret (Maxwell, 2013). An interview schedule was used which included prepared and impromptu questions around the three narrower research questions (Appendix A: Interview Schedule). Each participant was interviewed individually and face to face. In addition, reflexivity has been used throughout this research project (section 3.3.2) to develop an understanding of researcher centrality and influence during the research process (Roulston, 2010; Yanos and Hopper, 2008).

True to the social-constructivist influences on this research, where the intention is to explore socially constructed and mediated reflections (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014:19), explicit and surface meanings are highlighted from the talk rather than underlying meanings or personal motivations. Each interview is viewed as a 'social encounter' (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995), where the interviewer and interviewee co-construct data, generating situated understandings and possible ways of talking about the research topic (Roulston, 2010: 60). To align with these intentions, an inductive, 'bottom-up' (Braun and Clarke, 2006:79) approach has been used to analyse the data, using thematic analysis conducted within a constructionist framework. Constructionist thematic analysis recognises that meaning and experience are socially produced and reproduced, rather than inhering within individuals (Burr, 1995). The analysis has been coded to the research questions to generate concepts and themes that orient to these questions. The final themes have been developed from the respondent data and literature and are framed around the words, phrases and metaphors used when reflecting on teaching (RQ1); incidents, experiences and events referred to when reflecting on teaching (RQ2); and the helpful aspects of the reflective talk (RQ3).

## 1.6 Significance and Contribution

This research builds on existing research in art and design pedagogy (Sims and Shreeve, 2012; Orr and Shreeve, 2017) and the body of knowledge about reflective teaching in higher education (Ashwin *et al.*, 2015; Boud and Walker, 1998; Kahn *et al.*, 2006; Larrivee, 2000), to promote a greater appreciation of socio-cultural and structural contextual discourse in reflective teaching development. Subsequent educational studies have explored disciplinary variations on reflective teaching (Bleakley, 1999; Clegg *et al.*, 1999; Kreber and Castleden, 2009; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Shreeve *et al.*, 2010), but not through the 'discursive repertoires' (Trowler, 2001;2008) of creative arts lecturers specifically. Therefore, the findings will inform academic development programmes in my own institution and potentially be of interest to other heads of learning and teaching interested in developing more socio-cultural reflective practices which are practice-sensitive and based around relationships (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014; Boud and Brew, 2013; Roxa and Martensson, 2009). This is particularly significant in the current environment, in which there is a trend towards identifying new ways of enacting authentic, [practice](#)-based forms of academic development rooted in the context of the academic communities to which lecturers belong (Loads and Campbell, 2015:356; Roxa and Martensson, 2009).

The findings from this small-scale research inquiry are being discussed with academic developer colleagues and will contribute to cultures of enhancement in my own institution. In

addition, I am professionally committed to enhancing reflective teaching in the field of academic development and have used my research findings to expand the limited research around these more affective dimensions of the reflective teaching process. I have already written an online article for the Journal of Useful Investigations (JUICE), entitled, 'Reflective teaching in the creative arts' and have presented a workshop on talking about reflecting on teaching in my own university (Appendix J: 'Research articles and work in progress presentations').

## 1.7 Thesis outline and structure

This chapter has provided a rationale and context for the research project and outlined the aims and key research questions to be addressed. The chapters that follow cover the following five main sections:

### *1.7.1 Literature review (Chapter 2).*

The literature review introduces the key concepts and main arguments regarding why this study is relevant and important. It begins with an exploration of reflective teaching, defining the concept and highlighting the different conceptualisations of teacher reflection, reflective practice, teacher reflectivity and reflexivity. This is followed by an exploration of reflective practice and academic development and the challenges for professionals in higher education to find ways of critically engaging (reflecting and acting) with the academic worlds in which they practice. After highlighting the shifts to more practice-led, contextualised practices in academic development, the chapter moves to explore reflective teaching contexts in the creative arts. The next section reflects on the literature to summarise the implications for academic development. The chapter concludes by connecting the literature to the research inquiry by explaining how the research questions have emerged from the review.

### *1.7.2 Methodology (Chapter 3).*

The methodology chapter explains the research design and the methodology chosen for this research. It provides a rationale for the use of qualitative-interpretive paradigm situated in a social-constructivist world view. The chapter outlines the process of data generation through in-depth semi-structured interviews with ten lecturers and provides justification for the decisions and choices made at each stage of the process. The process of analysis is explained, with a focus on 'constructionist thematic analysis' (Braun and Clarke, 2006) to generate key findings from the data. This chapter also includes reflections upon the

challenges and limitations of the approach; examination of aspects such as ethical considerations; and the quest for authentic and trustworthy findings.

### *1.7.3 Findings 1: Reflective teaching talk (Chapter 4).*

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of first two research questions. The findings are developed and discussed in relation to the existing literature, whereby the professional implications are signposted. Then these are consolidated in the conclusion chapter. The first section describes the characteristics of the purposive sample. The second section introduces the ten participants, highlighting aspects of the participants' socio-cultural (disciplinary differences and academic cultures) and structural contexts (institutional policy and ideology). The third and fourth sections develop the findings related to the first two research questions, drawing together conceptual clusters around the words, phrases and metaphors (RQ1); and events, experiences and incidents (RQ2). This data then provides the context for the fifth section, which develops the findings from the first two research questions into four themes: dual identity; disciplinary lenses; social and interactive; and legitimacy in work practices.

### *1.7.4 Findings 2: Helpfulness of talking about reflecting on teaching (Chapter 5).*

This chapter draws on the four themes identified from the words, phrases, metaphors, events, experiences and incidents, to discuss the findings from the perspective of a head of learning and teaching trying to better understand the 'wicked problem' (Rittel and Webber, 1973). The chapter is divided into two main sections: the first section looks at the findings in relation to the socio-cultural contexts; the second section examines the findings in relation to the structural conditions. Both sections are explored in relation to the rationale and literature review.

### *1.7.5 Conclusion (Chapter 6).*

The conclusion chapter provides a brief overall conclusion, which is followed by a summary of the main arguments, the findings, and the professional implications. These sections (6.2.1 – 6.2.5 ) can be read as a summary of the thesis. This is followed by an outline of how the findings might contribute to new knowledge in the field, and what further research has been highlighted. The chapter ends with a personal reflection and evaluation and an overall conclusion.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the topic of the study, why it is relevant and what is known about it, and how the intended inquiry provides an original contribution to knowledge in the field of academic development. The theoretical dimensions and critical literature explored cover three main aspects: *Reflective teaching: definitions and interpretations*; *Reflective practice and academic development in higher education* and *Creative arts reflective teaching contexts*.

The literature review in this chapter aims to build a more critical understanding of reflective teaching in higher education settings and the epistemic orientations to reflection in the creative arts. The first section provides an overview of the literature relating to reflective teaching and explores conceptual terms and influences such as frameworks, experience, and context. The second section provides an overview of literature relating to reflective practice and academic development within the complex and shifting landscape of higher education. The third section critically examines reflective teaching in the creative arts and the signature pedagogies which might inform actions and develop rationale for practices. Finally, the implications for academic development from this critique of the literature will be discussed, along with an explanation of how the research questions have emerged from the literature. The purpose of this review is to explore key concepts for the research that are used to guide the exploration of how creative arts lecturers talk about reflecting on their teaching.

I have chosen to use the generic description 'academic development' throughout the review of literature, although some developers might prefer the terms 'educational development', 'professional development' or 'staff development'. The term 'academic development' more broadly captures the concerns of developers with academic practice and is taken to include staff/faculty (academic) developers that engage in work to enhance the capabilities of academic staff/faculty and improve educational methods and processes (Baume and Popovic, 2016:1)

### 2.2 Reflective teaching: definitions and interpretations

This research project is underpinned by a perspective that recognises that the origins of the reflective teaching concept have been interpreted and defined in various ways, based on

existing research on teacher cognitions, teachers' knowledge, and the context of teachers' learning. In the last few decades, slogans such as *reflective teaching* and *reflective practitioner* have become fashionable terms on teacher education programmes signalling the extent to which reflection is seen as integral to individual teacher's understandings of themselves, their teaching and their context (Ashwin *et al.*, 2015; Zeichner and Liston, 2014).

### 2.2.1 Definitions of reflective teaching

Reflective teaching is an overarching term used in professional teacher education to encourage a systematic 're-evaluation of our teaching experiences in order to change our future teaching practices' (Ashwin *et al.*, 2015, 2016: 43). The act of reflecting on teaching is variously described: as a form of structured self-analysis and/or mental processing in teaching (Dewey, 1933; Moon, 1999); a kind of professional competence or artistry which teaching practitioners display in unique, uncertain and conflicted situations of practice (Schon, 1987: 22); the development of an open, critical perspective through the articulation of ideas to others (Boud and Walker, 1998; Brockbank and McGill, 2007); and as 'a deliberate and sustained way to continually attempt to shape teaching and learning environments into democratic spaces of knowledge exchange (Brookfield, 1995: 44). The common themes that emerge view reflection as an active thought process aimed at understanding and subsequent improvement of teaching and highlight the influence of personal and contextual variables in shaping dispositions to reflect on teaching. One of the most notable characteristics to emerge from the literature is the extent to which terms such as reflection, reflective practice, reflectivity and reflexivity are used interchangeably in teacher development discourse, yet each term has a slightly different meaning.

### 2.2.2 Conceptualisations of teacher reflection, reflective practice, reflectivity and reflexivity

Conceptualisations of teacher reflection, reflective practice, reflectivity and reflexivity cover a rich and often contested terrain of affective, cognitive and social traditions (Ashwin *et al.*, 2016; Brockbank and McGill, 2007; Brookfield, 1995; Dewey, 1933; Malthouse *et al.*, 2014; Schon, 1987). There does seem to be some agreement within the literature on the taxonomy: *teacher reflection* aims to make educators aware of their own professional knowledge and action (Dewey, 1933; Finlay, 2008; Schon, 1987); *reflective practice* is described as the process of 'intellectual and affective activities in which individuals engage to explore their experiences in order to lead to new understandings and appreciations' (Boud *et al.*, 1985:19); *reflectivity* focuses on the act of reflecting on practice as a specific practice skill (Malthouse *et al.*, 2014: 599). *Reflexivity*, meanwhile, is understood as a type of self-



awareness, as a way of exploring assumptions and of being able to locate oneself within a structural picture (Brookfield, 1995). To expand these expressions, there may also be further framings, such as the addition of 'critical' to reflection, or the inclusion of 'situated' in reflective practice. In the context of this inquiry, which focuses on how lecturers talk about reflecting on their teaching, reflective teaching is delineated from reflective practice to acknowledge the importance of reflection on teaching and 'that it is through reflective practice that we become more skilled, more capable and in general better teachers' (Zeichner and Liston, 2014: xvii).

To explore the many and varied types of reflective orientations for developing teaching and learning, it is appropriate to revisit some of the scholarly contributors to the field. In particular, the reflective frameworks associated with the works of Dewey (1933), Schon (1983,1987) and Gibbs (1988).

### *2.2.3 Reflective frameworks for developing teaching*

There is some suggestion within academic development literature that reflective frameworks for developing teaching originate from Dewey's (1933) seminal work on reflective thinking in education (Ashwin et al, 2015; Kahn *et al.*, 2006). Dewey (1933), is best associated with moving reflection beyond routine thinking in teaching, where 'reflection' involves a 'deliberation in relation to knowledge or beliefs in light of the supporting grounds and the further conclusions to which it tends'(1933:9). He believed 'the goal of education to be the development of reflective, creative and responsible thought ' (1933) and that reflection could be taught and learned. According to Dewey, the process of reflection for teachers begins when they experience a difficulty, troublesome event, or experience that cannot be immediately resolved. Prompted by a sense of uncertainty or unease, reflective action (as opposed to routine action), in Dewey's view, involves the 'active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further conclusions to which it leads . . . it includes a conscious and voluntary effort to establish belief upon a firm basis of evidence and rationality' (Dewey, 1933:9).

Dewey considered a reflective experience to have a proper sequence, including: perplexity, confusion, [or] doubt from which the situation is reflected, espousing an analytical form of reflective teaching which 'affords teachers conscious deliberate insight to bring about learning, and encourages them to become students of their own teaching' (Danielson, 2008:130). This is a type of reflective disposition, or constant reconsideration of teaching, which replaces unsubstantiated opinion, demands 'thoughtful, caring decision making

wherein educators are able to move beyond the tendencies of their own biographies and the apparent mandates of their current circumstances to envision and consider alternative interpretations and possibilities' (La Boskey, 1994: 9). Epistemologically, this approach to reflection promotes a structured, mechanical reflecting process, as opposed to routine thinking where habits of thought may rely on mistaken assumptions and beliefs. However, as Kahn et al (2006) infer, the omnipresence of problematic deliberation over the content, process or premise of reflection (Mezirow, 1990: 6) leaves Dewey's (1933) reflective schema open to interpretation. Indeed, many theorists since have felt compelled to introduce further terms to clarify the territory and acknowledge the unique situations that professionals face that require the use of knowledge and experience to inform action (Schon, 1983). Whilst the distinction between routine thinking and reflection still remain important in reflective teaching, a teacher is not a mere technician, mechanically thinking through their teaching on a learning cycle, free of uncertainty and complexity (Bell and Mladenovic, 2015).

Picking up on the lack of emphasis on the content, process and premise for reflection, it is Schon (1987) who evolves the construct of the 'reflective practitioner', depicted as a 'dialogue of thinking and doing through which the practitioner becomes more skillful' (1987:31). The development of this theorem was in direct response to what Schon saw as a professional education, teaching 'technical-rational' approaches to solving well-defined problems with unique solutions. These ill-defined, wicked, messy, indeterminate aspects, Schon argues, require a kind of professional competence which practitioners display in unique, uncertain and conflicted situations of practice – a form of 'knowing in action' (Schon, 1987: 22). Schon distinguishes between reflection-on-action, which looks back to evaluate; and reflection- in-action, which enables a more instant response, thus evolving the more familiar construct of the reflective practitioner in which 'a skilled performer adjusts his responses to variations in phenomena to deploy a wide-ranging repertoire of images of contexts and action' (Schon, 1983: 29). Schon therefore evolves a more situationally-adaptive schema for reflecting on teaching, which takes account of the wicked, messy, indeterminate aspects, which practitioners display in unique, uncertain and conflicted situations of practice.

Although both theorems differ, the importance of reflecting on one's own teaching to 'notice aspects of practice that are normally hidden from us' (Bell and Mladenovic, 2015: 25) is a strong feature of the philosophical underpinnings of the Deweyian and Schonian traditions. These expressions of reflective teaching provide a helpful formula for an academic developer seeking to foster reflective practices to make a teacher more aware of their own professional knowledge and action by 'challenging assumptions of everyday practice and

critically evaluating practitioners' own responses to practice situations' (Finlay, 2008). To stimulate reflective teaching, there are a plethora of 'circles and cycles, single and double loops of reflective processes and frameworks' (Huddleston and Unwin, 1997). Much like Gibbs' (1988) Reflective Cycle for Teaching (Figure 2.1), these visualisations of the reflective process are all designed to make the process of critically engaging (reflecting and acting) less abstract and more understandable to lecturers in higher education.



*Figure 2.1* Gibbs' (1988) Reflective Cycle for Teaching

Cycles and frameworks can indeed be helpful tools to stimulate reflective practice in teaching, but they also disguise a 'wicked problem' (Rittel and Webber, 1973), which is a disconnect between developer educational discourse and the more socially-situated, culturally-imbued reflective teaching discourse that arises from local settings (Boud and Walker, 1998). What might be surmised from this, is the importance of taking account of the particularities of the setting and 'accommodating the actual people involved and the practice that is being reflected upon' (Boud and Walker, 1998:32).

#### *2.2.4 Fostering local approaches to reflective practice*

It is observed within the literature that reflective teaching is central to academic development programmes, but the concept is not always relatable to the disciplinary teaching contexts it

could most usefully serve. This opinion has led developers to posit that reflective conversations might get 'locked' with vocabularies of human deficit, focusing on the problem, rather than the local practices that shape professional knowledge and understanding (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014; Ghaye, 2011; Gil-Garcia and Citron, 2002; James and Brookfield, 2014). This reasoning has led some authors to express concern over the effectiveness of reflection in teacher settings, arguing that the process of reflection does not encourage practitioners to engage purposefully with wider views, including policy, others' perspectives and theory (Boud and Walker, 1998; Brookfield, 1995; (Malkki and Lindblom-Ylänne, 2012 ). In recent years, this awareness has energised academic developers to locate tools for reflective teaching that apply a strength-based approach, which looks for opportunities to complement and support existing strengths and capacities. Reflective schemas and frameworks are thus presented as part of a "menu" of reflective tools, rather like an ecologically situated reflective circuit that can be applied to a lecturer's own teaching context. Reflective tools might include reflective journaling, portfolios, mind mapping, storyboarding, scenario-based role plays, critical group audience and micro teaching or video reflection (Ghaye, 2011; James and Brookfield, 2014) By employing a range of creative possibilities to stimulate reflection on teaching, the evidence suggests an authentic engagement with teacher reflection which connects in with teacher's values and beliefs. Ghaye's (2011) Participatory and Appreciative Action and Reflection model, for example, introduces a mutually supportive approach to reflecting and acting, involving consideration of these extra-individual collegial influences; and James and Brookfield's (2014) exploration of creative reflective practices, invites educational practitioners to appreciate a range of diverse approaches to student reflectivity as a route to expanding their own imagination and creativity in teaching.

The suggestion from this set of literatures is that reflective teaching practices are shaped by the contexts in which they take place, by 'interrelated sayings, doings, relationships, meanings, artefacts, and emotions' (Boud and Brew, 2013, quoted in Loads, 2015: 356). Rather than encouraging teachers to think critically about their teaching through awareness of self and relations with others, it is implied that reflection has become too self-referential, reducing the process to 'simplified and technicist prescriptions' for teaching (Boud and Walker, 1998: 192). The argument extends that reflective teaching should not be a lone task where we improve only our own knowledge and competencies in reflection, but that we think about these behaviours in relation to our disciplinary teaching contexts. To explore this further, it is necessary to review the academic development literature pertaining to the reflective teaching development of academic teaching professionals in higher education.

## 2.3 Reflective practice and academic development in higher education

Several studies have examined how reflective practice plays a role in lecturers' academic development in higher education (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014; Ashwin *et al.*, 2015; Bell *et al.*, 2010; Gibbs, 2013; Kahn *et al.*, 2014). These authors generally agree that reflection in, on and about practice is essential to building and further developing the capacities of teachers to think and act professionally over the span of their careers. Appleby and Pilkington (2014), for example, assert the value of reflection as a process whereby the individual practitioner engages with her/his own values, assumptions and the influences of policy and organisational systems and processes (2014:17). Ashwin *et al.* (2015), underline the importance of reflective teaching as a mechanism for tutors to develop their teaching and navigate competing demands and tensions in higher education (2015:42). There is a sense through these discourses of a mutually beneficial relationship between the higher education organisation and the individual practitioner in terms of their reflection and professional development.

However, whilst the concept of reflective teaching offers a significant and persuasive construct for improving teaching and learning cultures in higher educational institutions, this review of literature also surfaces a disconnect between theory and practice, espousal and enactment. Some developers argue that the concept of reflective teaching is not sufficiently cognisant of the shifting landscapes and competing priorities of higher education teaching professionals (Barnett, 1997; Copeland, 2014; Di Napoli, 2014; Locke *et al.*, 2016; Turner *et al.*, 2013) and does not represent the contextualised realities of teaching in disciplinary cultures (Kreber and Castleden, 2009; Loads and Campbell, 2015; Lindblom *et al.*, 2006; Roxa and Martensson, 2009). This new awareness exposes the fault lines of reflective teaching in higher education, where academic developers might be perceived as guiding reflection in line with dominant ideological cultures around teaching performativity, or espousing modes of reflection that are not representative of everyday teaching practices. Implicit within these literatures is a view that as education has become increasingly commodified (Ball 2003), the challenge for professionals in higher education is to find ways of critically engaging (reflecting and acting) and integrating the academic worlds in which they practice (Quinn *et al.*, 2012:74). This realisation puts academic developers in a precarious position, faced, as Gibbs opines, with a choice 'between having high ideals but being pretty ineffective, or being highly influential but losing integrity' (Gibbs, 2013:12-13).

### 2.3.1 *Shifting landscapes and competing priorities in higher education*

The rhetoric and importance of reflection for promoting better teaching practices is set within a “super-complex” landscape of higher education, where educators are juggling multiple tasks and processing information on many levels (Barnett, 2000). As Ashwin *et al*, 2015 assert:

the job of becoming a university lecturer involves, among other things, a complex repertoire of technical skills and understandings; positioning yourself within larger communities of practice; managing emotional dimensions of ‘personal development’ and connecting, integrating and reconciling various sources of theory and experiences of practice (2015:42)

In times of super-complexity, where teaching staff have competing research and education work demands, there may not be the time for the degree of mental processing espoused by reflective frameworks taught on educational development programmes. Eraut (2004), for example, suggests that in the ‘swamplands of practice’, decisions and judgements are often made on an instant basis, requiring more intuitive, ‘hot action’ rather than deliberation in cool spaces after the event (Eraut, 2004: 252). To complicate this picture further, there may also be constraining discourses which challenge the ways in which reflective pedagogy is conceptualised within academic development (Quinn *et al.*, 2012:74). For example, skills discourses which may dismiss the intellectual complexity of reflecting on teaching (*ibid*:78).

Lecturers in higher education are faced with a range of competing demands and agendas. In a 2016 overview of the staff development needs of higher education academic staff, for example, Locke *et al* (2016) call for a ‘more accurate understanding of the actual experiences, needs and concerns of the individual’ (Locke *et al.*, 2016:81), reporting on the changing parameters of academic work as HE institutions have expanded and diversified to meet the demands of contemporary environments. Critics argue that due to competing priorities, the process of reflection may be reduced to an overly technical concern with narrow aspects of practice (McCardle and Coutts, 2010), presented as a ‘checklist of behaviours’ (Rodgers, 2002) within formal frameworks such as teaching observation schemes. The implication here is that formalised processes for reflecting on teaching may guide the process but, perhaps focus too much attention on the performance of teaching for assessment purposes. A particular concern within the literature is the association of reflective practice with institutional performance indicators as part of organisational narratives on teaching excellence. Many UK universities now offer accredited professional recognition schemes to support staff in gaining fellowship recognition (Advance HE, 2020). Fellowship is increasingly being embedded within institutional strategy and policy, including

HR processes for probation and promotion of lecturing staff. Yet, engagement with the reflective processes involved in the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF, 2011; 2012 a), continues to be problematic for academic staff, who consider the language vague and need support to interpret it and relate it to their practice. (Turner *et al.*, 2013: 32).

In addition, the problem of not 'having time to think' to identify personal professional development needs and goals may influence lecturer dispositions to reflection as they juggle competing priorities and workloads (Locke and Whitchurch, 2016: 26). For busy professionals short on time, reflective practice might all too easily be applied in bland, mechanical, unthinking ways, especially when formalised through a teaching observation scheme or as part of a postgraduate certificate in teaching or application for professional recognition. Time poor academics may come to view reflection an educational or quality assurance exercise that is detached from individual practices and context. The operationalisation of reflective teaching through written reflective accounts of practice, is a particular preoccupation of Alan Bleakley's (2000) work on narrative, confessionalism and reflective practice. Bleakley's (200) assertion is that reflective accounts become 'invisible ink' (Bleakley, 2000: 11) detached from the mediated and complex processes of learning that lecturers engage within their immediate teaching contexts. Such practices might also be conceptualised as 'front stage' and 'backstage' teaching (Roxa and Martensson, 2009: 547-559). Front stage refers to the processes academic teachers engage with at the institutional level (formal reflections on teaching through accounts of practice). Back stage are the critical or "real" reflective conversations with a small network of significant others (informal reflective activities such as coaching, mentoring and peer supported review), which might have the bigger impact on teaching.

Commenting on the growth of teaching and learning professional development schemes in higher education, Copeland (2014), warns that 'further growth should be individually and collectively motivated by professional and pedagogic reasons and not in order to maximize individual performance' (Copeland 2014 cited in Locke *et al.*, 2016: 26). While the reflective teaching concept is described as assuming a hegemonic positioning on academic development programmes, its connection to disciplinary pedagogic practice is viewed by these authors as loosely defined and unrelatable to disciplinary teaching contexts. According to Clegg and others, reflective practices in teaching have become more about acting than reflecting (Clegg, 1999: 131), and reflection on teaching has become a well-meaning concept that has fallen on hard times (Harvey and Knight, 1996; Boud *et al.*, 2011, Spowart *et al.*, 2015). These arguments highlight the divide which may exist between generic and discipline-specific reflective teaching practices.

### 2.3.2 *Generic vs discipline-specific reflective teaching practices*

Within the literature, reflective teaching is said to have not been examined critically and reflexively within the discipline-specific contexts it could most usefully serve (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014; Barnett, 2008; Boud and Brew, 2013; James, 2007; Orr *et al.*, 2010). In their work on critical professionalism, Appleby and Pilkington (2014) underline the difficulties of engaging lecturers with a generic, rather than discipline-specific body of pedagogic knowledge that has not been authenticated and tested against practice. It can be inferred from this that educational discourse used to stimulate reflective teaching is conceived as originating from general theories and models in education, whereas everyday teacher reflectivity is derived from discipline-specific practice.

Extending these arguments, Barnett (2008) suggests that Schon's (1983) concept of the reflective practitioner promotes a limited view of critical thought and action, reducing higher education professionalism to problem-solving in bounded professional situations rather than a critical deployment of multiple discourses. In his work on critical professionalism, Barnett (2008) states that 'when professionals learn they are individually constructing their own identity as part of a discursive process with and within the communities to which they belong' (Barnett, 2008). Similar views are expressed by Brookfield (1987) who suggests that higher education is surely about developing critical thinkers, but has capitulated to a reductive view of teaching practices through un-reflective technical rational practices characterising the new vocationalism of training cultures (Brookfield, 1987). Boud and Brew (2013) call for an end to simplistic and reductionist views of what academics do, and how they can develop. Arguing for a turn to practice, they insist that academic work should be understood as a contextualised social practice which cannot be broken down into packages of decontextualised skills and knowledge.

The inference from these educational researchers is that adopting a generic notion of reflective practice may not always be meaningful to the development of disciplinary based academics. What faculty members learn in pedagogical courses, or any other developmental initiative, has to be negotiated within departmental and disciplinary cultures (Fanghanel, 2009; Roxa and Martensson, 2015; Trowler *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, fostering reflective activities that are embedded in the context of real-world relationships, opportunities and constraints (Kahn *et al.*, 2006; Loads and Campbell, 2015; Roxa and Martensson, 2009) is promoted by these authors as a more authentic, practice-based academic development (Loads and Campbell, 2015).



### 2.3.3 Authentic, practice-based academic development

Authentic, practice-based academic development is described by Loads and Campbell (2015) as a type of academic development activity which focuses on practice as a whole, connecting lecturers with their contexts for teaching (Boud and Brew, 2013; Boud and Walker, 1998; James and Brookfield, 2014; Loads and Campbell, 2015; Martensson and Roxa, 2016; Roxa and Martensson, 2009; 2016). Contexts for teaching include disciplinary community, students, academic colleagues, leaders, the organisation and society (Martensson and Roxa, 2016, quoted in Baume and Popovic, 2016: 174). Corresponding practices which are appreciative of these contexts include for example, Roxa and Martensson's influential work around teaching networks and microcultures (Roxa and Martensson, 2009;2016); and the use of secondments to enhance understanding of the working practices, aims and directions between academic practitioners (Loads and Campbell, 2015: 360). The implication from this set of literatures is that reflective teaching practices are shaped by a lecturer's socio-cultural and structural contextual influences. To align with this theoretical positioning, advocates promote a type of academic development which focuses on the 'non-formal, daily practice of academic teachers and their working environments' (Martensson and Roxa, 2016, quoted in Baume and Popovic, 2016: 175). Such informal practices might include: having better conversations about teaching with colleagues and students; employing coaching and mentoring techniques to support teacher reflectivity; and, appreciating teaching and learning networks as learning spaces for reflecting on teaching. Applying this thinking to the research context of this inquiry, where the formalising of teacher reflectivity through workshops and courses, is described as challenging, there may be value in introducing informal activities for reflecting on teaching, which are cognisant of socio-cultural and structural contextual influences.

According to the literature, socio-cultural contextual influences include disciplinary differences and academic cultures which have an impact on lecturers' development of academic practice (Fanghanel 2009; Trowler *et al.*, 2012). Epistemological differences are said to vary between academic cultures, resulting in divergent disciplinary teaching and learning norms and practices (Neumann *et al.*, 2010). Educational initiatives like reflective teaching may play out differently because they are filtered through different cultural components or 'moments' in teaching and learning regimes (Trowler, 2008). One such cultural component is a 'discursive repertoire' (Trowler, 2008) which has the power to 'capture' and fix the ways in which the world is seen by teachers, students and others. Teacher reflectivity will therefore be influenced by individual departmental norms and conventions (Trowler 2008; Roxa and Mårtensson 2015). Structural conditions meanwhile,

might include institutional policies, regulations, ideology, the requirements of external evaluation bodies and the external political environment. These structural elements will often influence the choices and opportunities available to individuals and communities within the organisation (Englund *et al.*, 2018).

The awareness of a more complex entity of practices for teacher reflection, has led academic developers to source academic development actions which are located, mediated and relational (Boud and Brew, 2013; Boud and Walker, 1998; Roxa and Martensson, 2009; Trowler *et al.*, 2012). By stimulating these contextualised aspects, the evocation is that a teacher reflectivity will arise which aligns with colleagues' values because it acknowledges that teachers do not think about their teaching in isolation, but co-construct and re-negotiate meaning, in dialogue with their colleagues (Boud and Brew, 2013). Kahn *et al.* (2006) and James and Brookfield (2014) specifically encourage the collaborative processes of reflecting on, and through interaction with others in collegial settings. James and Brookfield (2014) also remind us that creative and reflective thinking rarely happen alone, 'we need peers to bounce ideas off, to ask us productively troubling questions, to introduce new possibilities and to alert us to omissions in our thinking' (James and Brookfield, 2014: 205-206).

#### *2.3.4 Reflective dialogue as a professional conversation*

Recent literature on reflective teaching is filled with projects to cultivate reflective dialogue as a professional conversation between teachers, teachers and learners, academics and managers, and between disciplines (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014; Boud and Brew, 2013; Brookfield and Preskill, 1999; James and Brookfield, 2014; Kahn *et al.*, 2006; Roxa and Martensson, 2009). Experts in this field of academic development argue that reflective dialogue offers an alternative to reflective practice, because the construct aligns with the socio-cultural, discursive nature of professional educational learning (Boud and Walker, 1998; Pilkington, 2014; Roxa and Martensson, 2000). Kahn *et al.* (2006) suggest that developers build on the collective and socially constructed elements of reflective teaching, paying more explicit attention to the interactive processes of reflecting on, and through interaction in, teaching settings and communities. James and Brookfield remind us that creative and reflective thinking rarely happens alone, 'we need peers to bounce ideas off, to ask us productively troubling questions, to introduce new possibilities and to alert us to omissions in our thinking' (James and Brookfield, 2014: 205-206). This is a directed process, 'which must be both targeted and supported, as this prevents the process from turning into metacognitive rambles on minor aspects of teaching' (Kahn *et al.*, 2015:27).

Kahn et al (2006) propose that reflective development activity should intentionally encourage these more intra-relational forms of reflective teaching in order to nurture collegial self-improvement (Kahn *et al.*, 2006: 19). The concepts teachers use to talk about teaching are rooted in different disciplinary frameworks, providing an opportunity to challenge and deepen both disciplinary and educational ideas. This is a dialogic process that by its nature requires careful listening and active questioning, trying to articulate the tacit 'known' so it can become shared and valuable to the community (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014: 160; Brookfield and Preskill, 1999). Respondent development interventions might include practitioner forums, coaching networks and action learning sets, to encourage intersubjective understanding and exploration of teaching from different perspectives. Enabling space for reflective dialogue, whereby colleagues listen to each other and question practices, is a key element of Appleby and Pilkington's (2014) model for supporting critical professional development (see diagram below).

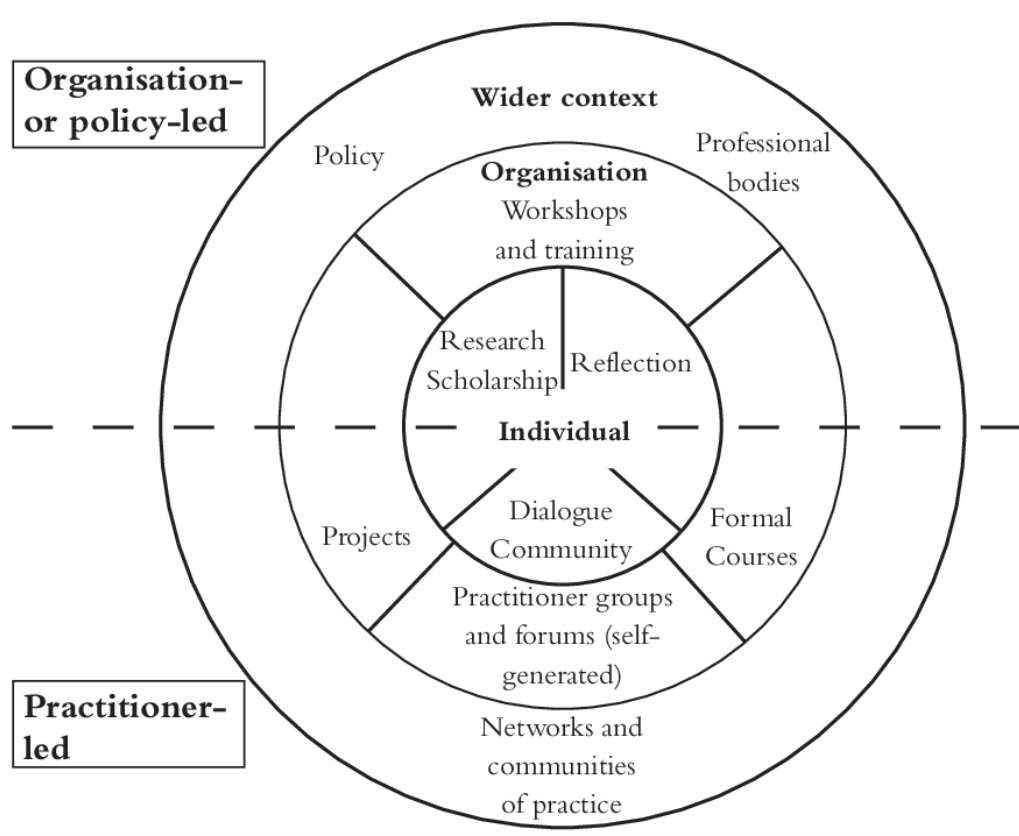


Figure 2.2 A model for supporting critical professional development (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014)

Of particular note in this model, is the demarcation between practitioner-led and organisation or policy-led initiatives. The location of reflection within the diagram suggests reflection can

be both a practitioner-led and organisation or policy-led activity to enhance teaching and learning. Placing more of an emphasis on the bottom half of enabling activities to encourage teacher reflectivity, may be a more fruitful disposition for an academic developer exploring socio-cultural mechanisms for self-improvement. As Roxa and Martensson (2009) postulate, 'there are many indicators that teachers' social and collegial contexts strongly influence their ways of talking about, valuing and practising teaching' (2009:552). The varying arguments extending the importance of socio-cultural influences on the reflective disposition have implications for the enactment of reflective practice in academic development, inviting developers to explore the disciplinary teaching contexts they support.

#### 2.4 Creative arts reflective teaching contexts

The literature on creative arts reflective teaching contexts identifies some important pedagogic differences, where lecturers are rooted in particular contexts, with distinctive protocols, methods, conventions and literatures (Biglan, 1973; Eisner, 2002; Fanghanel, 2007; Lindblom-Ylanne, *et al.*, 2006; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims et al, 2012). Biglan (1973), describes hard and soft disciplines, where the former use well developed theories, rely on universal laws and are cumulative; whilst the latter disciplines work with unclear boundaries, relatively unspecified theories and deal with loosely defined problems (1973:218). Creative arts subjects are described as softer disciplines, where there is more of an emphasis on indeterminacy, pluralism, revisibility and dialogue (Danvers, 2003:47). In response to the uncertainty and open-ended nature of creative arts disciplines, teaching is characterised as an exchange of ideas, conversation, knowledge and expertise with students, rather than didactic approaches based on a certainty of expert knowledge (Sims and Shreeve, 2012:2).

Within the literature, it is implied that creative arts lecturers may be still coming to terms with the transition from art school cool to university corporate pedagogy. This means there may be competing tensions between a need for clarity driven by accountability and transferability, which may be in direct conflict with the open-endedness, playfulness and ambiguity at the core of creative arts learning (Orr and Shreeve, 2017: 13). Such characterisations of creative arts practices also highlight the social constructivist origins of these disciplines, which are based on the presumption that each and every individual creates his/her own knowledge, and that such knowledge is primarily created through his/her interaction with the environment and other people/communication with society (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978; Rogoff, 1990). The influence of social constructivism affords a contextuality and multiplicity commensurate with these disciplines, where there is a knowledge and a

vision of humans as 'creative problem solvers in constant interaction with the natural world' (Stubley 1992: 4), fostering a concept of and respect for multiple perspectives (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 1990).

Building on these philosophical foundations, teaching and learning within creative arts disciplines is frequently conceptualised as less about imposing knowledge on students, and more about providing a route into knowledge. Within some of the key literature on art and design pedagogy, creative arts practice is viewed as divergent and messy (Hjelde, 2012; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims and Shreeve, 2012), rather than a neat cycle of moving from one stage to another. Crucial to this type of learning and teaching is a 'kind of exchange' (Sims *et al.*, 2012) between tutors and their students: a dialogue that seeks to engage students with the language and concepts of the material and performance aspects of creative work (Sims *et al.*, 2012:125-138). Encouraging such dialogic interaction in teaching is defined by particular 'signature pedagogies' (Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Shulman, 2005; Sims and Shreeve, 2012) and dual professional identities, which condition how lecturers in higher education reflect on their teaching (Drew, 2004; Kreber and Cranton, 2009; Shreeve, 2009).

#### *2.4.1 Signature pedagogies in the creative arts*

It could be argued that there are particular 'signature pedagogies' (Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Shulman, 2005; Sims and Shreeve, 2012) or distinctive aspects of the teaching and learning experience which are shared by many art and design subject areas. Shulman's (2005) argument is that all disciplines provide distinct curricular experiences enabling students to learn through specific methods, to develop disciplinary ways of thinking and being. In their research on art and design pedagogy in higher education, Orr and Shreeve (2017) coin the term, 'sticky curriculum' where lecturers create 'sticky curricula that are varied, unpredictable and challenging for those engaged in learning and teaching (Orr and Shreeve, 2017:143). Students are expected to forge a way through a complex web of activities to become creative arts practitioners. Orr and Shreeve (2017) identify elements of art and design curricula which illustrate these messy and uncertain journeys. These include the open-ended nature of learning where the journey may be viewed as just as important as the destination; giving students permission to play and disrupting previous learning; the use of provocation to generate new ideas and possibilities; and the continued use of the self and identity in learning (Orr and Shreeve, 2017:96).

In response to these signature pedagogies in art and design pedagogy, tutors might be said to 'be responsive, reflective and innovative, as well as being entrepreneurial in using

opportunities for learning that rise unexpectedly' (Orr and Shreeve, 2017:143). These teaching characteristics correspond with research by Sims and Shreeve, (2012) and others on some of the educational traditions found in art and design teaching:

1. Students are, from the outset of their Higher Education, practitioners in their subject of study.
2. Many courses are structured to include long periods of working on projects.
3. There is often a range of technical skills which students need to acquire.
4. Study time and contact hours frequently occur in studios and workshops, which provide opportunities for engaging in informal conversations about the work in progress amongst students and between tutors, technicians and students.
5. Assessment and feedback are often accomplished through the crit, or critique, a key component of most art and design education.
6. Opportunities to learn from peers and from the work of students in the years above are plentiful.
7. There is an emphasis on open-ended solutions and many possible ways of undertaking practice.
8. There is less emphasis than in many subjects on formal knowledge and more on procedures and ways of working which are more or less appropriate in specific situations. This knowledge is frequently held tacitly by practitioners (both teachers and students) and therefore may not be readily articulated.
9. The expectation that students will become independent, self-analytical, critical thinkers informs the entire period in higher education from the start of their course.
10. Students (and indeed staff) are often uncomfortable with the role of writing and theory within the subject; it is often seen as separate and unrelated.
11. The environment in which students learn is rich in opportunities to develop skills, usually referred to as personal and professional skills, key skills or skills for employability.

This list of characteristics might infer that learning and teaching in the creative arts is an interpersonal, kinaesthetic and collaborative engagement with arts-specific materials and processes which are central to creative arts learning. Formal didactic content transmission is minimal, and instead students learn by making and doing, and thus 'develop ways of knowing through experience of the tactile, visual and spatial' (Austerlitz *et al.*, 2008:139). As Orr *et al.*, (2014: 38), explain, 'students do not receive an art and design education—they are supported in educating themselves and they 'own' their work . . . the lecturer's role is that of a facilitator'.

To facilitate learning in the creative arts, tutors use a combination of the divergent and adaptive to accommodate the centrality of ideas and embracing of uncertainty, and the highly visible and experimental processes that accompany learning about creative practice (Sims and Shreeve, 2012). This is also mentioned in studies of Shreeve's (2008) earlier research on teaching strategies in art and design, which include passing on one's own knowledge (largely through a "show and tell" approach); using examples from one's own practice, such as bringing in your own work, paralleling, dovetailing and collaborating (referenced in Orr and Shreeve, 2017:99) Much of the learning is developed through the social and interactive nature of the studio and dialogic presentation sessions where students are expected to be able 'to speak and understand the language of their particular practice' and 'to explore verbally the understanding we construct around artifacts' (Austerlitz *et al.*, 2008: 141).

Many of these teaching strategies may also be symptomatic of the strong vocational nature of some creative arts disciplines with the prominence of the production of the artefact over the development of critical thinking (Souleles, 2013:251). Of particular note is the centrality of the 'crit' in art and design practice 'which involves the individual presentation of completed learner projects to a group of peers in the presence of the teacher and sometimes an appropriate industry expert' (Blair 2006: 83). These experiences are also an opportunity for learners to articulate, justify, explain, rationalise and contextualise the learning process and how they went about designing and developing the artefact (Souleles, 2013).

Students in the creative arts are supported not only to learn about the discipline but also to think and behave like creative practitioners in their own right, to negotiate and communicate their design concepts in formative and summative settings. This conception expresses the predominantly dialogic nature of teaching in these subjects in which the students' experience is central to teachers' concerns and learning is seen as a partnership. The Art and Design Benchmark Statement (Buss and Gretton, 2002:2-3) describes these practices as placing emphasis on '... imagination, creativity and, where appropriate, craft skills... [Instruction is] designed to develop students' intellectual powers and their ability to communicate'. This quote from research by Sims and Shreeve (2012) helps to illustrate this phenomenon:

...my situation as a tutor is very similar to their situation as a student really. They are coming fresh to a subject and they teach me a lot about how the subject would be in the future... And I aim for that kind of even exchange...

Being able to engage imaginatively is considered pivotal to learning and teaching in creative arts subjects (Danvers, 2003; James and Brookfield, 2004). Learners are encouraged to 'progressively extend the arena of possibilities within which they operate' (Danvers, 2003: 51) and 'seeing the everyday and familiar in new ways' (James and Brookfield, 2004: 3). To support students to develop these creative ways of being, teaching is mostly facilitative with very little 'chalk and talk' and a strong emphasis on playfulness, intersubjective understanding and empathy (James and Brookfield, 2014: 187). Group work, which is common practice within the art and design curriculum, attempts to mirror the realities of the professional world. The emphasis is on autonomous learner activity with some negotiated control over the curriculum as part of the objective to promote independent and critical thinking skills. The intention of such curricula is to simulate industry practice by placing an emphasis on intra-relational activities that involve talking through ideas with others. Typical assessment components might include student presentations, peer group learning, and group critique (Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims and Shreeve, 2012). Tutors may adopt different pedagogical tools and techniques to enable this kind of student learning, including visual methods of teaching and learning (sketchbooks and journals, drawing, collage and diagramming) and the use of story and metaphor to provoke reflective thinking (mental models, diagrams as stories, timelines, metaphor as parable) (James and Brookfield, 2014).

However, these learning intentions may also lead to dysfunctional relationships between student and tutor, as tutors move from school master, guide, storyteller, instructor and mediator. The power asymmetries are particularly stark where students may position themselves as paying customers engaged in a consumer contract with a consumer provider identified as the teaching staff on a given course within a given HE institution (Danvers, 2003; Gravells and Scanlon, 2011). Whilst tutors may seek to sustain relationships with students which engage imagination and the development of a questioning criticality, students may be seeking more deterministic assurances of value for money. The tensions also extend to tutors, where creative arts identities and values may misalign with sector requirements for teaching quality and 'students as consumer' rhetoric. Nicholas Addison (2014), for example, writes about the uneasy relationship between learning outcomes and creative arts practice, suggesting an acquiescence in these technocratic and overly deterministic educational processes:

Lecturers engage in writing LOs and in interpreting their implications with students as a process to which they are subjected..They acquiesce to these imperatives before getting on with what they consider really matters in support of learning (Addison, 2014:315).



Addison (2014) and others view the current rhetoric of instrumentalization in modern universities as unhelpful to creative education. The perception these authors hold is that pedagogic approaches are applied to the curriculum which tend towards supporting risk averse knowledge transmission modes. Orr and Shreeve (2017:11), refer to the 'academisation' of the art school, where the formalising and documenting of art school higher education, clashes with the liminal and ambiguous intentions of the creative curriculum. This viewpoint may be significant for developers working with creative arts lecturers suggesting a receptivity to radical pedagogies which are cognisant of their dialogical and interrogative disposition (Danvers, 2003:55). This is in contrast to corporate pedagogies, aimed at achieving institutional targets around teaching excellence (Bleakley, 1999; Clegg *et al.*, 1999; Clegg, 2000), which may be conceived as technocratic and unrepresentative of creative arts practice.

#### *2.4.2 Reflective teaching in the creative arts*

Within academic developer literature, creative arts disciplines are discussed as learning spaces, where reflective practice is 'at the heart of creative education' (Orr *et al.*, 2010:3) and where educating students to become 'reflective practitioners' (Schon, 1983) is viewed as essential to individual students' development and at the core of the creative arts curriculum (Orr *et al.*, 2010). It is also worth considering the reflexive nature of creative arts disciplines, which are often dynamic, rather than fixed and require an active (rather than passive) engagement from teachers and students (Skelton, 1996).

One might assume from these readings that there is a pragmatic receptivity to reflection in creative arts disciplines, but there is also a complex relationship between creative arts practice and reflection on that practice (Orr *et al.*, 2010). This phenomenon may be a consequence of decontextualised theorems around reflective teaching which are not concerned with subject specialisms, or show how a subject or a practice can become integral to the teaching-learning encounter. In his research on accounts of reflective practice, Bleakley (1999) posits an alternate explanation for this which lies in with the term 'reflective', which he suggests has not been interrogated with the kind of rigour that practitioners should normally apply to their own discipline's theoretical framework (Bleakley, 1999: 315). Indeed, within creative arts disciplines, lecturers may still be wrestling with the concept of what reflection is and how it should be manifested (Orr *et al.*, 2010; Shreeve, 2009; James, 2007). The consequence of this phenomenon is that 'critical conversations on where reflection in, on and for action can lead, have been lost in the evanescence of

competing needs, space and time' (Burnard and Hennessey, 2006; *piv*). The onset of these reductive behaviours runs counter to the transformative potential of reflective practice to question core beliefs and reflect on premises and presuppositions in teaching (Clegg, 2000).

Some empirical studies have observed the disconnect between art and design practice and educational theory, arguing that reflection on teaching takes on distinct forms due to differences in epistemological structure (Burnard *et al.*, 2006; Hjelde, 2012; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims and Shreeve, 2012). Burnard *et al.* (2006), for example, describe the purpose of reflection in the arts as 'to develop, transform and improve one's own teaching whether as a beginning teacher, as experienced practitioner in higher education or an artist educator' (Burnard *et al.*, 2006: 186). Whilst this definition may be endorsed by most academic developers, the authors also suggest that reflective arts practice is characterized by multiple perspectives where 'reflective practice conversations might include questioning and formulating multiple solutions to daily challenges that arise in arts practice' (Burnard *et al.*, 2006: 10).

The premise for the multiple realities accepted in creative arts practice are captured neatly by Elliot Eisner, who reminds us that 'one of their [creative arts practitioners] large lessons is that there are many ways to see and interpret the world' (Eisner, 2002: 70-92). According to Danvers (2003), this interpretive stance is based on a belief that knowledge is always partial, where learning is contingent, informed by earlier learning, by our needs, intentions and expectations, and by our beliefs and values. As Eisner (2002) suggests, arts-related understandings provide unique forms of knowledge which 'materialize in reflective processes that require accumulated observation captured across a wide range of symbiotic forms, expressive languages and actions' (Eisner, 2002, quoted in Burnard *et al.*, 2006: 7). Creative arts disciplines may also provoke a more divergent attitude to problem solving, which defy neat solutions to practice. Burnard *et al.* (2006), for example, observe that the catalysts of reflection in arts education might encourage more creative forms of thinking: critical incidents and disruptions can stimulate action, change of direction, identification of a problem, a solution or a revelation; reflective task design might generate tools for reflection to generate and shape the nature of the thinking they are designed to support. However, some authors also point out that multiple realities and the emphasis on provocations in art and design may also result in a 'sticky curriculum' (Orr and Shreeve, 2017), where "sticky" conveys the challenges, conflicts, dilemmas and ambiguity in the creative arts curriculum.

Following these various positions through, it might be speculated that reflective practitioners in the creative arts 'do not look for 'quick fixes' in dealing with classroom challenges'

(Kerchner, 2006, quoted in Burnard et al, 2006:125). Instead, practice-based academics might use reflective thinking skills, intuition, artistic/vocational experience and content knowledge to create solutions to teaching and learning 'in the moment or during their analysis, reflection and planning after the class has occurred' (Kerchner, 2006:125). In line with this form of reflective thinking, discussion and debate are considered fundamental to enabling students to develop their practice (Orr and Shreeve, 2017: 90). Art and design subjects rely on continuous interaction between students and tutors to promote learning and this 'kind of exchange' (Shreeve *et al.*, 2010). The conversational element seems significant, illustrating the relational, collaborative and situated mode of meaning-making present in creative education. Co-operative ways of working might also be symptomatic of the dual professional identities of creative arts academics, who bring their experiences from industry and professional settings, to simulate industry working practices.

#### *2.4.3 Dual professionalism*

Dual professionalism in the context of this research is taken to mean lecturers who enter higher education with industry and professional skills in the creative sector, or with experience as creative arts practitioners (Drew, 2004; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims and Shreeve, 2012). However, it is important to qualify that creative arts lecturers are not uniquely positioned as dual professionals. Indeed, lecturers' teaching courses in business and administrative studies, education, and subjects allied to medicine may also be perceived as dual professionals. The expertise of these practice-informed lecturers is highly valued, particularly for bringing in real-world experiences, credibility and access to professional networks, as well as equipping students with the skills necessary to succeed in the workplace (GuildHE, 2018). Consequently, the curriculum they teach simulates conditions of industry, providing opportunities for students work collaboratively with industry partners to solve issues and identify solutions.

Although industry experience is valued in terms of the student experience, researchers in art and design pedagogy highlight the difficulties of integrating practitioner and teacher identity (Hjelde, 2012; Shreeve, 2009, 2010). As Shreeve (2009) asserts in her article, 'I'd rather be seen as a practitioner, come in to teach my subject, practitioners who teach (practitioner tutors) move between the two different cultural contexts of their practice and their teaching, with a resulting impact on the identity work that ensues (Shreeve, 2009: 152). She suggests there is a clear dichotomy between the role of practice and teaching, resulting in two cultures that may become irreconcilable, creating a feeling of being pulled in two directions (Shreeve, 2009: 153). Teachers in this field may often be practitioners in their

own right and see themselves as 'being in two camps' (Shreeve, 2011). As Shreeve (2011) concludes, 'If aspects of identity as a teacher and a practitioner are threatened, this may leave the individual in limbo between two social practices' (2011: 79).

## 2.5 Implications for academic development

Taking into account the contested terrain of teacher reflection (Ashwin *et al.*, 2015); the shift to authentic, practice-based approaches to academic development (Boud and Brew, 2013; Boud and Walker, 1998; Roxa and Martensson, 2009; Trowler *et al.*, 2012); and the influence of dual professionalism on teacher reflectivity in the creative arts, the following three sections highlight what implications this might have for academic development.

### *2.5.1 Material, cultural and interpretive understandings of reflective teaching*

There is a call-out within the academic development literature, for developers to become more familiar with the material, cultural and interpretive circumstances through which respondents orient to reflective teaching practices (Boud and Walker, 1998; Land, 2001, 2004). Academic developers are interacting with 'faculty, rooted in particularly disciplinary contexts, with distinctive protocols, methods, conventions and literatures' (Akerlind, 2017:35). The inference from these literatures is that there is a gap in developer knowledge of the particularities of the disciplinary teaching setting and the 'interrelated sayings, doings, relationships, meanings, artefacts, and emotions' (Boud and Brew, 2013 quoted in Loads and Campbell, 2015: 356) which influence lecturer dispositions to reflect on their teaching. This awareness is made more complex in creative arts settings where there may already be a dichotomy or separation between the two worlds of practice and teaching, and a sense of diminished identity (Shreeve, 2009). Newer creative arts lecturers, for example, may struggle to construct an identity as a teacher, if they do not have a teaching qualification and there are few opportunities to learn the discourse of higher education. By exploring creative arts reflective teaching discourse, developers might begin to locate meaningful forms of teacher reflection that are cognisant of discipline and/or practice which are guided by previous experiences of individuals and the history of development that they bring to the workplace.

### *2.5.2 Moving beyond reflective bandwagons*

One of the noticeable characteristics of the reflective practice phenomenon in higher education is the extent to which academic developers have found themselves at the epicentre of institutional bandwagons in reflective teaching (Gibbs, 2003; Finlay, 2008; Land,

2001; Loughran, 2003). Faced with a choice between, 'having high ideas but being pretty ineffective, or being highly influential, but losing integrity (Gibbs, 2013: 12), developers might opt for the latter and generate normative responses to reflection which are a response to institutional measures of performativity rather than meaningful reflections based on disciplinary teaching and learning practices (Kreber and Cranton, 2009). This sets an important challenge for developers' that if they want to stimulate reflective teaching cultures, they might explore more legitimate teaching and learning development activities that arise from workplace contexts, rather than those subverted by institutional measures of performativity (Copeland 2014; Di Napoli, 2014; Locke *et al.*, 2016). Relating this phenomenon to the research inquiry, fostering approaches to reflective teaching development which utilise some of these affective influences may also help to paradigmatically shift the trademark image of academic development as a reductionist and decontextualised "service" defined by what academics do and how they can develop.

### *2.5.3 Matches and mismatches in reflective teaching development*

The literature suggests that there may be 'matches and mismatches between academics' and developers' views of how best to foster reflective teaching development' (Akerlind, 2007:35). Common pedagogical vocabularies introduced in reflective teaching development might serve to further highlight difference, or even be viewed as contested terms. Creative arts industry professionals who have drifted into higher education lecturing roles may have had few opportunities to learn the discourse of higher education and there may be feelings of being an imposter, with the associated pressures of perfectionism, increasing social comparisons, and a fear of failure (Hutchins and Rainbolt, 2017; Orr and Shreeve, 2017). Therefore, an exploration of these matches and mismatches through the 'discursive repertoires' (Brookfield and Preskill, 1999; Trowler, 2008) of creative arts lecturers, provides an insight into the everyday reflective teaching talk in these disciplines. Through such an exploration, it may be possible to identify more authentic forms of teacher reflectivity which utilise previous practices in positive ways, to enable lecturers 'to see something new in themselves as teachers, or to see familiar aspects in fresh ways' (Loads, 2009: 48).

## 2.6 Connecting the literature to this research inquiry

The rationale for focussing on how creative arts lecturers talk about reflection in their teaching is to respond to the constructivist influences of dialogic and interactive pedagogies in creative arts learning and teaching (Sims and Shreeve, 2012). Immersing myself in conversation with individual lecturers attunes with the predominantly dialogic nature of

teaching in these subjects (Sims and Shreeve 2012; Orr and Shreeve, 2017), providing an opportunity to explore some of the socially situated and culturally imbued ‘frames of reference’ (Hjelde, 2012) which surface from everyday conversations about reflective teaching in the creative arts.

The research topic is also responding to calls within the professional literature to gain a ‘more accurate understanding of the actual experiences, needs and concerns of the individual’ (Locke *et al.*, 2016: 81). The implication for this research proposal is that enabling more contextualised reflective teaching that takes account of creative arts practices and dual identities, could be a more fruitful orientation for an academic developer.

### 2.6.1 How the research questions have emerged from the literature.

The research questions have been informed from the themes emerging from the literature and the strong intention of the research to discourage normative (common-sense) responses to reflection in teaching. The design of the research questions has been informed by the literature base (see Table 2.1: Research questions derived from the review of literature around reflective teaching).

Research questions	Themes from the literature that informed the research questions
<p>What words, phrases and metaphors do creative arts lecturers use when talking about reflecting on their teaching?</p>	<p>‘Arts-related reflective processes embrace a wide range of symbolic forms, expressive languages and actions’ (Eisner, 2002).</p> <p>‘These may be varied and complex to enable the critical deployment of multiple discourses’ (Barnett, 1997; Bleakley, 1999).</p> <p>‘Creative arts staff may be seeking more imaginative, sociable and non-threatening modes of reflection’ (Burnard et al 2006, p.190).</p> <p>‘Reflective practice conversations might include questioning and formulating multiple solutions to daily challenges that arise in arts practice’ (Burnard et al, 2006: 10).</p> <p>‘Interrelated sayings, doings, relationships, meanings, artefacts, and emotions that cannot be broken down into packages of decontextualised skills and knowledge ’ (Boud and Brew, 2013, quoted in Loads, 2015: 356).</p> <p>‘Quest for more socially situated, culturally imbued understandings and engagement with reflection in practice settings’ (Boud and Walker, 1998; McCardle &amp; Coutts, 2012).</p>

	<p>'Rooted in particularly disciplinary contexts, with distinctive protocols, methods, conventions and literatures' (Akerlind, 2017:35).</p>
<p>What incidents, experiences and events do creative arts lecturers refer to when talking about reflecting on their teaching?</p>	<p>'Written accounts of reflection viewed as educational 'Invisible ink' detached from disciplinary settings' (Bleakley, 1999, cited in Clegg <i>et al.</i>, 1999).</p> <p>'Disciplinary practitioners used to working with unclear boundaries, relatively unspecified theories and who might deal with loosely defined problems' (Kreber, 2009).</p> <p>'More accurate understanding of the actual experiences needs and concerns of the individual' (Locke <i>et al</i> 2016: 81).</p> <p>'Reflection may be more dynamic in the creative arts' (Bradbury <i>et al</i>, 2010).</p> <p>'Critical incidents and disruptions can stimulate action, change of direction, identification of a problem, a solution or a revelation' (Burnard <i>et al.</i>, 2006:10).</p> <p>'Arts disciplines may provoke a more divergent attitude to problem solving, which defy neat solutions to practice' (Eisner, 2002).</p> <p>'Critical conversations on where reflection in, on and for action can lead, have been lost in the evanescence of competing needs, space and time '(Burnard <i>et al.</i>, 2006: ix).</p>
<p>How might creative arts lecturers' talk about reflection on teaching be helpful for a teaching and learning development manager?</p>	<p>'Matches and mismatches between academics' and developers' views of how best to foster reflective teaching development' (Akerlind, 2007:35).</p> <p>'Widespread espousal of reflection as key to effective learning has meant that its meaning is assumed to be obvious to all' (James and Brookfield, 2014:26).</p>

*Table 2.1: Research questions derived from the review of literature around reflective teaching*

Given the aim of this research project to explore the more interpretive elements of reflective teaching in the creative arts, the questions have been designed to encourage participants to reflect on their teaching in their own words and through the lens of their own disciplines. The research questions are phrased more openly, to allow for fluidity, rather than the perception of exhaustive boundaries. In this way, the research has the capability to meander into new and unexpected areas, to gain a helpful understanding of reflective teaching practices in the creative arts.

RQ1: What words, phrases and metaphors do creative arts lecturers use when talking about reflecting on their teaching?

RQ2: What incidents, experiences and events do creative arts lecturers refer to when talking about reflecting on their teaching?

RQ3: How might creative arts lecturers' talk about reflection on teaching be helpful for a head of learning and teaching?

The research is intended to explore reflection in the local setting of creative arts to take account of the particularities of disciplinary teaching practices and accommodate the actual lecturers involved and the practice that is being reflected upon (Boud and Walker, 1998). Data has been collected by inviting creative arts lecturers to talk about reflection using their own disciplinary frames of reference. From these individual encounters, the intention has been to draw out emerging themes and key responses to reflection in creative arts teaching practice. These may be varied and complex to enable the critical deployment of multiple discourses (Barnett, 2008; Bleakley, 1999). The themes to arise from the analysis and reflection have enabled me to construct meanings that have informed my own awareness and potential understandings of reflective teaching in the creative arts.



## Chapter 3: Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

The first two chapters have explored the context and then the literature relevant to the research project. In this chapter an explanation of the methodological choices and decision-making stages are described to meet the aims of this research project. To explore how creative arts lecturers in higher education talk about reflecting on their teaching, the following research questions (RQ) are deployed:

RQ1: What words, phrases and metaphors do creative arts lecturers use when talking about reflecting on their teaching?

RQ2: What incidents, experiences and events do creative arts lecturers refer to when talking about reflecting on their teaching?

RQ3: How might creative arts lecturers' talk about reflection on teaching be helpful for a head of learning and teaching?

The exploration of reflective 'talk' which underpins the research project, represents my own quest for authentic forms of practice-based academic development, to augur understanding of everyday reflection in the creative arts, embedded in the social context of real-world relationships (Boud and Brew, 2013; Boud and Walker, 1998; Loads and Campbell, 2015; Roxa and Martensson, 2009). The exploration of talk is also influenced by socio-cultural perspectives, where learning and teaching take place through engaging with meaningful activities in context (Boud and Brew, 2013; Loads and Campbell, 2015; Roxa and Martensson, 2009). As is highlighted in Chapter 1, in recent years, I have been drawn to more dialogic forms of reflective teaching which promote 'professional conversations about teaching' (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014; Land, 2001; Roxa and Martensson, 2009).

Reflecting on teaching with creative arts lecturers in this research inquiry offers a unique learning opportunity for critique and alternative explanations (Ashwin *et al.*, 2017:51). Communication and dialogue, where meaning is negotiated, are important components of cultural construction and the development and maintenance of communities (Roxa and Martensson, 2009). Talking with others is also seen as central to the development of an open, critical perspective to move reflection from implicit to explicit thoughts and understandings (Akerlind, 2017:35; Roxa and Martensson, 2009). This dialogic form of reflective teaching aligns with the discursive and situated nature of professional educational

learning (Boud and Walker, 1998), and accommodates the crucial role of dialogic interaction in developing shared understandings of teaching practice (Brookfield, 1995).

The chapter begins by positioning the research in an interpretive-qualitative tradition followed by an outline and discussion of the specific research methods and research tools used to generate the data for the study, the practical details and ethical considerations. The third section outlines the methods and stages of data analysis and the ways in which authenticity and trustworthiness were considered.

## 3.2 Research Design

The research design is underpinned by an epistemological assumption that there are multiple and varying levels and types of reflection in disciplinary teacher settings (Ashwin *et al.*, 2015; Boud and Brew, 2013; Boud and Walker, 1998) and that there may be a particular distinctiveness to reflective teaching practices in the creative arts (Burnard *et al.*, 2007; Kreber and Cranton, 2009). The following section justifies the selection of an interpretive paradigm situated in a social-constructivist world view. The former allows for the plurality of realities and interpretations invoked by talking about reflecting on teaching in the creative arts in higher education, whilst the latter enables a relativist, subjectivist stance where basic generation of meaning about reflecting on teaching is social, arising in and out of interaction with the creative arts lecturer participants.

### 3.2.1 *Interpretive paradigm*

Major studies exploring contextual influences on reflective teaching practices such as those by Brockbank and McGill (1998), Roxa and Martensson (2009) and Bell and Mladenovic (2015) have used an interpretive-qualitative approach to their research. These studies adopt methodologies that seek to understand how participants have experienced and give meaning to social phenomenon. Qualitative methods utilised in these studies include a range of data collection methods, especially semi-structured interviews (Cousins, 2009; Holstein and Gubrium, 1995; Kvale, 1996) which enable researchers to gather rich empirical data about the lives and perspectives of individuals. This section outlines the choice of paradigm or ‘basic set of beliefs that guides action’ (Guba, 1990: 17) for the design of this research framework and how this aligns with the intended research inquiry into how creative arts lecturers in higher education talk about reflection in their teaching. It will be argued that considering the research aim, which focuses on understanding (interpreting) how creative arts lecturers talk about reflecting on their teaching, that an interpretive inquiry and qualitative research approach was deemed most appropriate.

The interpretive paradigm, in contrast to its normative counterpart, is characterised by a concern for the individual, with the central endeavour to understand the subjective world of human experience (Cohen *et al.*, 2011: 17). This school of thought aligns well with the intention of this research which has involved being situated in reflective dialogue with individual creative arts lecturers, from the subjective substance of individual's lives and social worlds to the processes of meaning making (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995: 73). Indeed, as foregrounded in the Rationale (Chapter 1), an important element of this enquiry, has been to explore the multiplicity of teacher reflectivity of lecturers in the creative arts, where 'reflective practice conversations might include questioning and formulating multiple solutions to daily challenges that arise in arts practice' (Burnard *et al.*, 2006:10).

The advantages of utilising an interpretive framework include being able to accommodate diversifying views and more deeply describe and interact with the phenomenon in question, in this case the reflective teaching talk of creative arts lecturers in higher education. Adopting this research strategy has also provided an opportunity to apply leverage to the key method of interactive interviews which 'allows researchers to investigate and prompt things that we cannot observe, to probe an interviewee's thoughts, values, prejudices perceptions, views, feelings and perspectives.

### *3.2.2 Social-constructivism*

As highlighted in the Rationale, this research inquiry intends to explore highly situated professional and personal accounts of reflection, where reflection is socially constructed and 'mediated, influenced and shaped by individual understandings and values as well as external constraints and expectations' (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014:19). The influence of social constructivism within this study is in alignment with the philosophical origins of creative arts practice, which are based on the presumption that each and every individual creates his/her own knowledge, and that such knowledge is primarily created through his/her interaction with the environment and other people/communication with society (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978; Rogoff, 1990). Oldfather *et al.*, (1998: 115) defines social constructivism as a type of knowledge that is constructed within a social context, with a strong emphasis on sensemaking within that context, not outside of it. This is why the research is focused on lecturer's 'perceptions of reality' (Pring, 2000: 60), promoting an understanding of the contextuality and multiplicity of knowledge and a vision of humans as 'creative problem solvers in constant interaction with' the natural world (Stubley 1992: 4). The inference here is that this a reality 'socially constructed' and there are as many realities

or multiple realities as there are social constructions. This co-constructed perspective looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world' (Crotty, 2003:67). This interpretation links directly to a constructivist epistemology where 'knowledge is a construction reflecting the world, not independent of our deliberations, but as something constructed by them' (Pring, 2000:44).

Social constructivism recognises that events, realities, meanings, experiences and so on, are the effect of discourses operating within society (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 81). Since constructivist researchers tend to rely on participants viewpoints about the situations under investigation (Cresswell, 2003: 3), this type of inductive research tends to be interview based and interpretivist in nature. Accordingly, the use of interviews as a data collection method in inductive research is justified by its connection to everyday conversations and the centrality of interactions, exchanges, negotiation of meaning between two parties (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). This is why, for example, semi structured interviews have been chosen as the key research method. By using an interview schedule (Appendix A: Interview Schedule), this acts as a guide rather than a fixed set of questions, to enable a more fluid conversation that might unfold in unexpected ways (Roulston, 2013)

This socially constructed reality aligns with the intention of this research, to engage in reflective dialogue with creative arts lecturers, to explore the forms, interpretations and underpinning values of reflective practice in the creative arts. In recognising the influence of social constructivism on the research design, this also provides a lens for analysis, which focuses on the socio-cultural contexts and structural conditions that help to construct how participants talk about reflection on their teaching. By adopting a more socially constructed stance, this 'asserts that things do not and cannot have essence because they are defined interpersonally in a network of relationships' (Patton, 2016: 121). This positioning has shaped the application of a 'constructionist thematic analysis' (Braun and Clarke, 2006) to accommodate multiple interpretations (rather than a truth that can be determined by a process of measurement).

### *3.2.3 Researcher positioning*

A central consideration early on in the design and execution of this project has been my positioning as an interpretivist researcher and the impact of my own values and beliefs about teaching and learning. By adopting an interpretive-qualitative methodology, this has provided the space to recognise my centrality and influence in the research process and to acknowledge my own bias in data gathering and interpretation (Fine, 2002; Yanos and

Hopper, 2008). I have therefore considered my role as an educational leader in reflective teaching, allied to institutional drivers for teaching excellence.

As a former librarian and now Associate Dean of Student Experience, I have personal opinions about creative arts reflective teaching practice, and these biases and assumptions cannot objectively be completely put aside. This is why the data generated for this research, has been collected at two external universities, rather than my own employing institution. But, rather than attempt to expunge biases and assumptions, this research acknowledges the subjective positions taken to the research topic and research participants to show how I have developed my reflexivity. This has involved critically reflecting not only on my different role, position and assumptions, but on the choices of methods and their applications while engaging with participants (Punch, 2002).

Keeping a reflective journal throughout these research stages, has been one way of developing both personal reflection and reflexivity in this qualitative research project, looking for the 'warm and the cool spots, the emergence of positive and negative feelings, the experiences I want to avoid and when I felt moved to act in roles beyond those necessary to fulfil my research need' (Peshkin, 1988: 18). As Roulston (2010) outlines, reflexivity 'requires critical self-reflection of the ways in which researcher's social background, assumptions, positioning and behaviour impact on the research process' (Roulston, 2010: 116). A strong influence on the approach I took to interviewing, for example, was the idea of viewing each interaction as a 'social encounter' (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995) where the interviewer and interviewee co-construct data, generating situated understandings and possible ways of talking about the research topic (Roulston, 2010: 60). This style of reflective interviewing, has been insightful at the data analysis and interpretation stages, and has also guided responses to the third research question ('How might creative arts lecturers' talk about reflection on teaching be helpful for a head of learning and teaching?'). For, as Taylor and Bogdan (1998) argue, as researchers we draw on our first-hand experience with the research setting to make sense of our data.

The disadvantages of using an interpretive-qualitative methodology are that that the ontological view tends to be subjective rather than objective (Mack, 2010) and research outcomes will therefore be affected by the researcher's own interpretations, belief system, ways of thinking or cultural preference. As Fine (2002) argues, even a 'giving voice' approach 'involves carving out unacknowledged pieces of narrative evidence that we select, edit, and deploy to border our arguments' (2002:218). To mitigate against this, I found it helpful to position myself as a "traveller", involved in the co-construction of whatever

happens in conversations with my participants (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2008). This positioning helps to shift from a perspective of an insider looking around, to an outsider looking in (Muchmore, 2002).

By declaring these subjectivities as embedded and essential to the research design process, this has changed my researcher positioning from hiding behind a pre-set agenda, to becoming visible as a knowledge-producing participant in my interactions with participants. In this way, I have attempted to acknowledge the 'diverse ways of seeing and experiencing the world through the different contexts and cultures' (Hammersley, 2013) implied within an interpretive-qualitative methodology.

### *3.2.4 Research approaches*

Having established that the overall methodology is situated in an interpretive tradition it is necessary to reflect on the specific research approaches that informed the collection, organisation and analysis of the data.

Given the aforementioned discussion on positioning and lack of understanding of creative arts reflective practices, it has been important that the research design includes research methods that can accommodate divergent and subjective responses to situations and phenomena. The nature of the knowledge gathered in this study is relative and subjective knowledge, generated through 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973) to describe events in context. The findings are exploratory with a search for patterns and themes in order to suggest theories in response to the research questions.

Therefore, it made sense that the data be gathered through qualitative research methods which is sympathetic to these ontological and epistemological considerations. This is why in the next section on data collection, the use of semi-structured interviews and reflexivity are outlined as the key research methods for this study. The former makes better use of the knowledge-producing potentials of dialogue by enabling interviewer and interviewee to work together to develop understandings (Cousins, 2009: 73); and reflexivity provides a learning space for researchers to have an inner dialogue about their presuppositions, choices, experiences and actions during the research process (Ortlipp, 2000).

### **3.3 Data Collection:**

The previous section has outlined the appropriateness of the interpretive paradigm to guide the qualitative research design. This section will summarise why and how the data was

collected using semi structured interviews and how reflexivity was used throughout the research involves a process of on-going mutual shaping between researcher and research (Attia and Edge, 2017: 33). This is followed by an outline the considerations given to the sample; the use of institutional contacts; the recruitment of the participants; the inclusion of a pilot; and the ethical considerations.

### *3.3.1 Semi-structured interviews*

Semi-structured interviews were selected for as the main data collection method for this inquiry because of their strength in providing space for the respondents' narrative positioning, communicative contexts, conversational organisation and multivocality (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995). The selection of this research method augured well for the aims of this research inquiry, to gain a better understanding of the forms and interpretations of reflective practice in the creative arts. Potentially, semi structured interviews offer a more engaging, empathetic method of interviewing staff, enabling the researcher to vary the order and wording of the questions and to open up further explanations, through probes and follow-up questions to reveal more nuanced perspectives (Cousins, 2009).

Semi-structured interviews are differentiated from entirely naturalistic and unstructured conversations and are in contrast to structured interviews or questionnaires that use closed questions, where there might be a fixed range of responses to each question. Semi-structured interviews can be open without a pre-determined sequence of questions, but with a protocol that serves as a guide and provides a reminder of the topics to be covered (Cousins, 2009; Hays and Singh, 2012).

Following these principles through, I constructed an interview schedule (Appendix A: Interview Schedule) of prepared and impromptu questions around the three main research questions, including main question, probes and follow-up questions (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). In constructing the schedule, I drew upon Kvale's (1996: 30) key characteristics for qualitative research interviews. Kvale advises the use of natural language to reveal nuanced descriptions; the adoption of a deliberate openness to data and phenomena, to be able to accept ambiguity and contradiction; to accept that the interview will provoke new insights and changes in the participants' themselves; and to regard interviews as an interpersonal encounter.

The interviews were voice recorded with the participants' permission and were later transcribed verbatim.

### 3.3.2 Reflexivity

For the purpose of this research inquiry, reflexivity is articulated as an integral part of the research design, given my declared intention to make explicit the connections between my subject positions and the ways in which these may impact the outcomes of this study (3.2.3 Researcher Positioning). Cognisant of the importance of reflexivity to this research topic due to the aforesaid pedagogic involvement in reflective teaching activities, reflexivity has been conceptualised as an opportunity to question and explain my thinking throughout the research process. Through the use of a reflective journal (Appendix I: Excerpts from reflective journal 2018-20), I have been able to regularly examine the process, presuppositions, choices, experiences, and actions taken at the different stages of the research. By affirming these subjectivities, I have problematised my epistemological position of privilege, as the knowing researcher, declaring my thinking throughout the research process (Dahlberg *et al.*, 2002). The journal has also provided opportunities to consider the responses to my research from colleagues and the broader academic community, as part of a dialogue around the research methodology, findings and conclusion.

Documenting my research journey as an integral part of the research inquiry, has provided a record of gradually altering observations, ethical considerations and a reshaping of the findings and analysis. As Ortlipp asserts, keeping a reflective journal can also make the messiness of the research visible for those who read it and avoid producing, reproducing and circulating the discourse of the research as a neat and linear process (Ortlipp, 2000: 697). An example of making the 'messiness of the research visible' (Ortlipp, 2000:696) can be viewed in an early extract in my reflective journal, as I wrestled with my research questions:

*'It occurred to me, as I was talking to a colleague about my research, that my own explanation of the research topic needed revising – I sounded hesitant about why I was interested in finding out about lecturers' talk. Was I hoping to find a way to connect with creative arts lecturers? I ask myself once again, why am I interested in how they talk, as opposed to what's behind the talk? I ponder this for a while driving home and come up with the following: I want the opportunity to hear the talk itself, to put aside my biases and assumptions about what I think creative arts lecturers are interested in with regards to their teaching and just immerse myself in the talk. From this immersion, I want to be able to draw out themes, metaphors, ways of seeing teaching in the creative arts.'*

*Excerpt from researcher's reflective journal, May 2018*



Reflection is considered a crucial cognitive practice in the research field (Dahlberg *et al.*, 2002; Steier, 1995) used to legitimate and validate research procedures. But, as Hertz (1997) notes, the reflective researcher does not merely report the findings of the research, but questions and explains how these findings are constructed, as part of a collaborative, dialogic process. Recording my experiences, reasoning, and overall impact throughout the research process has enabled a more fluid articulation of the research questions and a better understanding of my own journey through the research. However, I am aware that the use of a reflective journal could be conceived as a form of 'reflexive introspection' (Finlay, 2002: 215), privileging my perspective over participants' voices. Taking a cue from the social-constructivist philosophical influence on my research design, I am not seeking knowable truths about self and others. Rather than attempting to control researcher values through method or by bracketing assumptions, I have conceptualised reflexivity in this project as an opportunity to develop my reflexivity and to consciously acknowledge those values. This approach to reflexivity continues into the next section, as I describe the practice interview stages.

### *3.3.3 Conducting practice interviews*

Like all data gathering techniques, interviews lend themselves to formal training and ongoing practice (Rabionet, 2011). Whilst I already had some experience of conducting educational research, I consider it important to trial my data collection process prior to entering the field, to identify and address any unforeseen issues that might arise. As Burgess *et al* (2009), surmise, 'collecting data has a habit of turning out very differently if you are in a different context, different time and working on a different research project' (2009: 78). I would be conducting my interviews in unfamiliar locations, with participants I did not know and using recording equipment that I had never used before. As well as providing an opportunity to apply the research design, practising the interviews provided an opportunity to try out research techniques and methods associated with the semi structured interview technique, like open ended questions, establishing rapport, and probing questions (Cousins, 2009).

I scheduled in two practice interviews with creative arts lecturers who met my selection criteria (see section 3.3.4). In preparation for the practice interviews, I sent each participant a copy of the participant guidance sheet (Appendix B : Participant Guidance). This was helpful, as I realized that I had missed out some important information for participants about the aim of the study. It also highlighted that participants often have questions about their participation beforehand. For example, one of the practice participants asked me if they

needed to know about the theory of reflective teaching before taking part in the research. Once I had addressed participant questions, I asked each to sign the consent form (Appendix E: Participant Consent Form) and confirmed each interview by email, asking each participant to suggest an interview date and location. Enabling flexibility for each participant was an important characteristic of the semi structured interview/qualitative-interpretive methodology of my research strategy, but it also mitigated against some of the power asymmetries already outlined. Building in this type of flexibility also reminded me that my actual participants would need the same choice with time and location and that I would need to liaise with institutional contacts on resource and security arrangements ahead of each interview.

In my first interview, I started off by asking my participant to tell me about their journey into creative arts teaching. Whilst this proved a useful icebreaking question, I quickly realized that I needed to have spent a bit more time talking with participants about the rationale for my research and how I would be conducting the interview. I could not assume that the participant information sheet (Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet) had been fully absorbed. I also realized that this introductory stage was essential for negotiating trust and establishing rapport. The lecturer described her personal journey into teaching, which was helpful and enlightening, but the interaction was steering into aspects of her creative practice that were not really addressing my research questions. When I listened to the recording, I realized that the participant was expressing her own epistemological uncertainty by trying to ascertain what I wanted:

*'I wondered whether my explanation of my research topic needed revising. I had assumed my participant had read the participant sheet but she kept asking me why I was doing the research. I felt slightly annoyed that she had not read it, but then realized that perhaps this was her way of establishing authenticity; by getting me to explain in my own words why and how I was doing the research'.*

*Excerpt from researcher's reflective journal, June 2019*

I had not fully appreciated that the depth, honesty and quality of participant response is dependent on the relationship that develops between the interviewee and the interviewer (Josselson, 2013). The use of semi-structured interviewing in particular, requires a horizontal, relational approach because of the crucial rapport-building aspects (Silverman, 2013). Achieving this level of interaction became an important consideration in my research inquiry. To set participants at ease and to maximise the ethical and methodological advantages of semi structured interview research practices, I utilized Brown and

Danaher's (2019) CHE Principles of *Connectivity*, *Humanness* and *Empathy* for rapport building. According to Brown & Danaher (2019: 80) connectivity or establishing initial rapport, is an important element in interviews, particularly when the researcher is concerned with gaining entry or participant consent. I ensured that initial contact with participants by email was professional and that I responded to questions and was clear about the purposes of the project and their involvement (Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet). During the interviews, I used first names when appropriate to do so, and became aware of physical gestures and body language that maintained an open, friendly approach that includes techniques like maintaining eye contact, tone of voice and smiling (Pitts and Miller-Day 2007). I also considered the second principle of humanness, which is founded on the value of reciprocity or what Pitts and Miller-Day (2007:180) likened to a 'reciprocal symbiotic relationship'. I made a point during the interviews, for example, of sharing my own critical incidents with reflective teaching in the creative arts, which helped to establish authenticity with participants and enabled them to share more of their own perspectives on reflective teaching. The third CHE principle of Empathy is closely connected with the rapport-building process. This was demonstrated by each party's willingness to be open to the views of the other. Paraphrasing and checking understanding were the key tools used here, but it was also helpful to look at the interview schedule (Appendix A: Interview Schedule) for follow-up questions to probe for further information.

The experience of the practice interviews had reminded me how important it is to give participants an opportunity to talk freely about their teaching. As a consequence, in my second interview, I spent a bit of time introducing the research inquiry and why I was interested in the topic. This established a mutuality between researcher and participant, enabling them to feel comfortable to tell their story. For example, my second interviewee used the term, a bad day in teaching. I wondered what a bad day in teaching would look like, so at the first opportunity I asked them. This method of recording thoughts as I went along, proved a useful way of connecting with my participant and better understanding their lived realities of creative arts teaching.

Giving enough space for participants to talk became an important consideration as I listened to the recordings of the interview and began transcribing the data. It also became apparent that conducting semi-structured interviews was a balancing act: on the one hand, not interrupting participants so that they can say what they want to say; on the other, carefully facilitating the dialogue so as to cover the aspects outlined in the research questions. I also reflected on the time it was taking to conduct the interviews, make notes during and after the data collection and then transcribing the data. All of this documentation took time and proved

quite a messy process of note taking, memo-ing, moving back and forth through the data to make sense of the interaction. As I typed up the transcripts, I also noticed how eager the participants were to illustrate their knowledge and experience of reflective teaching. My reflections on the practice interview experience confirmed that I had made the right decision to conduct the interviews for my major study at two external creative arts universities. I also noted in my diary that I needed to finesse my active listening skills, finding ways to summarise my understanding to participants, without interrupting the flow of dialogue. The following sections outline the operationalisation of the research process, from recruitment and selection of participants to the generation and analysis of data.

### *3.3.4 Recruitment and selection of participants*

In order to answer the research questions, the intention of this research inquiry was to gather data about creative arts lecturers' reflective talk in higher education. Given the issues around positionality, conducting such a study in my employing university would not have been appropriate. The population for this study was therefore recruited from a homogenous sample of lecturers currently teaching creative arts in higher education. Creative arts subjects were broadly defined as fine art, design, performing arts and media studies: theatre and performing arts, music, film, creative writing, graphic design, photography, visual arts, and creative arts education. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary.

The participant pool was recruited using 'purposive and convenience sampling' (Patton, 2002), given that my intent was not to generalize from the sample to a population, or suggest that the sample was representative, but to explain, describe, and interpret (Maxwell, 2013). Purposive sampling, also called judgment sampling, is a non-random technique that does not require underlying theories or sets of participants, enabling the researcher to recruit respondents who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience (Bernard, 2002). Convenience sampling meanwhile, provides members of the target population that meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate are included for the purpose of the study (Etikan *et al.*, 2016). The advantage of using purposive-convenience sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases which as Patton (2002) suggests, 'yield(s) insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations' (Patton, 2002: 230). The disadvantages of using this type of sampling is the level of bias given the subjectivity of the selection mechanism. These sampling methods have been chosen to reflect the interpretive-qualitative nature of this study, where reference to the population is not the highest priority. As Emmel (2013) notes, with purposive sampling, the researcher is

reflexive and makes decisions in response to empirical findings and theoretical developments that occur in the study. Given the iterative nature of my research my sample size was largely a trade-off between breadth and in depth. However, I also built in the possibility for 'snowball sampling' (Newby, 2016: 254) due to my lack of knowledge of the participants at each of the two universities chosen for the study. This flexibility enabled respondents to identify other possible respondents for the research and was also useful if participants pulled out at short notice.

To ensure that the data collected provided the information richness I was seeking, my sample (Table 3.1 'Participant socio-cultural and structural data') consisted of creative arts lecturers, purposefully selected based on a suitable combination of the following criteria:

- Discipline: theatre and performing arts, music, film, creative writing, graphic design, photography, visual arts, or creative arts education
- Type of creative arts lecturing role: Programme Leader, Course Leader, Lecturer, Senior Lecturer.
- Teaching in higher education
- Employed at one of the two specialist creative arts universities (University A or University B)

<i>Pseudonym</i>	<i>Lecturing role</i>	<i>Discipline</i>	<i>Years in HE</i>	<i>University</i>
<i>Carl</i>	Interim Course Leader	Creative Computing	6	A
<i>Eleanor</i>	Subject Leader	Creative Education	7	A
<i>Katherine</i>	Unit Leader	Drama and Performance	2	B
<i>Mary</i>	Associate Dean: Learning and Teaching	Design Studies	15	A
<i>Mindy</i>	Course Leader	Graphic Design	3	3
<i>Pedro</i>	Unit Leader/Critical Studies Lecturer	Architecture/Critical Studies	2	2
<i>Phil</i>	Subject Leader/Senior Lecturer	Illustration	2	A
<i>Ruth</i>	Course Leader	Animation	16	B
<i>Tim</i>	Course Leader	Fine Arts	12	B
<i>Trevor</i>	Course Leader	Fashion	14	A

Table 3.1 Participant socio-cultural and structural data

The research required negotiation with institutional contacts in the two universities to secure support for the project and then further negotiation with the lecturers within the schools to participate in the project. The areas for negotiation with the institutional contacts were in gaining consent for the interviews to take place in the universities and permission for the data to be used anonymously. The areas for negotiation with lecturers included the nature of the study and assurances around anonymity.

Contacts at the two institutions selected for the study, agreed to place a poster (Appendix C: Recruitment Poster) on the university's staff portal or newsletter. These contacts also acted

as the conduits for gaining institutional informed consent (Appendix D: Institutional Consent Form) which sometimes yielded further questions about institutional participation. In both cases I received further questions from these contacts about what institutional participation would involve. The additional questions (*italicised*) and responses given, are detailed here:

- *It is important to be clear on if someone withdraws the point when their data will not be included for analysis. For example, I assume the right for non-inclusion will go up to transcription and perhaps isolated analysis (coding/thematic analysis) pre-collective thematic/coding? In both your institution's policy and the consent form this is not clear - can you please adapt?*

Under the 'Data Subject Rights' section of Data Protection and Storage Guidance Policy (2018,p2) which is referenced in the Consent Forms and Guidance, 'Research participants have a general right to opt-out of further processing. If they do opt-out, there is no need to delete their research data but it should normally only be used in an anonymised form or as part of an aggregated data set. GDPR also grants individuals other rights in relation to their personal data, including the right to access the data, the right to object to processing, the right to request that the data be deleted (the right to be forgotten), the right to request that the processing of the data be restricted and the right to request the rectification of inaccurate or incomplete data. These rights are not absolute, and the University considers that they do not apply where personal data is being processed for the purposes of research. If a research participant requests a copy of their personal data, researchers may provide this but are under no obligation to do so

- *As there are only two institutions and a relatively small sample size, how will you protect the identity of the participants and the institution?*

All data will be confidential and anonymised and will be kept in encrypted hard drives. My research inquiry is qualitative with which is influenced by elements of social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978). I am seeking to engage lecturers in reflective talk about their teaching. I am not seeking to make any comparisons between institutions or draw any generalisations. No institutions will be named in this study. These are individual encounters, where I will be making an interpretation of what I find, which will be subjectivist and will undeniably be shaped by my own experiences and background. Each Consent form contains a link to the UOR Data Privacy Notice (attached) detailing for 'Research Participants – How the University of Roehampton uses your personal data'.

- Can you please detail: *'I understand that the personal data collected from participants at [name of the institution] during the course of the project will be used for the purposes outlined above in the public interest.'*

As outlined in the UOR Data Protection and Storage Guidance Policy (2018, p5) personal data processing for research purposes is normally carried out by the University in the public interest, which means that consent from research participants to process personal data is not required. This is separate from ethical consent to participate in a research project, and means that if a research participant withdraws from the study (i.e. withdraws ethical consent), they are not automatically entitled to have their personal data deleted. In order to rely on the public interest as an appropriate legal basis, a researcher must be able to demonstrate that the research methodology represents a targeted and proportionate way of achieving the research aims. This means that there should not be another reasonable and less intrusive way of achieving the same result. A research participant can request that their personal data is erased, but there is no obligation to do so if erasure is likely to render impossible or seriously impair the achievement of the research objectives. In determining whether this is the case, researchers should consider whether the same results could be achieved by anonymising the data.

- *Under GDPR, I did not see a rationale for data being held for 10 years - can you please explain.*

The 10 years is detailed as normal practice in line with Section 7 (Research data produced through the life of the project) in the UOR Records Retention Schedule here: <https://www.roehampton.ac.uk/globalassets/documents/corporate-information/policies/uor-retention-schedule-april-2018.pdf>

These questions and my responses proved helpful for making amendments on participating institutional consent documents (Appendix D: Institutional Consent Form), gaining entry to the field by establishing validity and trustworthiness with the institutions I was visiting.

Once my contacts had promoted the research at their respective institutions, I started to receive emails from potential participants, asking for more information and what involvement might look like. Each potential participant was contacted individually to provide them with information about the interview process and the extent of their involvement (Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet). These interactions proved an important first step in rapport building and helped to engage participants enough to want to participate. Once consent had



been given, I contacted each participant to firm up an interview date and give them the choice of where the interview would take place. In total, I received 20 enquiries about the research and interviewed 10 participants who met the criteria of lecturing in creative arts at a higher education level. Interviews were audio recorded on my Macbook using Quicktime.

### *3.3.5 Ethical considerations*

Ethics approval was sought in accordance with the regulations and requirements of the doctoral programme and guidelines issued by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2018) before any aspect of the research was conducted. By adhering to the BERA (2018) principles for educational research, I conducted my research within an ethic of respect for: the person, knowledge, democratic values, quality of educational research and academic freedom (BERA, 2018: 4). The ethical responsibility has rested with me as the researcher, placing me in a position of power, defining the situation, introducing the topics of conversation and steering the course of the interview. I observed the University of Roehampton 'Code of Good Research Practice', by demonstrating integrity, professionalism and self-regulation throughout the research process; informing myself of developments in relevant subjects and their disciplines; observing fairness and equity; avoiding or declaring conflicts of interest; ensuring the health and safety of those associated with the research; and observing all legal and ethical requirements laid down by the University and other relevant bodies.

The research was also guided by Guillemin and Gillam's (2004) concept of 'ethical mindfulness' in which it is argued that we must critically reflect on the purpose of our research (is it ethically appropriate?) and on the interpersonal aspects of the research (the interactions between the researcher and participants). This sensitivity to self and others was an important characteristic of the reflexivity maintained throughout the research inquiry, from the selection and recruitment of participants to the final stages of writing up of my findings. Any ethical dilemmas encountered through these stages were detailed in my reflective journal. For example, where a participant decided to withdraw from the research, I examined my own actions to assess whether these had contributed to the decision to withdraw and whether a change of approach might have persuaded participants to re-engage (BERA Guideline, 2018: 6). These reflections have been an integral part of the research data collection and analysis.

Negotiating my positionality as the researcher during fieldwork has been a critically important aspect of this project that has required and developed an ethical mindfulness. As

an academic developer teaching reflective practice, working in a creative arts university, there is already a degree of understanding with the subject matter. To offset this familiarity, then participatory approach to the study has helped to make 'the familiar strange' (Mannay, 2010: 94), to privilege the perspective and voices of the creative arts lecturer participants. I also become more visible to participants as a knowledge-producing and active participant in the encounter, able to adapt, modify and add to prepared questions if the flow of the interview suggested it.

An additional consideration during the course of this research inquiry has been the researcher-participant relationship and the care of the 10-12 participants. I was guided by Shank's (2002) four essential notions for an ethical researcher: 'do no harm', 'to be open', 'to be honest' and 'to be careful' (Shank, 2002: 97). These guiding principles proved invaluable when negotiating my entry to the field. Participation in the research was voluntary and participants could withdraw at any time from the research. I also ensured I had counselling support details relevant to both University A and University B, should the interviews stray into uncomfortable emotional territory. Given the dependency on semi structured interviews for data collection, the extent to which these interview interactions went beyond a polite conversation or exchange of ideas would largely depend on the willingness of the participants to share openly their views understandings and perceptions (Kvale, 1996: 125). As I came to realise, this also depended on my ethical stance as the interviewer given that 'a good interview evokes thoughts, feelings, knowledge and experience not only to the interviewer, but also to the interviewee' (Patton, 2016: 495). I did not know the interviewees beforehand, so building relationships with participants became especially important in the early stages of setting up the research interviews. I needed to not only be able to provide guidance to potential participants to outline the aims and objectives of the study (Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet), but also to address any questions about what opt-in participation would involve. Before data generation began, the lecturers were sent a consent form (Appendix C: Participant Consent Form) to be signed which also detailed how they would be informed if any changes to the research design were made and that they would have the option to withdraw consent (Burgess, 2005).

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The previous sections have outlined the considerations given to the data collection within an interpretive framework, using the qualitative methods of semi-structured interviews and reflexivity. In this section, I include a clear description of the area of focus, the analytic framework, and stages and methods used to guide the interpretation (Braun and Clarke, 2006). I also include the tools I have utilised, such as 'diagramming' and NVivo computer

assisted software, to arrive at codes and themes to record, systematise, and disclose the methods and stages of the analysis (Nowell *et al.*, 2017).

#### *3.4.1 Data preparation*

Ethical considerations extended into the data analysis stage of the research. Each participant was debriefed after each interview and confidentiality was reaffirmed. Each of the 10 participants were advised that at the conclusion of the research they would be provided with copies of any reports of the project. All participants names were given pseudonyms (see Table 3.1: Participant socio-cultural and structural data) and the audio recordings were password-encrypted to ensure confidentiality.

Guided by the qualitative-interpretive theoretical framework, I found it helpful to view the data not as a 'report', but as an account – or 'practical displays of the local organisation of social order by the speaker' (Baker, 2004, quoted in Roulston, 2010: 60). I determined that I was not looking for the 'true' voice of the lecturer, because of the earlier acknowledgement (see section 3.2.2 on Social Constructivism) that reality is 'socially constructed' and there are as many realities or multiple realities as there are social constructions. For these reasons, I did not return the transcripts to each participant. I did, however, actively involve participants in my study by asking each participant to send through any additional thoughts after the interview. For example, one of the participants wanted to qualify her interests in reflective practice as seen through a disciplinary lens, feeling she had not had a chance to relay this in the interview:

'When actually, it's not that the whole thing is new, it's just understanding that there is something theoretically that supports what I'm doing in my discipline. And actually recognising that there are cycles of reflection that are referred to in education that are exactly the same as the cycles of reflection in creative practice and the things that are happening all the time.' (Ruth, email interaction, August 2019)

These additional comments proved invaluable for reflecting on my own actions during the interview process and also when it came to transcribing each interview and starting to make sense of the data.

#### *3.4.2 Method of analysis*

Thematic analysis was used as the main method of data analysis, adopting, as Patton (2015) suggests, two primary sources to draw from in organising the analysis: the research questions that were generated during the conceptual and design phases of the study, prior to fieldwork; and the analytic insights and interpretations that emerged during data collection. Thematic analysis is a good match for the research inquiry as it utilises an inductive approach, whereby the themes identified are strongly linked to the data themselves (Patton, 1990). Thematic analysis is not wedded to any pre-existing theoretical framework, so potentially provides an 'accessible and theoretically flexible approach to analysing qualitative data' (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 77) which can be used within different theoretical frameworks.

However, although thematic analysis is flexible, this flexibility can lead to inconsistency and a lack of coherence when developing themes derived from the research data (Holloway and Todres, 2003). This is why the interpretation of the data has been guided by the use of 'constructionist thematic analysis' (Braun and Clarke, 2006), a conceptual framework which is in line with the interpretivist and social constructivist philosophies underlined in Chapters 2 and 3. Holloway and Todres (2003) recommend that consistency and cohesion are promoted by applying and making explicit an epistemological position that can coherently underpin the study's empirical claims. True to the interpretive-social constructivist roots of this research inquiry, I make it clear that I am not seeking to analyse the motivation or individual psychologies of my participants, but instead to theorise the socio-cultural contexts, and structural conditions that have enabled the individual accounts provided. A strong influence on my method of data analysis has been the work of Woolcott (1994) who suggests that thematic analysis draws on three dimensions of data analysis: description, analysis and interpretation: In *description*, the analyst's main purpose is to ask 'what is going on here?' I have used the data from the interviews, the literature and my research journal to answer the first two research questions on the words, phrases, metaphors, incidents, events and experiences used when creative arts lecturers talk about reflection in their teaching; In *analysis*, Woolcott focuses on how things work, to look at the 'essential features and the systematic representation of interrelationships among them' (Woolcott, 1994: 12).; and the *interpretation* stage addressed questions of meaning and context: 'What does it all mean? What is to be made of it all?' (Woolcott, 1994:12). This probing into what can be made of the data enabled me to respond to my third research question on how 'talking about reflection on teaching' might be helpful for a head of learning and teaching. Consequently, the role of coding in this 'search and retrieve' analytic strategy has been threefold: a) noticing relevant phenomena, b) collecting instances of those phenomena

(reassembling and disassembling) and c) analysing these phenomena in order to find commonalities, differences, patterns and structure (Seidel and Kelle, 1995:55-56).

### 3.4.3 Stages of analysis

Utilising Woolcott’s (1994) three dimensions, all stages of the analysis have been documented through a reflective journal and a 5-stage analysis, adapted from those suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), ‘Using thematic analysis in psychology’.

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarizing yourself with the data	Transcribing the data (if necessary); reading and rereading the data; noting down initial ideas
2. Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set; collating data relevant to each code
3. Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes; gathering all data relevant to each potential theme
4. Reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set; generating a thematic “map” of the analysis
5. Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tells; generating clear definitions and names for each theme
6. Interpreting results	The final opportunity for analysis; selection of vivid, compelling extract examples; final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature

Table 3.2: Phases of Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006:87)

I have been mindful of the issue of trustworthiness in thematic analysis and of conducting my research in a rigorous and methodical manner to yield meaningful and useful results ( This is why, as highlighted earlier, I have chosen to acknowledge my positionality as an active, knowledge-producing traveller in the various stages of analysis. This is so as not to deny the active role I have in making sense of the data and identifying patterns and themes, selecting which are of interest and reporting this sense-making to readers (Taylor and Ussher, 2001). The intention is to reveal these subjectivities throughout the stages of analysis.

#### Stage 1: Familiarising myself with the data

In line with the interpretive-qualitative methodology, an inductive, 'bottom-up' approach has been used to transcribe the data by re-listening to the interviews and reviewing the topics discussed and notes made in my reflective journal, to interpret the interview data and generate preliminary analysis (Roulston, 2010.) Although time consuming, I transcribed all 10 audio recordings, inviting an early stage of manual analysis 'pouring over the data, annotating, describing, linking, bringing theory to bear, recalling what others have written, and seeing things from different angles' (MacLure, 2008: 174).

After transcription, each data set was read and re-read and additional notes and interpretations added, marking up the texts using track changes, with marginal keywords, using different colours to highlight chunks of text related to the 3 research questions (Appendix F: Early Memo-ing). This way of working then yielded further reflections in my diary and I also began to draw up an initial set of 'in process' reflections of ideas that had resonated about how respondents had talked about their creative arts teaching. These constant reflections throughout the data analysis process enabled me to think with the data and generate ideas more thoroughly and precisely related to the data.

Throughout this early stage of analysis, I reflected more upon my own active role in the research process, acknowledging my own subjectivities and assumptions about creative arts teaching and learning. This deeper thinking about self, prompted a return to my original rationale for taking up this inquiry and what experiences in my own personal and professional journey, had influenced my positioning on the topic. For example, an early provocation for doing this research had been that creative arts lecturers did not reflect on their teaching. As I wrote in my diary, I had now realised that my perceptions that creative arts lecturers avoid reflective conversations may stem from a lack of understanding of creative arts practices:

*'What I perceive as a deliberate avoidance of pedagogical tools and frameworks, may actually be more wrapped up "imposter syndrome", where lecturers feel that their lack of knowledge about teaching may somehow be exposed and that they might be found out'.*

Notes from researcher's reflective journal, October 2019

Boyzatis (1998) reminds qualitative researchers that; 'cleaning your glasses helps, but conducting qualitative research involves emotional, value-laden and theoretical preconceptions, preferences and world views' (ibid: 8). The 'sensing' of the themes in the data analysis would be predicated on the revelation of some of these subjectivities (Appendix I: Excerpts from Reflective Journal).

## **Stage 2 – Generating initial codes (What is going on here?’ Woolcott, 1994)**

As I prepared to move into the second phase of the research, I found myself with an increasing complexity of ‘in process’ reflections, memos and reflections in my diary. I realised that the messiness of my data would only get messier as I transitioned from the *semantic*: what’s on the surface (i.e. words, phrases, metaphors, events, incidents and experiences) to the *latent*: seeking to identify the features that give a particular form of meaning (i.e. socio cultural contexts and structural conditions that enable the accounts provided). Sorting out the ‘mess’ of my data analysis became somewhat problematic and a provocation – how could I start to reduce the data analysis to manageable proportions, at the same time as staying true to the constructionist ontology of my particular form of thematic analysis?

True to my interpretivist-qualitative methodology, I would not be expecting themes and categories to ‘emerge’ from the data as they were analysed, especially given the acknowledgement of my researcher positionality. Nevertheless, I was not conducting grounded theory either. This paradigmatic anxiety persuaded me of the efficacy of an analytic grid as a means of extracting significant sections of the transcripts, making notes of initial codes of words, phrases, metaphors, incidents, experiences and events taken directly from the narratives (in-vivo coding). I drew up an analytic grid for each of the 10 data sets (Appendix G: ‘Example of an Analytic Grid’). Each grid was organised around the research questions and encouraged me to collect examples of the phenomena and analyse the data for initial commonalities, patterns and common structures. On each grid I was also able to draw on the socio-constructivist underpinning of the research topic by highlighting the socio-cultural and structural conditions experienced by respondents as they talked about reflecting on their teaching. Coding was still tentative and open and the codes I formed at this early stage became ‘heuristic devices for discovery’ (Seidel and Kelle, 1995:58), acting as signposts to the data, reminding me to go back and think about an issue and the data linked to it. As a result, I changed and made links between some codes, dropped and added others.

## **Stage 3 – Searching for themes (How things work, Woolcott, 1994)**

The third phase began when all data had been initially coded and collated, and a list of the different codes identified across the data set had been developed. This phase involved sorting and collating all the potentially relevant coded data extracts into themes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Given the plethora of notes, memos, reflective diaries already mounting up during the various phases of analysis, I was prompted at this point to explore the additionality that NVivo software may give my data analysis. My main rationale for utilising this qualitative software was to facilitate the easier search and retrieval of data segments categorised under the same codes. After a short tutorial, I loaded up all the interview transcripts and began doing some basic search queries, using some of the more common words and phrases I had listed earlier in Phase 1 – words like ‘talk’, ‘work’, and ‘studio’ featured heavily in each data set. As I gained confidence in the software abilities of NVivo, I began to code each data set, with broad, analytic categories. In order to do this, I began a process of decontextualisation, ‘segmenting portions of data and slicing up each data set’ (Tesch, 1990). Attaching codes in this way helped me to identify and re-order my data, allowing me to think about the data in new and varied ways. Indeed, using this software has proven to be a highly productive phase in my data analysis in which I have been able to return to and utilise the memo-ing I had made from the first phase of analysis.

The analysis and interpretation stages have proved a salutary experience, helping me to appreciate my researcher positioning as a ‘traveller’ co-constructing shared discourses (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2008) about reflective teaching in the creative arts. This is opposed to my more typical developer positioning as an excavator, “mining” individual creative educator’s minds. During the collection and analysis stages I became mindful of my tendency to lead questions and steer conversation, rather than go with the flow of the interaction. Each interview was to unfold in unexpected ways (Roulston, 2013), taking me to new and unexplored territories. Steered by the advice from the literature, I listened carefully, following up on unanticipated responses by taking up an interviewee’s term, to check understanding or provide an account for my reasoning on a subject (Kvale, 1996: 45). For example, in the interview with Ruth, where she had mentioned “a bad day in teaching”, I return to this later in the interaction by reminding her of what she said and asking, “So what would a good day in teaching look like?” But sometimes, I seem to miss the opportunity to probe and explore a topic of interest (see reflective entry below). In the interview with Tim, a Fine Arts lecturer, for example, I reflected on being slightly intimidated by his subject knowledge and not feeling able to interrupt his flow:

*As I looked back through Tim’s transcript, I was reminded of how difficult it had been to understand the sheer volume of dense content he had been describing during the*



*interview. What on earth was he talking about when he used words like modalities and fabrication? I remember wondering whether I would ever be able to find a way in to the conversation...I kept clocking all this interesting stuff about creativity and critical thinking, but I just could not find a hook in...*

Notes from researcher's reflective journal, 08/11/2019

Later, in making sense of the data at the analysis stage, I realized that by not interrupting Tim, I had given him the space to talk freely in his everyday fine arts language. By accepting ambiguity and contradiction as part of the socially constructed philosophical premise of this research, it has helped to view each encounter as an unfolding social interaction. This has enabled me to develop a better appreciation of how respondents say what they say within their own terms (Kvale, 2006).

#### **Stage 4: Reviewing Themes (What is to be made of it all? Woolcott, 1994)**

The fourth stage was to make comparisons of the descriptive codes across the interviews, to identify the "pool of meaning" (Marton, 2006) to which each belonged. It was helpful at this point to refer back to the research questions and the literature, extracting key quotations from the whole data set, and place data extracts within their 'pool of meaning' (Appendix H: Relating the codes to the literature'). This exercise proved a fruitful way of reviewing themes and making connections between the data extracts.

During this stage, I reflected on the proliferation of 'accounting devices' (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996: 104) that participants had used to legitimise and justify (and excuse) to produce coherent and plausible constructions of their (participants) world of experience. Looking back through the data, I noticed the proliferation of socially approved vocabularies designed to mitigate or relieve questionable action or conduct in creative arts pedagogy. For example, the recurrent use of 'industry' and 'studio' when talking about difficult teaching moments. I began to view each of my interviews as recounting a cultural story, which embodied particular claims, legitimations or justifications.

#### **Stage 5: Defining and Naming Themes**

The fifth stage involved further analysis to define and name each theme and the overall story the analysis might describe. Helpful tools for this stage in the analysis included my reflective journal, *Mindmeister* brainstorming software and notes made at EdD work in progress presentations. I found it useful to draw visual diagrams that made connections between

disparate sets of codes to see where themes might emerge (Figure 3.1 Diagram of Theme Development). This visual diagramming technique also helped explore and display relationships between themes beyond the linear template of the research questions (Crabtree and Miller, 1999). Following from this, I undertook a process of abstracting, whereby I condensed the codes into deeper conceptual constructs. I continued this until all coded sections were saturated.

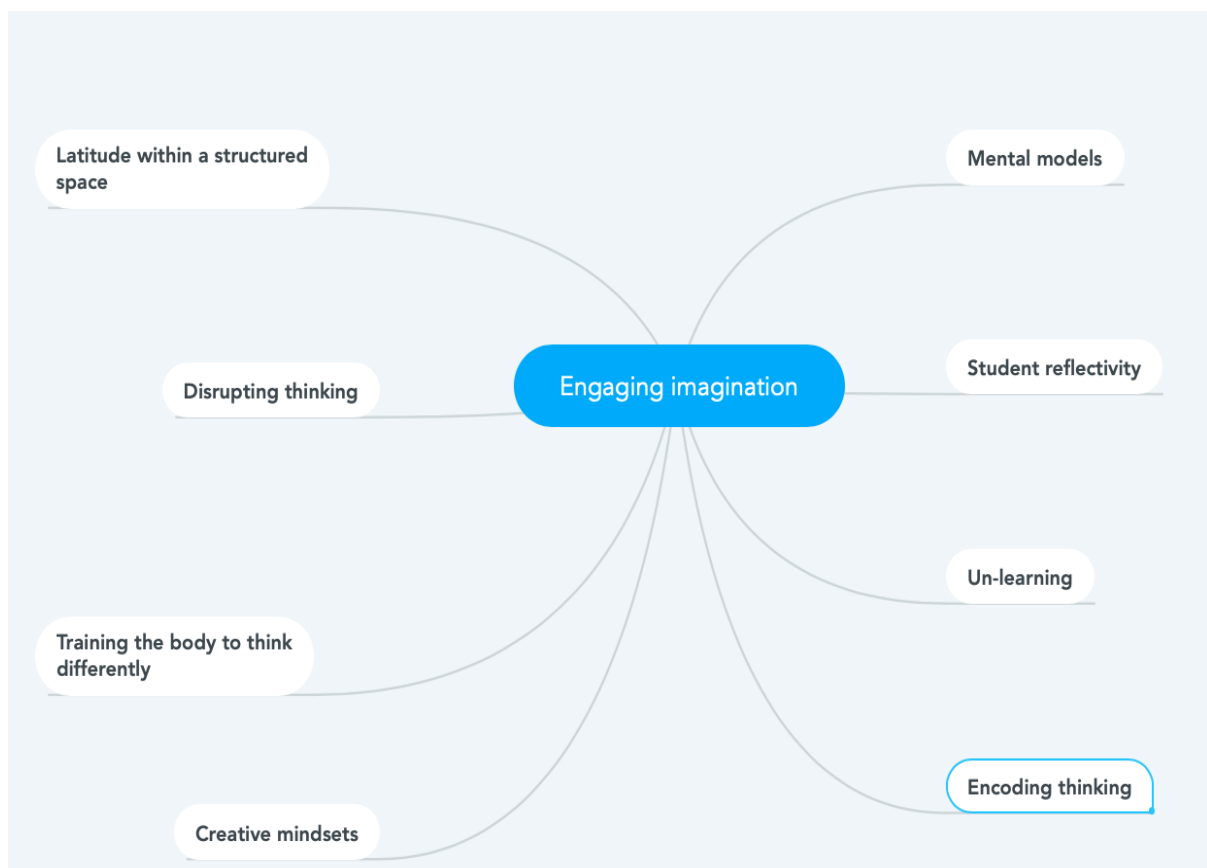


Figure 3.1 Diagram of Theme Development

### 3.5 Chapter Summary

In this chapter the philosophical and theoretical dimensions of the research design used to shape and inform the data collection methods and data analysis have been outlined. The choice of an interpretive paradigm and qualitative research methods is discussed, taking into account both the socio-cultural contexts and structural conditions in which participants talk about reflecting on their teaching. The ways in which the data has been collected through semi-structured interviews have been outlined, alongside reflexivity throughout the different stages of the project. The chapter ends with a discussion of the ways in which the

interpretive-qualitative methodology has influenced the methods and stages of the data analysis and interpretation of the data, through coding and theme development. The subject of the next chapters are the findings from this research project.

## Chapter 4: Findings 1: Reflective teaching talk of creative arts lecturers

### 4.1 Introduction

The literature review has outlined the topic of reflective teaching in the creative arts, why it is relevant and what is known about it, and how this study provides an original contribution to knowledge. The methodology chapter has outlined the research approach and how the data was collected and analysed. This chapter will address the research aim of this study which was to situate myself in a reflective conversation with higher education creative arts lecturer(s) to explore how and what they talk about in relation to their teaching. Qualitative data was collected in the form of semi-structured interviews with ten creative arts lecturers in higher education (Table 3.1: Participant socio-cultural and structural data). The data was transcribed by the researcher and was analysed using 'constructionist thematic analysis' (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

The chapter is structured in five parts. The first describes how the data was interpreted. The second section introduces the ten lecturer participants and their roles in higher education creative arts disciplines, highlighting aspects of each participant's socio-cultural and structural context. The third section focuses on the first research question to explore what words, phrases and metaphors creative arts lecturers use when talking about reflecting on their teaching. The fourth section concentrates on the second research question to explore what creative arts talk about: what incidents, experiences and events creative arts lecturers refer to when talking about reflecting on their teaching. The final section brings together the concepts drawn from the two research questions into a set of four overarching themes seen in Figure 4.3 'Conceptualisation of themes from reflective teaching talk in the creative arts'.

## 4.2 Interpreting the interview data

In line with the interpretive-qualitative methodology and exploratory nature of this inquiry, an inductive, 'bottom-up' approach is used to transcribe the interview data by re-listening to the interviews, reviewing the topics discussed and notes made in a reflective journal, to interpret the interview data and generate insights. The interpretation of the data has been guided by the use of 'constructionist thematic analysis' (Braun and Clarke, 2006); a conceptual framework which is in line with the interpretivist and social constructivist philosophies underlined in Chapters 2 and 3. The framework acts as a socially-constructivist lens on the data, highlighting the awareness that socio-cultural contexts mediate our interpretation of experience fostering a concept of and respect for multiple perspectives (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 1990). Conceptual clusters have been identified that place a particular emphasis on the socio-cultural contexts and structural conditions which influence creative arts lecturers' reflective teaching talk. The development of these conceptual clusters can be located in section 4.4 (Figure 4.1: Conceptual Cluster development for RQ1) and section 4.5 (Figure 4.2: Conceptual Cluster development for RQ2).

## 4.3 Introducing the ten creative arts lecturers

The ten participants interviewed for this study were recruited using the purposive sample criteria detailed in Section 3.3.4 (Table 3.1: Participant socio-cultural and structural data). The interviews were conducted at two small creative arts universities, University A and University B. Institutional profiles were not a sample characteristic, but both Institution A and B are specialist creative arts universities with similar student numbers (n=2500), and academic staff (n=120). Both universities are members of Guild HE, a representative body whose member institutions include some major providers in creative arts subject areas including art, design and media, music and the performing arts. The participants from both universities held a range of senior lecturing roles. Five were course leaders, two were theory lecturers, two were subject lecturers and one was an Associate Dean. Care was taken to recruit participants across a range of creative arts disciplines as detailed in the recruitment and selection criteria.

The creative arts lecturer's profiles that follow highlight aspects of participant's socio-cultural (disciplinary differences and academic cultures) and structural contexts (institutional policy and ideology) which influenced the individual accounts of teacher reflectivity. Each profile was compiled from notes made during data collection and in the early stages of data analysis, providing some contextualisation for the key concepts and themes that will be explored in greater depth in this and later chapters.

## **Carl**

Carl is an experienced practitioner in computer aided design and sound recording. He studied for his original degree at Cambridge University. For the last year, he has been seconded to a role as course leader in creative coding, but he has been employed as an associate lecturer for a number of years at his current institution

Carl has been working in higher education for 6 years, but in that time has had a number of different contracts and positions. The creative coding course he is leading has had low student satisfaction for the last few years and is set to close in a year's time.

Carl says he drifted into higher education by "happenstance" whilst working in the music industry. He sees himself as a bit of an outsider with a strong freelancer identity and prides himself on being slightly 'at odds' with the vocational direction of the institution.

Carl talks a lot about models, toolkits and frameworks, particularly using visualising and diagramming techniques. His main passion seems to be in exploring ways to teach students how to engage in abstract ideas, through small, unthreatening learning tasks.

Carl is currently studying for a PGCert in learning and teaching.

## **Eleanor**

Eleanor is the part time subject leader for a postgraduate certificate in learning and teaching, taught within her employing university. She is from Italy and has a background in school teaching. She is well versed in inclusive pedagogy and has been doing a lot of personal research around creative education.

The postgraduate teaching course that Eleanor leads, has been in place for three years and she is the only permanent member of its teaching staff. She is working hard to develop more capacity for the course and is currently writing the curriculum for an MA in Creative Education.

Eleanor admits to being slightly challenged by creative arts teaching cultures but strives hard to provide meaningful development activities to match the pedagogic realities of the mainly practice based lecturers with which she works. She is particularly aware of dual identities in art and design, and how many lecturers suffer from what might be termed, 'imposter syndrome' juggling roles in either creative practice, research or teaching. She is immensely

proud of the impact she has had already on learning and teaching, especially as this is the first time the institution has had a PGCert.

Whilst at heart Eleanor is striving for a world where there is more student agency, the reality of structural and financial constraints on teaching time has forced her to rethink her pedagogy. She describes circumnavigating systems which do not work for her and creating her own networks because there are no informal channels for talking about teaching in her own institution.

### **Katherine**

Katherine is an experienced practitioner in theatre and dance and has been teaching in higher education for 2 years. She is currently a part time theory lecturer and also works in a local theatre company. She has a PGCert in learning and teaching.

Katherine is very proud of her industry background and her theoretical knowledge of theatre and performance. She has been comfortable in her ways of teaching, which has mainly been through small lectures and seminars. She has recently undergone a restructure of her contextual study role, to align with university goals to develop more multi-disciplinary communities. She is now teaching to larger, mixed student cohorts, which has forced her to rethink her pedagogy. This has made her a little nervous of her teaching knowledge and how best to tackle challenges from students. She welcomes talking these challenges through with more experienced colleagues.

Industry connectivity and preparing students for employment are strong elements of the conversation, but Katherine also believes employability is not solely about having skills that are right for industry: students also need a good contextual knowledge and abilities to think critically, so they can improve industry perspectives. Katherine finds bringing in the employability perspective particularly helpful when students are not engaging with some of the historical and cultural ideas she is teaching.

### **Mary**

Mary is an associate dean in learning, teaching and enhancement. Before this role, she was a subject leader in advertising predominantly teaching postgraduate international students. She has only recently been promoted to this strategic leadership role. She has worked in her present university for eight years and before that held another lecturing role in higher education.

Mary is very knowledgeable about creative arts curricula and pedagogy in art and design. She has a nurturing and supporting teaching style, with strengths in coaching and mentoring. It is important to Mary that students come and talk to her, but if they do not, she has learned not to take this personally. She models the idea of dialogue with students through formative feedback.

During the conversation, Mary recounted some challenging episodes in her teaching career, which she said had forced her to think differently and 'completely tear up' what she had done in previous years. She uses terms like 'turning point' and 'connecting with' when talking about student engagement issues.

She has strong views on teacher development and the importance of understanding creative arts practices before designing new interventions. For example, Mary feels that PGCerts in learning and teaching should focus more on studio-based strategies for engaging dialogically with students, rather than focusing on how best to give a lecture or conduct a tutorial.

## **Mindy**

Mindy is a new course leader in graphic design with an extensive professional background in the graphic communication industry. She has been working in her current institution for about a year, having previously worked in various temporary roles in further education.

Mindy's main preoccupation during the interview was to reflect on the tensions she was experiencing in her role. These tensions included student disengagement with the teaching and learning on the course, especially around the topic of designing for social responsibility. Mindy described the many pedagogic interventions she has put in place to try and address these difficulties but feels a little let down by the support mechanisms in place within her university.

Mindy made some interesting connections between educational reflection and reflection in design practice. She said that design educators are used to going through that reflective process, but that reflection in art and design is much more divergent. She also seemed to be saying how important it was to gather insights from understanding your audience, making a link with her student-centred approaches to teaching.



Mindy is currently studying for an MA in Creative Education.

## **Pedro**

Pedro is an architect from Spain and is employed in a dual role as a contextual studies lecturer and subject leader in architecture. He has been working in higher education for two years. He has completed his RIBA professional accreditation, has an MA in Architecture and is very keen to become more research active by undertaking a PhD, once he has a more permanent contract. As a European with a professional architectural background from Spain, Pedro struggles to understand the learning levels of his students, believing the level of architectural study in Spain to be higher.

Pedro holds two temporary positions with his current institution and is hoping to have a more permanent contract. Numbers are a big part of Pedro's account, whether that be the number of hours he has to teach the students, to do his research or to support the increasingly large class sizes. He talks a lot about being responsible for those numbers, even though he is not a course leader and there is a sense throughout his account that he is constantly trying to 'prove his worth' to the institution.

Pedro's account is peppered with frustrations about the institutional infrastructure and how, if everything was in place and worked, he would have more time to reflect on and improve his teaching. Because things don't work for him, he believes this hampers student learning and has resorted to subverting systems such as student attendance monitoring, so that he can be more in control of his students' experience.

Pedro is currently studying for a PGCert in learning and teaching.

## **Phil**

Phil was a student in illustration and has been a subject leader for the last two years. He has an MA in Illustration but does not have a PGCert. He is being encouraged to apply for senior fellowship accreditation.

Phil saw himself as a "fish not understanding the water they are in". This became a strong metaphor for the conversation, symptomatic of Phil's lack of experience in teaching and his quest to become an inclusive educator rather than a lecturer who sees their role as preparing students for the harsh realities of employment.

He talked a lot about the 'pros' in his dialogue, by which he meant the experienced lecturers who simulated 'horrible' experiences for students that would help them prepare for industry. Phil seemed to fundamentally disagree with this way of being, and saw his role more as a facilitator or communicant in teaching.

Phil came across as a modeller of student-centred teaching, who uses the student experience to challenge and improve his own teaching, rather than blaming the students for not understanding the teaching.

### **Ruth**

Ruth is a course leader for animation and a very experienced lecturer in the creative arts. She has an MA in Animation and is a Senior Fellow of Advance HE. A passionate advocate of Paulo Freire and his work on critical pedagogy, Ruth sees herself as an inclusive educator.

Ruth provided an honest account of the tensions between teacher-led and student-centred approaches, especially within a neo-liberal higher educational context. The students she was teaching were very often coming to college 'with an agenda' based around consumerist values, which she was struggling to challenge. She seemed most enlivened when describing those students who had gone beyond the 'student as passive recipient of knowledge' stereotype and were setting up their own initiatives and communities (i.e. she mentioned her 'Fully Clothed Life Drawing Experience' extra-curricular student initiative).

Ruth talked about the social justice agenda in her own institution and that she had initially struggled to find a way to connect these ideas in her teaching. Then, she had a "eureka moment" when she discovered an article in the animation field which asked 'What's the point of us?', which she was then able to use with students to enable an ethical mindset in animation practice. Ruth believed that ideas in education have to be filtered in through the disciplinary lens to be received authentically by creative arts practitioners. She felt strongly that educational developers needed to find ways to connect in with creative arts lecturers, so that they could relate to educational ideas, i.e. through diagnostic prompts or use of provocation. Authenticism was a strongly held value which emerged during the conversation. It is particularly important to Ruth that the teaching and learning experiences she provides for students are legitimate and meaningful.

### **Tim**

Tim is an experienced course leader in fine art, with a rich background in applied arts practice and performance-based community work. He has been working at his current university for the last twelve years and has recently submitted his PhD.

Tim seems very comfortable in his teaching role and has a real passion for his discipline, partly fuelled by his recent PhD experience. It is all about the students for Tim and his efforts to engage student thinking by creating safe spaces for this to happen. He uses all sorts of pedagogic approaches to disrupt thinking and encourage students to 'un-learn' or 'de-school' their thinking. Many of these ideas model experiential learning technique where students are encouraged to learn by doing. For example, to understand what it feels like to work together collaboratively, Tim talks about getting students drawing over each other to develop a massive abstract drawing they have made together.

Tim uses the words 'structure' and 'process' a lot. This seems surprising considering the divergent thinking he is trying to encourage, but also suggests he has to think carefully about how best to engage a diverse student body in creative arts practices.

## **Trevor**

Trevor is a full-time senior lecturer and course leader in fashion practice. He has a first degree in fashion and an MA from the Royal College of Art. He has been teaching for a long time in his current university and before that held various roles in the fashion industry.

Trevor is comfortable in his leadership role and fascinated by ideas in education as a means of improving the student experience. He strongly believes in an atelier approach to teaching fashion, encouraging studio-based and dialogic approaches, which are largely tutor led. At the same time, he encourages students to explore their own diversity as a means of 'finding themselves in the curriculum'.

There is a sense that Trevor does not really find lecture theatre education that helpful or reliable for creating the kinds of individuals he thinks the fashion industry needs. However, Trevor does value the importance of theory and culture in underpinning creative arts practice, believing students need to know 'where they are coming from'. Research and inspiration are key for Trevor and he talks about 'pushing students away' from just producing visually appealing sketchbooks to evidence their inspiration and the impact of their design thinking.

Trevor's industry awareness and keenness to impart this to his students, are a key part of the interview. He 'name-checks' throughout the conversation and reels off an impressive list of companies with whom he has worked and has connections.

#### 4.4 Ways of talking about reflecting on teaching in the creative arts

In this section, I address the first of my research questions by exploring creative art lecturer talk: the words, phrases and metaphors the ten creative arts lecturers used when reflecting on their teaching. The research question is drawn from the rationale in Chapter 1 and the literature review in Chapter 2, which identified the need for academic developers to become more familiar with the material, cultural and interpretive circumstances of reflective teaching in the creative arts.

The following discussion and analysis draw upon the interview data, to illuminate the ways the lecturers talk about their teaching in creative arts disciplines in higher education settings. The interviews enabled a context-specific conversation in which participants reflected on their teaching roles using their own discursive repertoires and terms of reference. An illustration of the development of the conceptual clusters can be seen in Figure 4.1 ('Illustrative example of Conceptual Cluster development for RQ1').

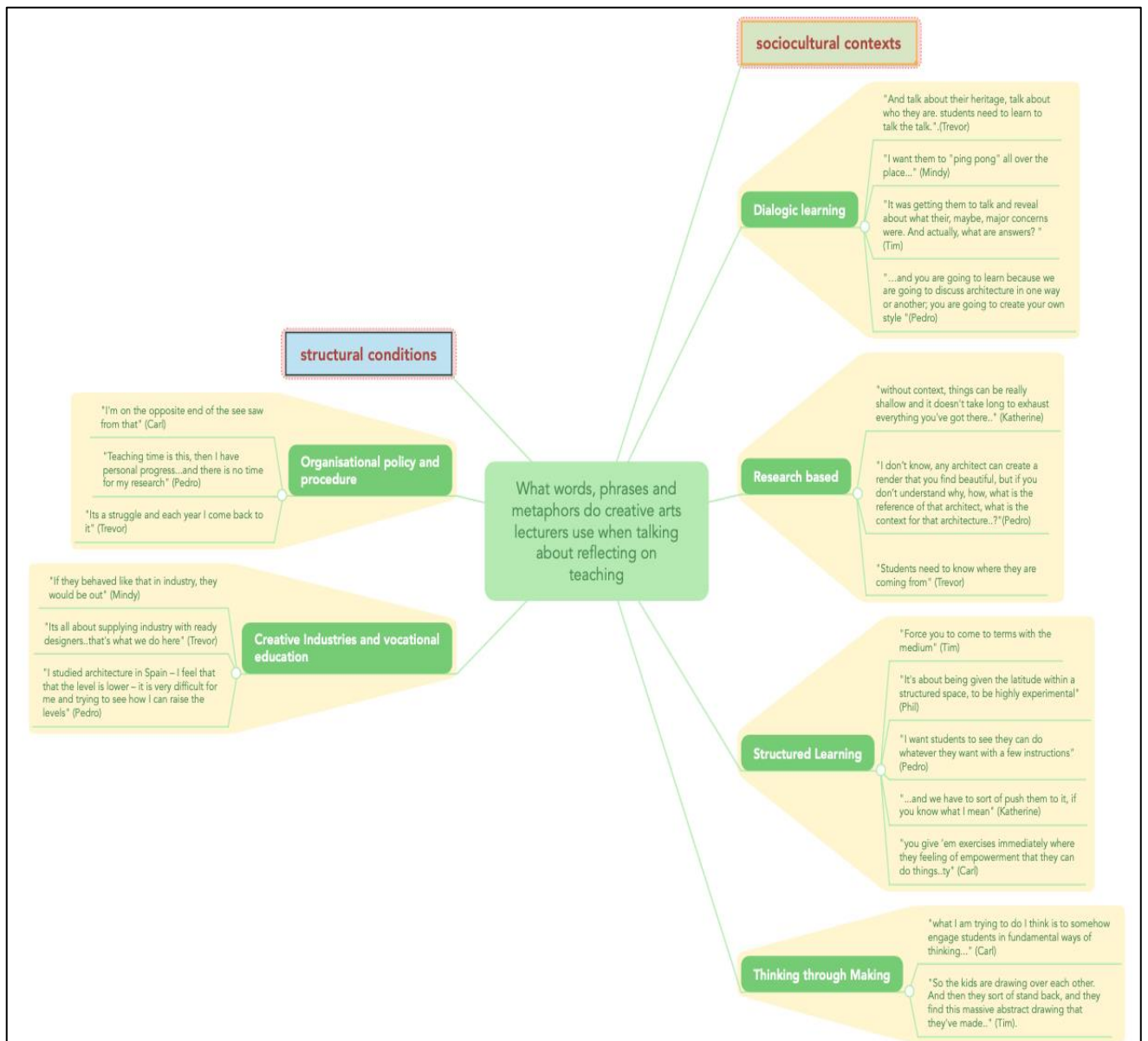


Figure 4.1: Illustrative example of Conceptual Cluster development for RQ1

#### 4.4.1 Dialogic Learning

During the interviews, all ten lecturers talked positively about the discursive aspect of their practice and the ways in which they encouraged their students to engage in a 'kind of exchange' (Shreeve et al., 2010) through conceptual models and communication techniques. In Tim's reflections below, for example, enabling student discussion with their work and practice is a way of encouraging a particular type of divergent thinking, where 'learners extend the arena of possibilities' (Danvers, 2003:51):

And what was particular was, again, like this discursive process, is what I was trying to get them to understand was, well, I didn't tell them this, there was nothing to do

with what they made. It was getting them to talk and reveal about what their, maybe, major concerns were. And actually, what are answers? What are possible ways of thinking laterally, or differently about their problem. (Tim)

Being able to communicate your ideas effectively are strong features of Pedro, Katherine and Trevor's reflective accounts. For Trevor and Katherine, this is a crucial element for student employability and developing students that 'stand out from the crowd' (Trevor) or 'feel like they know what they are talking about' (Katherine). Discussing work is also considered a way of developing cognitive abilities and engaging student imagination:

...and you are going to learn because we are going to discuss architecture in one way or another; you are going to create your own style. (Pedro)

For some participants, encouraging students to talk about their work was part of developing a sense of community and appreciating the value of peer interaction, as illustrated in Ruth's account here:

All of us talking about our work and our practice and our image-making just to show we're all dealing with the same issues, the same problems, the same kind of challenges in our work. But we're all just at different stages of careers in doing that. And I think that's a big thing. (Ruth)

Whereas for others, reflecting on these curricular experiences is all about giving opportunities for students to learn to communicate and solve problems:

Yeah, I would want to, definitely one of the things that I feel is the most obvious sort of core principles of my teaching and illustration and every life practice, is that basically, you can solve anything through communication. Through a conversation and I think that if it just requires a long conversation with me being honest... (Phil)

The importance of collaborating with others to foster students' thinking, learning, and problem solving, are key learning outcomes built into the studio-based curriculum in creative arts. This excerpt from the interview with Mindy captures the essence of this type of learning:

It's not about having that power – it's not just about being you - it is about the wider context, the people you meet, the connections you can make, kind of embedding that ethos in year one.. (Mindy)

The dialogic elements of teaching and learning in art and design education are also captured in the art and design benchmark, where students are encouraged to develop both the capacity for independent learning and the ability to work with others (QAA Art and Design Benchmark, 2019 :5). Dialogic exchange is defined as an important signature pedagogy in art and design (Danvers, 2003; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Shreeve *et al.*, 2010), where 'transactions between participants are conducted on the basis of exchanges of experience, knowledge and ideas between individuals' (Danvers, 2003: 5). The questioning, discussion and debate which characterise learning in art and design, are fundamental to enabling students to develop their work (Orr and Shreeve, 2017: 90)

The aforementioned dialogic learning experiences may also provide an opportunity for students to prepare for the 'crit': a signature pedagogy in the creative arts typified by learning to articulate, justify, explain, rationalise and contextualise the learning process and how they go about designing and developing the artefact (Souleles, 2013). Building in opportunities for this kind of student discussion is a prominent aspect of Pedro's account, which is characterised by his efforts to get students talking about their work with him and their colleagues:

I am giving the student the possibility of having that 20-minute conversation with me – the rest of the students in that hour they have to participate in that - and even if they haven't produced anything, they have an opportunity to see what their colleagues have been doing and to help their colleagues with feedback and to engage with the references I am giving to those students. (Pedro)

All of the tutors viewed talking about work as a key priority in their accounts, seeing it as their duty to build in spaces for students to discuss their work. Ruth, for example, talks about the importance of building spaces for open-ended discussion:

Which is the space and opportunity to talk about your work and to drill down things and have an open discussion. They're the things that people really miss. And you can have a version of them online on Instagram, but it's very hard to re-create that version that happens in the studio all the time. (Ruth)

#### *4.4.2 Thinking through Making*

'Thinking through making' was a metaphor used by one of the participants that captures the experiential learning inherent in creative arts learning and teaching. Thinking and making are also familiar terms within the 'signature pedagogies' (Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims and Shreeve, 2012) of creative arts disciplines, highlighted in Chapter 2. Creative arts teaching and learning practices place an emphasis on learning by doing and making, to better understand what it means to become an artist, designer or performer (Buss and Gretton, 2002; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims and Shreeve, 2012; Souleles, 2013). The creative arts curriculum also provides the space to 'play' with ideas, processes, images and materials to 'see what happens, to let things develop in ways which accommodate chance, randomness and intuition' (Danvers, 2003: 53). The subject benchmark for art and design also highlights the skills of 'making', as contributing to cognitive development and to engage learners. Making is seen as developing creativity, inventiveness, problem-solving and practical intelligence (Buss and Gretton, 2002: 3).

The ten lecturers interviewed often articulated their roles as guides, instructors, mediators and partners in engaging students' thinking and making, illustrated here in Carl's account:

What I am trying to do, I think, is to somehow engage students in fundamental ways of thinking that are transferable to different toolsets and environments and which are disruptive in the sense it will change the way they think about the medium they are working with.. (Carl)

A similar description is offered by Ruth, when she describes her teaching role:

Which is really exciting because obviously they've taken - you think they're listening to 100% of it, and they've taken 10%, but the whole point is they took the bit they needed and then they made it their own. And then they went away and did something wonderful and brought it back and made it theirs. (Ruth)

Disrupting ways of thinking and encouraging thinking/reflective practices, to de-school or un-learn previous ways of being, are common threads throughout the interview encounters. Carl and Tim use words and phrases like 'tricking in', 'bite-sized', 'trying out' to enable students to learn how to think more freely and question the material:

So the kids are drawing over each other. And then they sort of stand back, and they find this massive abstract drawing that they've made. So suddenly you've fit



collaboration, working together. And without prefiguring this notion of, you can do anything you like. (Tim)

Tutors also use disciplinary literatures and conventions to encourage students to think in more divergent ways. Carl, for example, reflecting on the difficulties of teaching mathematical software skills to games arts students, uses visual thinking techniques to engage students in thinking about their designs/making. Encouraging this type of student thinking is also reminiscent of Schon's (1983) ideas of 'design as a conversation', where there is a fluidity between drawing (doing) and talking (reflecting on doing):

Now draw me a picture of what you think the problem is and what you think this is. and then you can explain what the different aspects of your diagrammatic layout mean to you and then we can investigate are those rigorous, are those consistent and how might you use this method of encoding your thinking on paper to go back and approach the problem and develop your thinking. (Carl)

Also, Tim and Carl's accounts highlight the iterative and reflective nature of studio-based practice, using terms like 'circling back in' and 'ping ponging' to describe the dynamic and intra-active learning and teaching present in practice-based subjects like fine art and fashion. Tim articulates the experiential nature of this expected student learning here:

You know to have a question, you need to map out some aides, you need to develop the inquiry, produce the experiment, reflect on the experiment and then essentially move on. (Tim)

Whilst some lecturers used expansive terms to describe the types of design thinking they are trying to encourage, there is also a sense that respondents were conflicted by their ambitions for divergent learning outcomes and the institutional constraints on curricular experiences. In Carl's account, for example, he talks about his desire to create units in computational thinking, but feeling unsupported by academic structures:

Because we don't really have any units here that are about software design or computational thinking. I think we should but we damn well don't. So I am working on that..I don't have support from the academic structures of the teaching material to do this except really through the back door. (Carl)

Respondents perceived themselves at times to be acquiescing in safe learning to fit quality-assured educational frameworks, rather than providing the kinds of necessary uncertainty that creative thinking demands (Addison, 2014). We see this similarly in Trevor's account, where he describes the 'struggle' of each teaching year:

And its every year you come back to that struggle. And kind of question who is on my side and who is really making a difference here. But that's when this point of view, well you can deliver to larger numbers and it will solve all your problems and it doesn't. (Trevor)

#### *4.4.3 Structured Learning*

A significant revelation from the analysis was the emphasis lecturers placed on structured learning experiences. In some ways, this could be construed as a means of scaffolding learning, a prominent pedagogy in art and design (Buss and Gretton, 2002; Orr and Shreeve, 2017), but respondents also inferred a link between creativity and constraint. Rather than provide open briefs to students to design and imagine at will, structured learning experiences are built into creative arts teaching and learning, to enable students to explore and take risks through 'sandbox' and 'bite-sized' curricular opportunities. Building in these safe (non-scary) learning experiences are seen as enabling students to explore the parameters of that medium to become more creative:

You give 'em exercises immediately where they're feeling of empowerment that they can do things..they can achieve things..and then you give them enough of those and then you start getting them to try and generalise.. "you've done this thing and this thing" in fact the two things you have done in fact are the same thing and this is why..So it is kind of encouraging the reflective process, but by the back door. (Carl)

This connection between structure and creativity were particular features of Carl and Tim's accounts. Carl links these ideas to his industry experience as a means of curtailing creative blocks:

Talk to any artist, any musician. They will all say that the thing that kills creativity is infinite choice – you want constraint. If you are in a frame, you are constrained by what you can do, then you become creative. Otherwise, you just get creative block, no idea where to start, just being constantly distracted from your creative process by all things in front of you. (Carl)

Tim, meanwhile, refers to the importance of structure, as a means of coming to terms with the limitations of a medium:

All these things are not meant to teach you how to draw with a piece of charcoal and a stick really well, it's meant to force you to come to terms with the limitations of, maybe, your height or the limitations of the charcoal, or the limitations of using dry paper when maybe it should have been slightly damp. (Tim)

Tim goes further, suggesting a link between structure and presence:

You need to be present. That presence comes out of structure. It comes out of: you have three hours, three weeks, two weeks; this session in this room with these materials. Then they start, then we can be highly challenging to their precepts about practice. (Tim)

While more deterministic approaches for learning may misalign with creative arts practices because of their unsuitability for complex, indeterminate processes such as imagination, creativity and risk-taking (Davies 2012), lecturers talked about initial frameworks for learning to get students used to particular processes, as we see here in Mindy's account:

Yes, you need an initial framework, but it needs to have that openness for exploration (Mindy)

However, Eleanor and Phil are slightly embarrassed by their use of frameworks and checklists for learning:

Unfortunately, I've had to become a little bit more prescriptive in what should be included...what I have done is almost like a checklist, which helps them ensure that everything is there. What I've done is I've literally provided a section with what must be there and a section of what could be provided. (Eleanor)

Maybe it's just about having frameworks. Even just for the stuff that is inherently boring, for the stuff that is not creative. All the time, we need sign-up sheets for the tutorials, or here's put your name on this thing, or you were at this time, or this is the timetable, and that kind of thing. (Phil)

Tim refers to frameworks and structures as like 'copying a methodology', perhaps referencing the characteristic receptivity of art and design pedagogies for exemplar-based learning or 'procedures and ways of working which are more or less appropriate in specific situation' (Sims and Shreeve, 2012, referenced in Orr and Shreeve, 2017: 143):

So, what we try to do, in the first instance, is to create structure by in which we then say, "Okay, how do you think freely?" So, we tend to give them examples, practice. And ask them to think around how they might manifest or kind of re-articulate. So, this isn't like copying an artist, this is like copying a methodology. (Tim)

Tim elaborates on the kind of frameworks he builds into the curriculum using the metaphor of the 'sandbox' to explain the concept:

You create a sandbox where everything is up for grabs in some ways. Everything is possible. And it's easy to reset. (Tim)

The metaphor of a 'sandbox' also correlates with the characterisations of art and design pedagogy found in the literature, which might be captured as 'permission to play', (Orr and Shreeve, 2017:92) 'where individuals explore and articulate a range of different ideas and material constructs within a framework of collective experimentation, risk taking and mutual responsiveness' (Danvers, 2003:51).

#### *4.4.4 Research based pedagogy*

The participants interviewed viewed research as an important element of teaching and learning in the creative arts. This finding connects with the literature, which points to the centrality of research in creative arts pedagogy: where knowledge is gained and externalised through a continual process of finding out, trying out and making, within a framework of critical reflection and contextualisation (Danvers, 2003: 55). The ways this research emphasis was articulated were different for each participant (rather than discipline) with some focusing on how valuable this was for student learning, whilst others reflected on their lack of time to get on with their own subject research. For Katherine and Pedro, for example, the research influence was considered essential to the credibility of student work:

I mean, I would even go so far... I wouldn't have used it with the students, but I'm sure I've explained to some people about, without context, things can be really

shallow and it doesn't take long to exhaust everything you've got there. But with context, comes things like critical thinking. (Katherine)

I don't know, any architect can create a render that you find beautiful, but if you don't understand why, how, what is the reference of that architect, what is the context for that architecture – then that is what I am trying to reveal. (Pedro)

These reflections may be symptomatic of the synergies between research and practice in art and design, where research acts as a stimulus to practice for an individual or group to elucidate underlying ideas, and to understand their contexts (Danvers, 2003: 55). What is interesting, though is the expressions tutors use to generate these learning behaviours in students, which might be symptomatic of the challenging contexts for learner engagement in higher education, where tutors are working with large diverse cohorts in largely vocational settings. Words like 'trying' for example, used above in Pedro's narrative and below in Tim's, suggest that this can be an uphill task, with which students might struggle to connect with:

And that's what we're trying to get them to understand, is that they need to develop their context, their understanding of a kind of language, of a kind of various moments in our history. (Tim).

Enthusing students with the importance of 'knowing where you are coming from' so that you can 'stand out from the crowd' was also seen by some participants as vital for student employability. This was certainly the case for Trevor, a unit leader in Fashion, as we see here:

...it is because in professional practice in industry, your research and inspiration, which you need to get that moving 6 months or a year in advance in order for you to deliver on time –is, what is this about, what is the inspiration, what's the research behind this, why does it look this way...you need to know where you are coming from. (Trevor)

Enabling this way of thinking was also considered an important threshold for developing student criticality and moving away from just a focus on the outcome or artefact being created. Ruth, for example, reflects on the lack of interesting work her students produce:

So with projects, we'd ask student "Okay, what do you want your final major project to be?" They would say "I want to illustrate a children's book or I want to create my

first graphic novel. I want to do this." And they're very outcome focused things and they're not really thinking about the content, meaning the reason why you're making a children's book or graphic novel or a branding campaign or whatever. (Ruth)

Many of the tutors veer away from using research-based terms to students, opting instead to find ways to “hook” or connect with students through metaphors or provocation. Ruth, for example, articulates the research-based aspect to her students, by asking students “what do you care about?”. Tim, asks his students “Why” and “What’s going on” to ignite interest in a topic:

That kind of ping-ponging from politics in America, politics in the Middle East. What's going on with gender politics? What's going on with technology? You know, what's popular, what's not popular? What's avant-garde? What's that even mean anymore? (Tim)

Whilst the tutors interviewed seemed clear about the research basis of art and design, some of the newer lecturers seemed more uncertain about their own research-informed practices. Pedro, for example, is keen to generate new knowledge in his discipline, but is hampered by restrictive organisational structures:

when I have been told that once the new research structures working, I will be able to have research time because one of my idea was to start if possible a PhD. (Pedro)

#### *4.4.5 Creative Industries and vocational education*

The word ‘industry’ was a heavily used term in all the participant’s accounts, reflecting their identities as practice-based tutors (Shreeve, 2009) and the attempts of art and design education to reflect the contemporary workplace realities of the design domain within the context of the knowledge economy (Souleles, 2013). Building in creative industry experiences are a key characteristic of the art and design curriculum highlighted in the literatures, but the word ‘industry’ is used loosely by participants as a means of justify or excuse certain practices that might be deemed as non-inclusive.

Here, Mindy for example, reflects on the difficulties of engaging some of her more recalcitrant learners:

If they did that in industry they would lose their job. It would be a serious disciplinary.  
(Mindy)

Trevor, who has spent a number of years in industry, role models 'industry' as a means of 'readying' students for the creative workplace practices they will face:

Cos that is what you have to do in industry. You have to work to a brief – watch your customer, who's your audience? (Trevor)

Mindy and Katherine both use 'industry' in an exemplar-based learning context, as a means of engaging students with the relevance of the creative arts curriculum:

Provide lots of industry specific examples that they can then evaluate. I'm thinking particularly about they have to do some research into industry roles and evaluate whether they might want to pursue one particular role. (Katherine)

What I have noticed, is it was really beneficial – and what I have taken from trying to almost firefight in the third year, was that it was great having industry come in - and actually say, yes this is what we are doing currently – we are doing social impact projects – we are thinking and being more conscious as creatives – as graphic designers we are being more conscious that we ever were before – cos we have to be, because our clients have to be now. (Mindy)

Phil, however, challenges what he sees as the 'veterans' who feel it is their duty to tell students 'how it is' because this is what it is like in industry:

I've noticed a bit of an attitude in some veterans that is a bit unsavoury, which is that thing about how the world is horrible, so being horrible to them is right. Because it prepares them for the horrible world. (Phil)

Trevor also recognises the tensions inherent in generating 'industry-ready designers, particularly for those students who might have different end paths:

It is all about supplying industry with ready designers and that is what we do here and continue to do. But not everyone is following that path, cos it is a different end game for many. (Trevor)

These findings correlate with the literature on creative arts learning and teaching which highlight some of the dysfunctional relationships between student and tutor, especially where students position themselves as paying customers (Danvers, 2003; Gravells and Scanlon, 2011). Whilst tutors may seek to sustain relationships with students which simulate industry practice and foreground radical pedagogies, they are also contexts, where who perceive these learning and teaching experiences as non-inclusive or unrepresentative of perceptions of university education.

#### *4.4.6 Organisational policy and procedure*

Words, phrases and metaphors such as 'argued', 'struggle' (Trevor), 'backfired', 'agendas being forced upon them' (Mary), 'constantly up for an argument' (Mindy), 'battle of us and them' (Tim), were strong features of these accounts. Picking up from the literature on creative arts pedagogy, the terms are perhaps representative of the uneasy relationship of creative arts disciplines in higher education (Orr and Shreeve , 2017:11), where the formalising and documenting of art school higher education, clashes with the liminal and ambiguous intentions of the creative curriculum. Participants interviewed for this study were particularly vocal about teaching policy and practice, suggesting there was not enough time to engage in these activities properly and that colleagues were very unsupportive. Here, Pedro, for example, vents his frustration at the structural constraints for teaching and research time:

Teaching time is this, and after teaching I need to have personal progress with the students – then I realised that I was supposed to have time for research – and I realised, for example, that I have not had a single hour of research and that has made me a bit frustrated - that is one of the things I want to do. (Pedro)

Lecturers also seemed worried about being too progressive in their curricular enhancements in case students complained or sued the university. Carl talked at great length about his suggestions for a more progressive acculturation a particular process and way of thinking about software mathematics and design and he was really interested in applying across the institution to see how it might 'disrupt' student thinking. However, he also seems worried about doing something radical when students might complain:

....this is not something you can pitch to students who have just plonked down 9k for their first years teaching. (Carl)



Katherine, meanwhile, disagrees with quality changes in assessment and feedback practice, but seems powerless to challenge policy decision making:

For me, the alarms went off as soon as it was announced, cos I thought how are we going to compare an outcome with a 3d outcome. (Katherine)

Other participants struggled to rally around institutional ideology, finding it hard to reconcile widening applicant numbers with institutional values around social mobility:

No, it is frustrating and it is a struggle, and its every year you come back to that struggle. And kind of question who is on my side and who is really making a difference here. (Trevor)

Talking with teaching colleagues, was also highlighted as important to many of the lecturers interviewed, but there were not always the enabling structures in place for critical conversations around daily teaching challenges. Such conversations relied on supportive leadership and management:

I do miss having a critical friend, internally, because there is nobody who has this role. I asked her to come and observe my class, because I could see she was the only one that could relate. (Eleanor)

So now we are having a one-hour coffee in the morning, and I say guys how was this week for you, what are you expecting to do today, what do you want to do and how do you feel about this. And that is what I also expecting from my manager -finding the way to do that. (Pedro)

#### 4.4.7 Summary

The insights from this study highlight the following characteristics from lecturers' words, phrases and metaphors:

- *Practice-based*: infused with disciplinary experiences which stem from identities as practitioners in the creative arts (Hjelde, 2012; Shreeve, 2009; 2011).
- *Dialogic*: based on intra-relational activities like talking through ideas with others, through student presentations, peer group learning, workshops and group critique (Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims and Shreeve, 2012).

- *Disruptive*: divergent approaches to teaching and learning which defy neat solutions to practice (Buss and Gretton, 2002; Eisner, 2002).
- *Industry-focused*: reflecting the contemporary workplace realities of the design domain within the context of the knowledge economy (Souleles, 2013).

A shared feature found within the words, phrases and metaphors used by participants was the extent to which creative arts lecturers seek to encourage divergent thinking, by using a range of pedagogic techniques to disrupt patterns of thought to encourage risk taking and experimentation. The findings offer an insight into how these 'signature pedagogies' (Shulman, 2003) are used to encourage students to produce exciting work. Words and phrases such as: 'think about things in the right way (Carl); 'giving permission' (Mindy), 'training the body to think differently' (Tim); and 'tricking in' (Trevor) highlight the emphasis on procedures and ways of working in art and design pedagogy (Sims and Shreeve, 2012, 2012).

Whilst there were commonalities in what creative arts lecturers talked about, there was also a sense that each participant enjoyed the challenge of interrogating, revising, and redefining their own practice. Celebrating diversity and individual identity is an important aspect of being a creative arts practitioner, where diversity, difference and pluralism are factors to be affirmed, rather than erased. Lecturers talked a lot about the ways they expected 'interesting work' (Mindy) from their students, so that they can 'stand out from the crowd'; 'absolutely be themselves' (Trevor) and engage in transformative experiences. This is combined with a frustration that some students just 'do not get it' (Katherine), do not understand that 'stuff gets harder' are 'not at the right level' (Pedro), or need a lot of 'hand-holding' (Mindy) leaving tutors struggling with how best to manage this.

#### 4.5 What do creative arts lecturers talk about when reflecting on their teaching?

In this section, I address the second of my research questions by exploring what events, incidents and experiences creative arts lecturers talk about when reflecting on their teaching. The following account aims to illustrate what the ten creative arts lecturers talked about using their own disciplinary terms and disciplinary frames of reference. The analysis is guided by the socio-constructivist elements identified in Chapters 2 and 3, by identifying conceptual clusters that place a particular emphasis on socio-cultural contexts and structural conditions. An illustration of the development of these conceptual clusters can be seen in Figure 4.2 ('Illustrative example of conceptual cluster development for RQ2'):

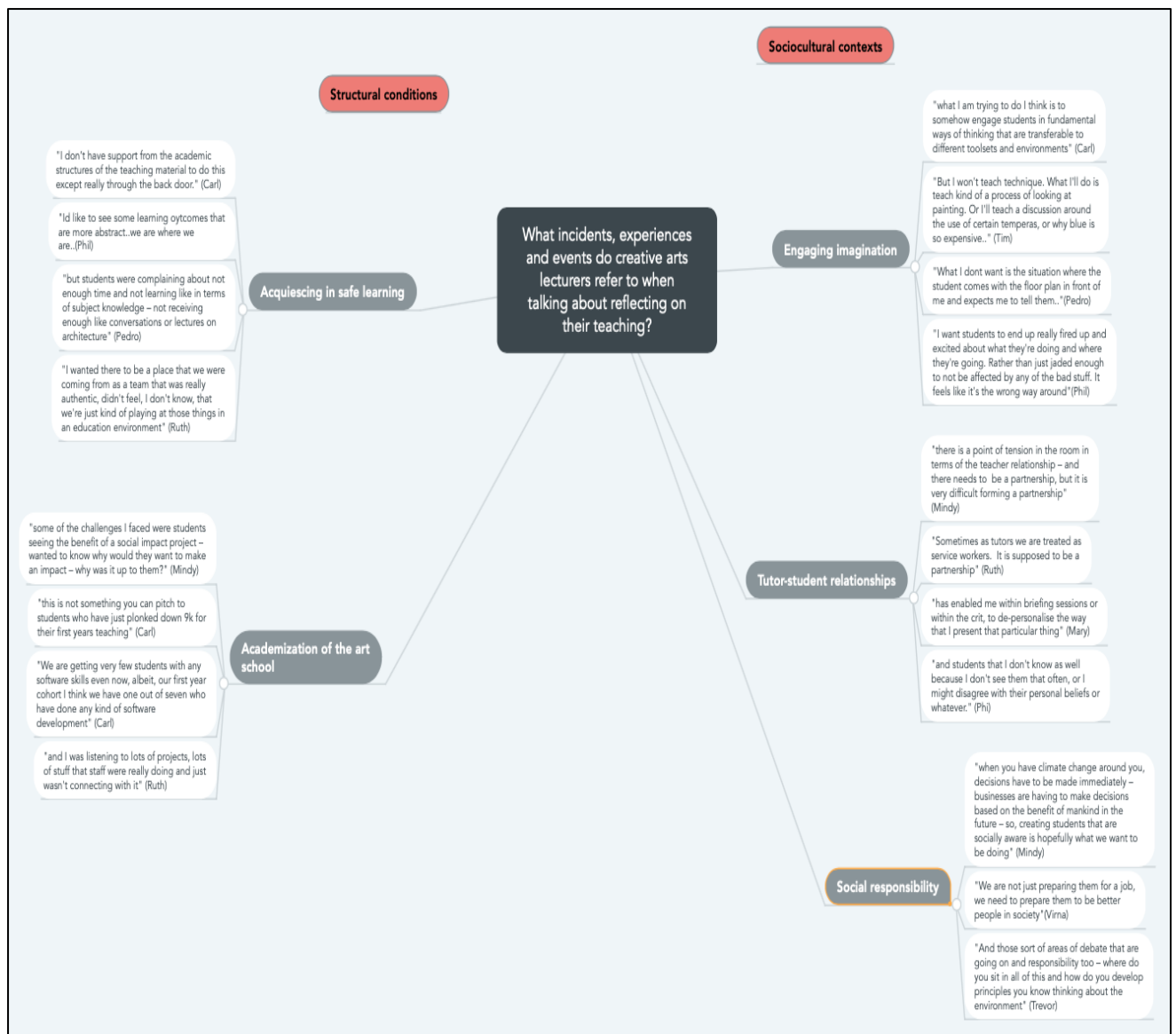


Figure 4.2 Illustrative example of Conceptual Cluster development for RQ2

#### 4.5.1 Engaging imagination

The creative arts lecturer participants all talked about the different ways they encouraged the creative impulse in students, to use their imagination to absorb content, play with ideas and imagine new possibilities. Engaging imagination is a strong tenet of creative arts education where 'imagination' is viewed as an opportunity to view the world from different perspectives, enabling students to challenge their own conceptions of the subject they are studying (Davies, 2012:7). Encouraging students to act imaginatively to generate alternative solutions is captured neatly in this quote from Carl:

What I am trying to do I think is to somehow engage students in fundamental ways of thinking that are transferable to different toolsets and environments and which are

disruptive in the sense it will change the way they think about the medium they are working with. (Carl)

This type of thinking is not a technique as such, but might be conceived as a way of engaging students in deeper levels of understanding through learning that “sticks”, is personally meaningful and which ‘jerks’ them out of their routines (James and Brookfield, 2014:8). The teaching described is creative and facilitative as we see in this extract from Tim’s interview:

But I won't teach technique. What I'll do is teach kind of a process of looking at painting. Or I'll teach a discussion around the use of certain temperas, or why blue is so expensive in essence, Italy, as opposed to Banksy. That's the type of talks we do. And then they'll have a technician who will deliver the technique. (Tim)

However, the participants also cited their own struggles with engaging students with creative thinking processes in creative arts disciplines, especially when this is set against a higher education landscape of increasing marketisation and management concerns over accountability and efficiency. Creative arts teaching and learning is ambiguous and “sticky” (Orr and Shreeve, 2017). The unpredictability of engaging the imagination, is hard to adapt to ‘classroom environments ruled by rigid assessment protocols’ (James and Brookfield, 2014:3). Here, in Carl’s account, he struggles to balance his own quest for more imaginative curricula, set against a punitive culture of performance metrics and student demands for more content:

So you have to think of ways of abstracting from the specific to the general..so they learn specific things you kinda do in software design..so they can see that there are commonalities, fundamental kind of undercurrents to the things they are doing (Carl)

We also see the same anxieties in Pedro’s account, where he justifies his student-centred interventions to engage student imagination as way of mitigating too much ‘hand-holding’:

What I don't want is the situation where the student comes with the floor plan in front of me and expects me to tell them. (Pedro)

A number of the participants talked about the high workload expected of students on their courses and how they may skip deeper level reflective experiences for more surface or

strategic approaches. Here, Phil realises his quest to ignite a way of reflective thinking may be a little too much for his students and they may need a little more explanation:

I want students to end up really fired up and excited about what they're doing and where they're going. Rather than just jaded enough to not be affected by any of the bad stuff. It feels like it's the wrong way around. (Phil)

Pedro too, senses the need to role model the type of thinking he is expecting his students to engage in:

For them to understand what is a good reference, they don't see that - then what I am doing is just saying, yes you just go on social media – do whatever you want – it is up to you - but when you are with me, we are going back and we are going to see which references are good – and when you go and you start applying it, yes you can go online, but I want you to review these architects that I give to you. (Pedro)

#### *4.5.2 Social responsibility*

Pedagogies to encourage social responsibility were a strong theme to emerge from the interviews. The lecturers described their curriculum intentions as about teaching students to care about the world, so as to develop a better sense of social conscience:

We are not just preparing them for a job, we need to prepare them to be better people in society. (Eleanor)

In a sense these orientations to teaching could be seen to be derived from critical pedagogy or 'conscientization' (Freire, 1973), but the intention for some was to ignite student engagement on a topic:

Well, what do you care about? Find the thing you care about and that will sustain you through those three months when you're working on that big project because you will feel this sense of responsibility to this project because you care about it so deeply. (Ruth)

Lecturers talked about these experiences as part of course learning outcomes, or as specific projects for students to interact with the world around them to produce more socially beneficial work. For many of the lecturers, designing for social responsibility were part of a

strongly held set of values and beliefs. Some of the lecturers were very passionate about this subject area as seen in these excerpts:

When you have climate change around you, decisions have to be made immediately – businesses are having to make decisions based on the benefit of mankind in the future – so, creating students that are socially aware is hopefully what we want to be doing. (Mindy)

To give you some context, the type of projects we give them..we ask them to do, so this is part of their final project, we ask them to highlight a problem in society and to use performance to give it a voice – a problem that does not .have a voice yet, or is missing a bit of promotion something that could help it (Katherine)

I really, I don't know how to put it in a few words, but that's one thing I do. I really try to provoke that focus on ethical issues, to do with their subject or with teaching and learning. (Eleanor)

Some of the participants also talked about how they how they want students to develop principles, so that their work can be influenced by the important debates in the world today like climate change and sustainability. Here, Trevor describes the intention of the first year curricula for fashion students:

Where do you sit in all of this and how do you develop principles you know thinking about the environment? That's a huge one for us at the moment -that's been written into a lot of project work now where they have to consider that broader context of recycling, you know whatever it is going to be and its impact on the environment. Interestingly we had a first year project a few years ago and it was called 'Migrate' – it was inspired by the people migration going on in the world. But then we would perhaps say, you don't have to interpret it that way – what else migrates, you know develop the idea of migration, migration towards what – so yeah we try and keep them current, informed, investigative.. (Trevor)

The good intentions of lecturers to create more active citizenship were clear during the interviews, but they also reported the difficulties they experienced in generating a social conscience in their student body, particularly if this part of institutional ideologies. Mindy, reflected on the struggles she has convincing students to engage with social justice projects.

Inculcating these values did not always sit well with fee paying students who may not understand why they need to engage in projects around developing a social conscience:

OK so, some of the challenges I faced were students seeing the benefit of a social impact project – wanted to know why would they want to make an impact – why was it up to them? Especially when they wanted to be a commercial designer...

Ruth, meanwhile, describes here, her own difficulties in relating to the social justice agenda in her institution:

Yeah, so the college had a big drive and it was thinking of these creative learning, social justice and I guess social justice was this- and I was listening to lots of projects, lots of stuff that staff were really doing and I just wasn't connecting with it. But then I read this article by Paul Bowman ..... it was like a kind of manifesto, a call to arms for illustrators and their responsibilities and what they could do. And right at the end he was asking this question, "well what's the point? What's the point of us? And just coming from a point of view of asking students what they care about.

It is important for Ruth and her students, that generic concepts like social responsibility are viewed through a disciplinary lens. Articulated as a provocation or manifesto within the discipline, Ruth believes that an abstract concept becomes authenticised, enabling greater ownership amongst staff and students.

#### *4.5.3 Tutor student relationships*

The concept of tutor student relationships was derived from participant accounts of events, incidents and experiences where they described tensions in their relationships with students:

Sometimes as tutors we are treated as service workers. It is supposed to be a partnership. (Ruth)

There is a point of tension in the room in terms of the teacher relationship – and there needs to be a partnership, but it is very difficult forming a partnership. (Mindy)

Whilst some of these insights may in part be due to massification of higher education where there are shifting landscapes and competing priorities (Copeland, 2014; Locke *et al.*, 2016; Turner *et al.*, 2013), the findings also reveal a tendency to problematise students rather than problematise the learning in the creative arts. Rather than critique the 'signature

pedagogies' (Shulman, 2005), of creative arts learning and teaching, some participants seemed inclined to blame the larger class sizes and the levels of students, as we see in the quotes below from Carl and Pedro:

We are getting in students in who don't have mathematics and you have no longer made it a requirement, so we have to revise the course to build in maths training because they need it (Carl)

I feel that that the level is lower – it is very difficult for me and trying to see how I can raise the levels – I have 82 students in front of me.. (Pedro)

There is a sense throughout the accounts of the importance for creative arts lecturers of encouraging students to engage in critical questioning and to think for themselves. Illustrative of the role of continuous dialogue and exchange for learning in the creative arts (Sims and Shreeve, 2012; Soluleles, 2003), one key learning space for these kinds of conversations is seen as the tutorial, as highlighted here by Pedro:

Then, when I feel that conversation is going well, I say Ok Anna this is amazing, take note about this and this ... I always have my ipad with me and I send a drawing immediately to their email. They always ask for my drawing and notes and I give it to them. (Pedro)

However, encouraging students to make the most of these tutorial conversations can also be viewed as challenging and too teacher led. Both Phil, Katherine and Mindy, reflect on the challenges of enabling such dialogue, particularly where students are facing a number of other extenuating circumstances:

I have had two students who have been very confrontational by nature – I have had one student get up and walk out of the class because they haven't agreed with something that another lecturer has said. (Mindy)

And it took a couple of weeks for all of the team actually to get those conversations going. And in some groups it kind of did and for some groups, it never got off the ground. There was almost that kind of "fourth wall" thing where you're separate. (Katherine)



For some tutors, conversations with students can become adversarial and emotional experiences. Mindy, for example, uses combative terms like 'up for an argument', 'up for a fight' and 'battle of us and them' to describe her difficult relations with some students. Mary, similarly describes her struggles with students 'just not getting it' and not connecting with her teaching style:

But the turning point for me actually came this year, with the first year cohort, for the second year of the actual course itself. This is a large cohort with some very challenging students. There were situations where students were confrontational within sessions. I felt I was being too much myself within the session or taking things a bit too personally. (Mary)

Even tutors who view themselves as inclusive educators, described their struggles with how to motivate some of their more challenging students. Many of these difficulties centred around establishing professional boundaries, particularly in personal tutoring:

Those conversations, they're just really, really hard. They're just really hard work. It's like walking a tightrope. (Phil)

Katherine also struggles in her relationships with students, worrying that changes in delivery to teach larger groups across a range of disciplines, may expose her lack of subject knowledge:

Because I was teaching so many more students with a range of backgrounds, really kind of secure in my knowledge of performance and costume. But now all of a sudden, I was being opened up to students from graphics and students from fine art, and trying to, not just kind of bottle it really. (Katherine)

Reflecting on their daily struggle to encourage students to justify, interpret, critique and develop their ideas can provide an opportunity for tutors to be creative in their teaching. Katherine, for example, noted the opportunities for peer dialogue when introducing a controversial topic in class, and how this generated a greater sense of ownership over the topic:

Well I was really relieved that I could take a step back from that because again, they managed it themselves and it wasn't the white students that were talking either. So, I felt like that had moved forward positively without me having to intervene (Katherine)

Other tutors highlighted the opportunities to talk to students about their work, as a way of working with them as individuals, shifting away the traditional power asymmetries of teacher-led models:

I think that what I was never expecting when I started teaching was the idea you could sit and talk to a student and in the same way that you would with your own work, you'd be offering things up, you'd be like "oh, why don't you try this? (Ruth)

#### *4.5.4 Acquiescing in safe learning*

As reflected in the literature review of creative arts teaching, the data analysis of the ten interviews reflects the uneasy relationship between learning outcomes and creative arts practice, suggesting an acquiescence in safe learning (Addison, 2014). Retrofitting higher educational frameworks like learning outcome models to creative arts disciplines, was a particular point of tension for some of the respondents. The challenges of working with outcome focused curricular for 'disciplinary practitioners used to working with unclear boundaries, relatively unspecified theories and who might deal with loosely defined problems' (Kreber, 2009) were a particular challenge for the lecturers interviewed. There was a sense that some of the participants were acquiescing in safe learning experiences, when really they felt their roles were to encourage students to 'progressively extend the arena of possibilities within which they operate' (Danvers, 2003:51) and take risks in their work to generate alternative solutions to a given problem or set of problems (Davies, 2003). Whilst participants appreciated the inclusive intention of clearly articulated learning outcomes, they also felt complicit in encouraging one way of thinking that resulted in uninspiring work, that was not in the spirit of creative arts practice, as we see here in Mindy and Carl's accounts:

Cos it shouldn't be emphatic; it shouldn't be final, it should all be about suggestion and experiment and innovation. So, this idea of having a decisive, definitive conclusion, troubles me, anyway. (Mindy)

No, the unit brief is not really about abstraction..the unit brief is about building this safe learning. You get the learning outcomes from this thing and then you are on to the next one. (Carl)

The outcome-focused element of most curricular experiences in art and design, are a particular point of tension for participants. Ruth and Phil, for example, challenge the continued focus on the outcome, rather than the learning experience:

But as soon as I got her away from outcome focused and into "find this thing, recognize what it is that's missing and then have this-" so it's just funny how after so long you can have these eye-opening moments. (Ruth)

Or even just obsessed with the finish, with the polish rather than with the content, which is a really common one. I think that to achieve the impossible utopia of assessments and grading, it should be that if someone brilliant starts the module brilliant, and they end the module the same amount of brilliant, they should fail. Because they haven't learned anything (Phil)

What seems to stand out from this finding is the extent to which creative arts lecturers notice that aspects of the curriculum are misaligned with their industry or disciplinary practices but lack the curriculum design knowledge to devise more divergent learning outcomes.

#### *4.5.5 Academisation of the art school*

In line with the literature review, data gathered from this small-scale study provides evidence of lecturer frustrations with the formal curriculum and the drift away from the edginess of art school cool to the "academisation" of art and design education (Addison, 2014; Orr and Shreeve, 2017:11). These frustrations seem to be attributed to lack of agency and feeling accountable to quality standards within their university. Some of these perceptions might also be attributed to teaching experience or time in roles. Pedro, Carl and Phil, for example, were all new lecturers, and each described some frustration in their university. Pedro talks about his decision to write a new brief and being unsure whether he could do this:

I said, well I am going to write a new brief – am I able to do that please? – because I think that is the normal thing that we should be doing – but you never know - and told me, well go ahead - and I changed completely the brief (Pedro)

Phil has a slightly different agentic dilemma as a new member of staff, being unsure how to stop his colleagues from being 'so horrible' to students:

Which I think is just bollocks. I mean I can't go far enough the other way from that. I feel like if there's any chance of changing the horrible, why can't we start, just start to do that and treat people nice. And tell them that their well-being and mental health is more important than their work and that kind of thing and then it might just mean that they're more... they feel better about standing up for themselves in a job when they can't in one day because their mental health is bad, for example. (Phil)

Trevor, also describes the lack of agency he feels in accepting larger student numbers, whilst balancing resourcing constraints:

Each year it is frustrating and it is a struggle, And its every year you come back to that struggle. And kind of question who is on my side and who is really making a difference here. (Trevor)

Some of the events, incidents and experiences lecturers talked about were influenced by their perceptions of agency in their teaching. For those participants new to teaching, there were frustrations at not being able to change the curriculum, or not knowing whether their contract would be renewed, or whether they would have enough time for their research. For more experienced lecturers, agency focused around opposition to institutional policy or systems that were not working for them. For all the participants, their intentions to create a positive learning experience are often beset by structural constraints and institutional barriers. An interesting insight here is the continued rhetoric of lacking influence in higher education systems and structures. Nonetheless, lecturers also know how to escalate their own agency to circumnavigate procedures or subvert systems, either because they do not share the same value system of their employing institutions, or because the systems are not working for them. Both Carl and Pedro talked about their attempts to subvert systems in their own institutions: Carl describes bringing in curricular changes by the 'back door'; Pedro, meanwhile, talks about inventing his own system for student attendance:

Since I have started I have been trying to put in place different let's say systems of organisation that we didn't have before -the university has an attendance monitoring system th---at is in place this year, but I have created my own list even – we are not supposed to do that (Pedro)

#### 4.5.6 Summary

The insights from this study highlight the following characteristics from the lecturers' talk:

- *Facilitative*: teaching narratives based on continuous interaction, intersubjective understanding and empathy (James and Brookfield, 2014; 187), rather than didactic transmission of knowledge (Shreeve *et al.*, 2012; Souleles, 2003);
- *Research-based*: where knowledge is gained and externalised through a continual process finding out, trying out and making, within a framework of critical reflection and contextualisation (Danvers, 2003: 55).
- *Sticky*: where lecturers create 'sticky curricula that are varied, unpredictable and challenging for those engaged in learning and teaching (Orr and Shreeve, 2017:143).
- *Student-led*: focused on students fashioning their own creative arts identity (Buss and Gretton, 2002; Souleles, 2003)

A collective feature of each of the participants' accounts was their problematic relationship with higher education practices within their own institution. This was sometimes attributed to having atypical or fluid contracts in teaching, but also a consequence of having a dual identity as practitioner-tutor or tutor-researcher, where there may be divided loyalties and/or a sense of difference (Shreeve, 2009). Each of the ten creative arts lecturers interviewed for this study are working in 'super-complex' (Barnett, 2000; 2008) creative higher education settings, juggling increased students' expectations regarding the value of courses with the uncertainty and ambiguity of the 'sticky curriculum' (Orr and Shreeve, 2017). There was also a sense from some of the more experienced lecturers interviewed, that they were complicit in an 'academization' of art and design education (Orr and Shreeve, 2017:11). This resulted in what the lecturers conceived as safe learning experiences, when really they felt it was their duty to encourage students to stretch the boundaries of creativity and produce interesting work. The resultant lecturer behaviours sometimes manifest as an ambivalence to structures in higher education; adopting outsider positions; and subverting processes to make teaching and learning work better for them and their students.

#### 4.6 Themes to emerge from the two research questions

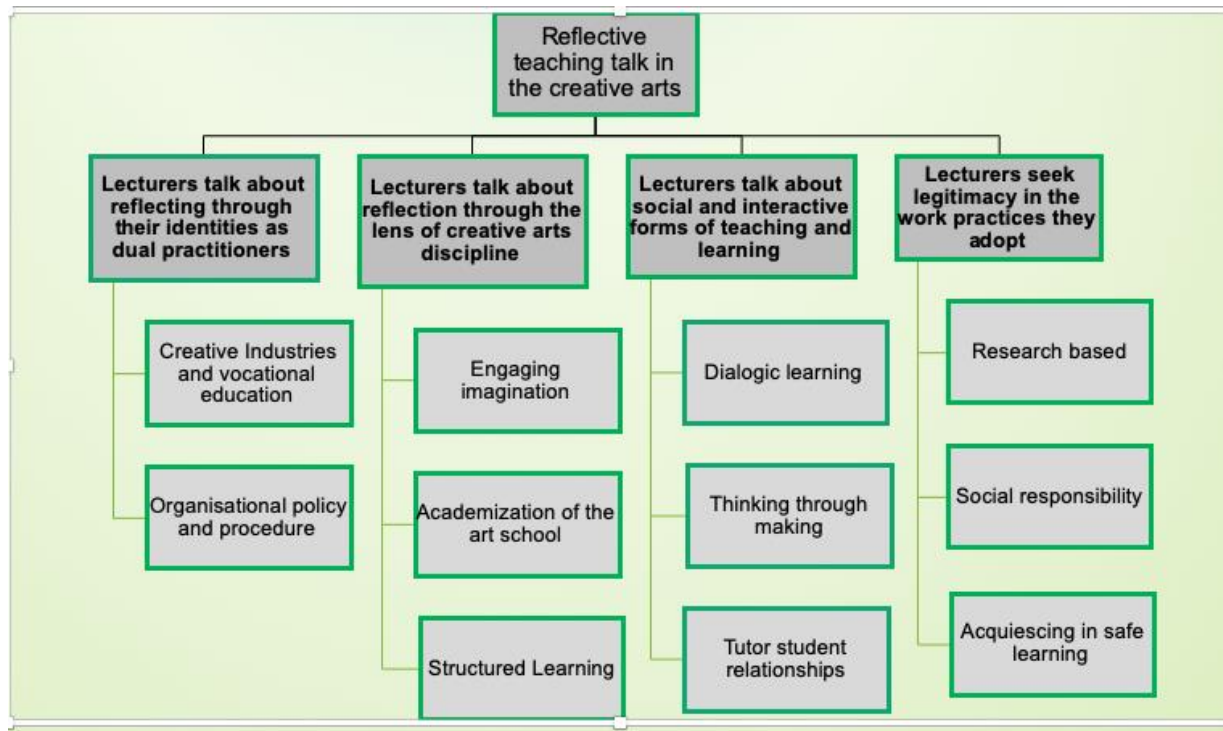


Figure 4.3: Conceptualisation of themes from reflective teaching talk in the creative arts

Figure 4.3 (above) brings together all the themes from the first two research questions (RQ1: the words, phrases and metaphors the creative arts lecturers' use; RQ2: the incidents, experiences and events lecturers refer to), into a set of four over-arching themes for discussion. Each theme has been arrived at by using a 'constructionist thematic analysis' (Braun and Clarke, 2006), which considers the socio-cultural and structural influences on the talk. These larger themes potentially illuminate a point of tension or disconnect between developer educational discourse ("edu-speak") and everyday creative arts teaching talk.

##### 4.6.1 Dual identity

Dual identity was a strong theme to emerge from the lecturers' reflective talk highlighting the connection between lecturer self-identity, professional identity, and teaching practice. From the outset of data collection, it was evident that the ten creative arts lecturers reflected on their teaching through their identities as tutor practitioners. Although they had clear thoughts about reflection as a disciplinary practice (as a graphic artist or illustrator, for example), they found it more challenging to relate these reflections to their identities as educators in a creative arts, higher education context.

Whilst the topic of dual identity has been clearly signposted within the literature review (Drew, 2004; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims and Shreeve, 2012) , the findings from this small-scale study provide a glimpse into the influence of dual identity (Drew, 2004; Shreeve, 2009; 2010) and the dichotomy between the two social practices of being a practitioner in the creative arts and being a teacher in the creative arts (Shreeve *et al.*, 2010; Hjelde, 2012). There would seem to be an inherent tension between these two identities and the practices enshrined within them, which had an impact on the construction of reflective teaching talk. As we see in the participant quotes below, there may also be an individualistic element to how creative arts practitioners perceive their identities, which impacts on their receptivity to educational knowledge and reflective processes:

You know, I tend to look at things as there is the teaching and the content....then there is the individual and everything they stand for, what they want to be , what they want to talk about, what they are interested in, you know how they see themselves as an individual. For designers, individuality is so important. (Trevor)

Yeah. When you think about the types of people that work in these types of buildings, then I think, thinking about identity is really, really important. And our individual, rather than maybe going straight to what your professional identity might be. (Katherine)

The inference in both sets of comments is that creative arts lecturers interviewed for this study put their individual identities as creative arts practitioners before their professional identities as lecturers or researchers in higher education. This finding is backed up in the Shreeve's (2009; 2011) research on the conflicting experiences of practice-based academics in art and design. Shreeve reminds us of the importance of negotiating relations between different aspects of being an academic, for those who have multiple professional roles in the university today (Shreeve, 2011; 80). The inference being that if these aspects are not attended to, this may exacerbate feelings of alienation and of 'being in two camps' (Shreeve, 2011).

The importance of building in opportunities for lecturers to negotiate their identities as academics might also be a helpful insight for academic developers working with creative arts faculty on postgraduate courses in learning and teaching or professional recognition schemes. This study has highlighted that creative arts subjects are taught by a diverse range of practitioners with strongly held beliefs about social responsibility (section 4.5.2). Rather than struggling to engage lecturing staff with unfamiliar standards and normative

frameworks like the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF), it might be better to start with questions like, 'How am I a teacher?' or 'Who am I as a teacher?', 'who am I recognising?'. As Mary observes, it is better to admit your lack of understanding than assume everyone is on the same level:

I think when I did my PGCert I really felt that the staff delivering that did not have a clue about what we are about, although they did acknowledge that they are not really close to creative arts pedagogy and were not really sure about the terminology we were using. (Mary)

The creative arts lecturers interviewed for this study did not all have teaching qualifications (sections 4.2 and 4.4) and even where they did, there is an ambiguity and uncertainty about educational pedagogies and how these align with studio-based practices. The analysis of the words, phrases and metaphors used by participants discussed in Chapter 4 (section 4.5) correlates with the literature review, that discursive repertoires in teaching are 'rooted in particularly disciplinary contexts, with distinctive protocols, methods, conventions and literatures' (Akerlind, 2017:35). Reflecting on teaching through educational frameworks, does not seem a natural way of being for the lecturers interviewed in this study, as we can infer from this quote from one of the more experienced participants:

The difficulty was that we were with other students who had much more teaching experience and it was a different type, kind of lecture based, rather than studio practice based. There is a difference. You know, in creative arts, there are lots of different teaching strategies that we would employ to engage students. So, instead of just setting up for lectures, it is much more that thing of dialogue and exchange of ideas really. (Mary)

The suggestion from this research is that developer pedagogies appropriated from creative arts 'signature pedagogies' (Shulman 2005) might be more meaningful to creative arts lecturers. For example, the use of safe spaces to familiarise learners with new ideas and experiment, or the use of disruptive thinking techniques to 'un-learn' previous ways of being (section 4.5.2 and 4.5.3). The formation of such development pedagogies might have the benefit of enabling lecturers to construct an identity which is viewed as complementary to their creative arts practice, where they see 'images of ourselves in this world, with pasts and futures and possibilities envisaged within the community of practice (Shreeve, 2009:157).



Nonetheless, there is also some indication from this study, that newer lecturers in the creative arts may be more receptive to actively cultivating their criticality and teacher reflectivity. Phil's comments below illuminate some of these reflective tendencies:

So, what it means is that I can assume that I can always improve stuff and what that has led on to is that when we get a bad rating in a survey or whatever and test or something like that. (Phil)

Helping to maintain practice-based identity alongside identity as an educational practitioner (Shreeve, 2009) by supporting creative arts lecturers (especially those who are new to lecturing), would seem a strong message from this small-scale study. The inference from this small-scale study is that showing more empathy with a lecturers' professional identity in higher education may complement the development of their professional practices in teaching. The research therefore promotes an opportunity for academic developers to cultivate 'critical conversations' (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014; Kahn *et al.*, 2006; Rowland, 2002; Roxa and Martensson, 2009) which embrace identity in teacher development activities. Research into the experience of creative practitioners who also teach suggests that the relationship is complex and can be experienced in different ways. Having a sense of identity is central to the variation in experience of these relations (Shreeve 2009).

#### *4.6.2 Disciplinary lenses*

The ten accounts analysed for this inquiry show that creative arts lecturers are reflective practitioners, but tend to talk about reflection through the critical lens of their creative arts discipline, rather than in educative terms. This finding is reflective of the literature specifically highlighting the tension between generic theories of teaching and learning, and disciplinary claims to distinctiveness (Danvers, 2003; Lindblom-Ylänne *et al.*, 2006; Neumann, Parry, and Becher 2002; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Shulman 2005). Ruth, one of the participants in this study, highlights why relevance to the subject is so important for engaging teaching staff with reflective pedagogical constructs:

And actually, recognising that there are cycles of reflection that are referred to in education that are exactly the same as the cycles of reflection in creative practice and the things that are happening all the time. (Ruth)

The difficulties of engaging disciplinary based academics with a generic body of pedagogic knowledge are raised in the literature (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014; Boud and Walker,

1998; James, 2007; Orr *et al.*, 2010) with the suggestion that acquisition of teaching expertise is best achieved where teaching knowledge is linked to practice and supported within disciplines. Such approaches also acknowledge that the concepts teachers use to talk about teaching are rooted in different disciplinary frameworks, providing an opportunity for academic developers to challenge and deepen both disciplinary and educational ideas (Rowland, 2002). Indeed, this research, highlights the potential of such opportunities. In addition, the constructions of reflective teaching located in this research inquiry provide a glimpse into the distinctive flavour of reflective frameworks in art and design education, which follows what Donald Schön calls 'design as a conversation with the materials of a situation' (Schon, 1983). Participants such as Mindy (below), describe the reflective cycle of design ideation, which they prescribe for their students:

You know the basic design process is about discovering insights to design problems and then it is about defining and narrowing down from that research – so you are having to constantly reflect on what you have done before in order to develop the right design solution – cos' it is all about communication. (Mindy)

The analysis suggests that creative arts academics are less likely to start with educational theory and technique to situate or inform their reflections on learning and teaching, preferring instead to seek creative solutions to teaching crises through their own disciplinary norms, practices and literatures:

Because it's a form of diffuse thinking, which allows the other things, the other aspects, the other knowledge, the complicit, theorised, felt, desired... (Tim)

I am interested in taking the skills I have acquired and putting a pedagogic vent on those so that I can pass across a particular way of thinking about the medium in the context of UG teaching. (Carl)

As we can see in the participant quotes above, both lecturers are talking about reflection, but are describing it using their own words, rather than with reference to educational constructs around reflective teaching. The essence of this type of reflective thinking is captured here in Pedro's description of criticality for his students:

I don't know, any architect can create a render that you find beautiful, but if you don't understand why, how, what is the reference of that architect, what is the context for that architecture. (Pedro)

This reflective narrative and others within the research inquiry infer that there is a particular receptivity to reflective practice in creative arts disciplines, which takes on a particular shape due to differences in epistemological structure (Burnard *et al.*, 2006; Hjelde, 2012; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims and Shreeve, 2012). It may then be helpful for academic developers to stimulate these more disciplinary influences on reflection which are embedded in the context of real-world relationships, opportunities and constraints (Kahn *et al.*, 2006; Loads and Campbell, 2015; Roxa and Martensson, 2009).

Although these insights may suggest creative arts lecturers are more comfortable talking in their own disciplinary idiolects, this is not to say that they were disinterested in educational practices to improve their teaching. Trevor's comments (below) highlight this interest, but point to the time limitations for undertaking research on teaching:

So, yes, I do enjoy investigating um what it takes, what counts you know – it is not just knowledge of your professional discipline, it is really keeping up with the changes in education – we don't always have time to do that cos you are so busy teaching (Trevor)

This research offers some important clues as to why the educational frameworks for reflection (see section 2.2.3) might not be taken up by creative arts lecturers, as we see in Phil's quote below:

If you have a really fantastic idea and then you tell me in French only and only one of them (students) knows French, it's like the idea is useless because they can't understand it as a group. (Phil)

What might be implied from this reflection, is a tendency of the lecturers interviewed for this study, to want to deconstruct educational ideas within their disciplinary context. As Danvers (2003), informs us, knowledge in art and design rests on a version of perspectivism where learning is always contingent, informed and guided by earlier learning, by our needs, intentions and expectations, and by our beliefs and values.

As Hjelde (2012) suggests, reflection on teaching (usually perceived as a higher education construct), can suggest that there is a 'right way to reflect' (Hjelde, 2012:45), which might invite anxiety or even dissonance from educational reflective discourse. The inference here is that academic developers might consider the extent to which common pedagogic

vocabularies used in academic development are perceived as “edu-speak” by lecturers who are unfamiliar with, or feel alienated from the discourse of higher education.

#### *4.6.3 Social and interactive pedagogies*

This small-scale study has illuminated the practice-based, disciplinary and dialogic teaching practices of creative arts lecturers, highlighting the circumspect and ambiguous nature of educational knowledge in the creative arts. Given this awareness, it may be more helpful for academic developers to enable space for a fluid exchange of ideas, conversation, knowledge and expertise with creative academic colleagues. This would contrast with the adoption of more expert-dominated pedagogic approaches to reflective teaching which might imply there is a right way to reflect (Hjelde, 2012). Correlating with the literature, this study provides evidence that art and design subjects rely on a horizontal exchange between students and tutors to promote learning (Shreeve *et al.*, 2010) rather than a more formal didactic content transmission (Austerlitz *et al.*, 2008; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Souleles, 2003). This more dialogic element of learning and teaching is considered reflective of the studio-based nature of art and design where students learn by making and doing, as we see in the extract below:

Because a lot of art and design courses are studio based, there is a lot of how would I say? There is continual formative feedback in the dialogue and discussion with student. I think, as part of that there is naturally a reflective element in that form of communication anyway.. (Katherine)

The purpose of this studio-based interaction is to develop student reflection and critical thinking for tutorials and other assessment requirements. The importance of these experiences is highlighted in the two quotes below:

I am giving the student the possibility of having that 20 min conversation with me – the rest of the students in that hour they have to participate in that - and even if they haven't produced anything, they have an opportunity to see what their colleagues have been doing and to help their colleagues with feedback and to engage with the references I am giving to those students.. (Pedro)

You can come on, be a painter for three years. But we will be asking you “why” for three years. Why are you using canvas? Why not cardboard? If you are painting homeless people, why are you painting homeless people on canvas? (Tim)

By surfacing the discursive contexts of creative arts teaching practices, the constructions of reflective teaching in this study highlight the opportunities for developers to utilise these experiences in their professional development activities. Rather than trying to retrofit genericised approaches to encourage reflection on teaching which focus on content delivery (for example, lectures and seminars), developers might usefully build on the intra-relational elements of creative arts pedagogy, to foster reflective teaching on the softer skills of teaching like teamwork, facilitation, and emotional intelligence. Given the evidence from this small-scale study of dysfunctional relationships between tutor and students, where student misunderstandings may manifest as tutors shift between positions as school master, guide, instructor, mediator, and enforcer (sections 4.5.1 and 4.6.3), there may be some benefit to incorporating intra-relational development opportunities in postgraduate teaching programmes. Some of the participants specifically commented on the lack of provision for these kinds of reflective activities in the professional development they had experienced:

There's lots of different teaching strategies that we would employ to engage students. So, instead of just focusing on a lecture, it's much more that thing of dialogue and exchange of ideas really...(Mary)

I really don't find lecture theatre education for fashion students is reliable in terms of creating the individuals we need. Their learning gets more complex the further they go on. And we can't deliver that in a lecture theatre. We do that in the studio with the tools we have got, so, high tables, mannequins, sketchbook...' (Trevor)

Also, enabling space for dialogue and exchange could be a more effective form of 'developing teachers' ability to self-improve, so that they need little or no support in future' (Gibbs, 2013: 6). Three of the participants in the study, for example, highlighted the importance of team meetings for discussing teaching, with one promoting the idea of a 'thinking pause' with teaching colleagues (Ruth):

Which is the space and opportunity to talk about your work and to drill down things and have an open discussion. They're the things that people really miss... (Ruth)

However, at the same time as believing discussion to be important, participants also stressed the importance of providing safe spaces for teaching conversations, which in themselves require building in time within organisational structures:

If these structures were in place, this would make our life easier – from the point of view of teaching, I think it is very important to have team meetings where instead of discussing problems of organisation, we could discuss how our teaching is going, what we are doing well. (Pedro)

Definitely one of the things that I feel is the most obvious sort of core principles of my teaching and every life practice, is that basically, you can solve anything through communication through a conversation. (Phil)

Potentially, this study also highlights the possibilities for developers of providing learning spaces and enabling structures (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014) for lecturers to talk about reflecting on teaching. Reflective practice based on dialogue is seen an effective form of professional development (Brookfield and Preskill, 1999; Danielson, 2009; Sachs and Parsell, 2014) especially where this occurs in an environment of trust and mutual ownership.

#### *4.6.4 Legitimacy in work practices*

The lecturer participants in this study seem to engage more with reflective teaching practices where the content or skills being learned are personally meaningful, enabling lecturers to see positive associations, connections and applications to their pedagogic practices. The findings infer that any ideas about teaching tend to be filtered through disciplinary-specific academic cultures and practices, rather than as educators in the creative arts:

I have to say I love all that introducing educational ideas to improve teaching. My own research let's say leads me to those places often. You know, it has adjusted my own teaching as I have become more experienced (Trevor)

Trevor's quote above highlights a willingness to engage in educational ideas, but only where this acts as a stimulus to practice, to elucidate underlying ideas, issues and theoretical perspectives, and to understand their contexts (Danvers, 2003:55). Just as these findings reveal how lecturers encourage students to research context for their design ideation (Section 4.5.4), participants also seem to apply the same principles to their teaching practice:

What is this about, what is the inspiration, what's the research behind this, why does it look this way? You need to know where you are coming from.' (Trevor)

The ten lecturers interviewed for this study each had a passion for their subject areas, which was fuelled by their own research or professional practices, as we see below with Phil:

It has adjusted my own teaching as I have become more experienced and you know I have been running design jobs at the same time to my teaching. Now my teaching is outweighing my professional practice, and you know, so I have kind of made it my purpose, to be as informed as possible, in order to offer as much choice as possible” (Phil).

This way of being might also be helpful for academic developers themselves. Rather than struggling to engage creative arts academics in unrelatable educational schemas and frameworks, their time might be better spent, connecting in with their audience and researching the challenging terrains in which these academics are working in. The findings from this research, for example, suggest that developers might keep in touch with these challenges by employing more dialogic practices in their development work, that encourage listening and reflection, seeking out surprise and creating fresh metaphors to reflect on everyday teaching. The use of metaphors was particularly prevalent in the lecturer accounts, reflecting deeply held values and a ‘way that humans ascribe meaning to their activities (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003, quoted in James and Brookfield, 2014: 94). This insight also seems to call for a more nuanced orientation for academic development that harks back to Goodson’s (1992) forms of professional knowledge and professionalism, that ‘in developing teachers’ professional knowledge, the joining of ‘stories of action’ to theories of context is imperative (Goodson, 1992).

Positive associations, connections and applications occurred in this study when creative synthesis took place, when lecturers suddenly saw unexpected patterns emerging, as we see in Ruth’s quote below:

When, it’s not that the whole thing is new, it’s just understanding “oh, all right, okay, there’s something theoretically that supports what I’m doing there. (Ruth).

The higher education lecturers interviewed for this study were not disinterested in reflective ideas or frameworks, but there has to be a relationship to their practices, which, as the findings of this study highlight, are research-based (section 4.5.4), industry-aligned (section 4.5.5) and dialogic (section 4.5.1):

So, there are times here when we stop and think at staff development and you know people will present on you know something very current and changing, and it might be assessment strategies or whatever. And you think, ok, so historically it used to work like that now it's like this, so what are we going to do next, and I love all that. (Trevor)

Introducing academic development pedagogies to 'progressively extend the arena of possibilities within which they operate' (Danvers, 2003:51) may also connect with creative arts colleagues' values because it concerns things that matter in the workplace setting. Indeed, this study provides particular insights into the values-driven mindset of creative arts lecturers, especially when it comes to social responsibility (section 4.6.2) In keeping with the dialogical and interrogative disposition in creative arts practices (Danvers, 2003: 55) the participants for this study did not just receive opinions, dogmas and assumptions, but tended to interrogate, revise and redefine through their own values and belief systems. Some lecturers, for example, describe a 'manifesto' or 'call to arms' (Ruth), or of 'making decisions for the benefit of mankind' (Mindy), to encourage students to develop social as well as cultural capital:

As graphic designers we are being more conscious that we ever were before – cos we have to be, because our clients have to be now. when you have climate change around you, decisions have to be made immediately – businesses are having to make decisions based on the benefit of mankind in the future – so, creating students that are socially aware is hopefully what we want to be doing (Mindy)

This finding highlights the possibilities for a more authentic, practice-based set of reflective activities (Loads and Campbell, 2015; Roxa and Martensson, 2009) to align with the everyday discourse, and practices of a creative arts community (Shreeve, 2009). By demonstrating a more empathetic understanding of the pedagogic realities of creative arts practitioners, academic developers might gain more receptivity for reflective teaching development. In turn, this may lead to a more active development of criticality and reflectivity, encouraging lecturers to challenge themselves, and to test out the extent to which their pedagogies may, or may not, concretise disadvantage.

#### 4.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has been an analysis and discussion of the data generated from the first two questions. There has been a brief description of the participants and their contexts, followed by a full analysis of the data from the talk: the words, phrases, metaphors, events,



experiences and incidents, captured in the conceptual cluster diagrams, Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2. The broad clusters have then been drawn together into 4 main themes to inform the direction of the following chapter on the helpfulness of talking to creative arts lecturers for a head of learning and teaching.

The reflective practices of the ten creative arts lecturers interviewed for this study could be conceived as oblique: diverging from a straight line or course of action. Concurring with the literature, these are practitioners who are used to critical interrogation, revision and redefinition within their own creative art and design practice which leads to an inherent instability, that is seen as positive, dynamic and productive (Danvers, 2003:54).

Appreciating the more oblique characteristics of creative arts, may be a more fruitful disposition for academic developers struggling to engage this community of specialist practitioners. Exploring these and other aspects of what might be helpful from the research findings is the subject of the next chapter.

## Chapter 5: Findings 2: Helpfulness of talking about reflecting on teaching

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I address the third research question to consider how creative arts lecturers' talking about reflecting on teaching might be helpful for a head of learning and teaching working in a similar higher education context. Since the aim of this research study to increase the understanding of heads of learning and teaching into the reflective teaching practices of creative arts lecturers, this final question provides an opportunity to reflect on the data from the first two questions, in relation to the literature and earlier rationale for this study. As outlined in the rationale detailed in Chapter 1, I have observed a disconnect between the generalist reflective educational discourse espoused on academic development programmes and the situated reflective teaching discourse of disciplinary based academics.

The discussion and analysis of the ten lecturers' accounts in Chapter 4 provides a snapshot of the 'discursive repertoires' (Trowler, 2008) of creative arts lecturers working in higher education settings. Four themes have emerged using 'constructionist thematic analysis' (Braun and Clarke, 2006), by categorising each of the data sets of reflective teaching talk as either relevant to socio-cultural context (teaching and learning norms and practices, cultures and conventions) or structural conditions (institutional policy and practice, external regulations and environment). These themes are identified in Figure 4.3 ('Conceptualisation of themes from reflective teaching talk in the creative arts') as dual identity, disciplinary lenses, social and interactive pedagogies and legitimacy in work practices. What now follows is a detailed discussion of what might be considered helpful from exploring these socio-cultural and structural contextualised dimensions.

### 5.2 Socio-cultural contexts for reflective teaching in the creative arts

As outlined in Chapters 1 and 2, there are matches and mismatches in academic developers understanding of the disciplinary teaching communities they support (Akerlind, 2007; Boud and Walker, 1998; Boud and Brew, 2013; Locke *et al.*, 2016). Even though well versed in educational theories and literature, developers may not always be familiar with the social and cultural components influencing reflection in teaching. These are the disciplinary norms and practices, cultures and conventions which impact on the adoption of scholarly and professional infrastructures (Englund *et al.*, 2018; Roxa and Martensson, 2009; Trowler *et al.*, 2012). Partly in response to this lack of contextual knowledge, approaches to academic development may be generic, based on a set of common principles of learning which are then expected to be translated into practice. However, as is outlined in the rationale for this

study, generic educational discourse may also be conceived by lecturers as alienating or unrepresentative of their own disciplinary specific pedagogic principles. Enacting unfamiliar discourses may be particularly problematic in creative arts disciplines, where lecturers might not have a background in higher education and where their disciplinary or practitioner identities might be viewed as separate from their teacher identity (Drew, 2004; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims and Shreeve, 2012). Learning and teaching practices in creative arts disciplines are typified as “sticky,” and ambiguous, where knowledge is circumspect and where students learn by making and doing, to develop ways of knowing through experience of the tactile, visual and spatial (Austerlitz *et al.*, 2008; Orr and Shreeve 2017; Souleles, 2013). Creative arts practitioners may also be averse to universal perceptions of reflection that suggest a right way to reflect, rather than drawing on more familiar reflective practices found in their own disciplines (Hjelde, 2012).

The sections that follow offers a broad discussion around some of the socio-cultural contextual aspects of lecturer reflective talk in the creative arts found within this study. The analysis focuses on what the researcher conceives as helpful from the talk for a head of learning and teaching looking to enhance the learning and teaching practices of disciplinary-based faculty.

### *5.2.1 Disciplinary lenses*

This study has illuminated the reflective teaching talk of creative arts lecturers, showing that accounts of reflective teaching are filtered through disciplinary practices (section 4.7.2). Given the difficulties of engaging disciplinary based academics with a generic body of pedagogic knowledge (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014; Boud and Walker, 1998; James, 2007; Orr *et al.*, 2010), there could be some value in accepting more disciplinary reflective practices in academic development. This discernment would better utilise previous knowledge and move beyond misconceptions of a ‘right way’ to reflect (Hjelde, 2012).

The data has shown that the words, phrases and metaphors that creative arts lecturers use when talking about teaching, are reflective by nature, but the respondents prefer to ‘say what they say within their own terms’ (Kvale, 2006), rather than adopt decontextualised frames of reference borrowed from teaching and learning theory. For example, Carl describes ‘putting a pedagogic vent’ on his teaching to explore his ideas on making mathematical skills more accessible to his animation students; Trevor refers to a ‘big argument’ taking place with course team members about how student-centred teaching should be; Mindy explains the ‘pivotal points of tension’ in her teaching, as she describes difficult interactions with her

students. These articulations of reflective practice could be attributed to the dual identities of creative arts lecturers discussed within the literature, who may struggle to articulate their roles as an educator (Drew, 2004; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Shreeve, 2009;2010). But there is also a sense of the complexity of participant's practices, between espoused theory and theory in use; that participants' felt more comfortable with more fluid conceptualisations of reflection, that recognise disciplinarity and difference. This is inferred by Ruth when she talks about the similarity between educational reflective cycles being 'exactly the same as the cycles of reflection in creative practice'.

The participants who took part in this study tended to talk about the reflective practices that were already embedded into their teaching, using more germane terms such as 'thinking through making' (section 4.5.2) or 'engaging imagination' (section 4.6.1). This finding correlates with the research on teaching and learning cultures, that the most important factor influencing learning is what the learner already knows (Trowler *et al.*, 2012). Reflection is talked about by participants in familiar terms, as an integral curricular activity, which is part of creative arts practice, as we see below:

Because a lot of art and design courses are studio based, there is a lot of how would I say? There is continual formative feedback in the dialogue and discussion with students...I think, as part of that there is naturally a reflective element in that form of communication anyway..(Mary)

While this finding correlates with the shift to better understand reflection within disciplinary settings (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014; Boud and Walker, 1998; Fanghanel, 2009; Roxa and Martensson, 2015; Trowler *et al.*, 2012) highlighted in the literature (section 2.3.2), the research offers a new perspective on how academic developers might build on existing reflective practices within disciplinary teaching and learning cultures.

### 5.2.2 *Dual identity*

Then, I think thinking about identity is really, really important. And our individual, rather than maybe going straight to what your professional identity might be.  
(Katherine)

The interplay between an individual (creative arts identity) and professional (teacher identity) was a key aspect of each participant's talk, as is illustrated above, in an excerpt from Katherine's transcript. This finding is correlated in studies of creative arts practitioners,

especially in Alison Shreeve's work on dual identity. As Shreeve (2009) concludes in her research, 'We need to pay attention to identity work and to find ways of enabling practitioners to understand that there are different ways that their identity as a practitioner can be maintained along-side an identity as an educator in creative arts subjects' (Shreeve, 2009: 158).

The capture of creative arts lecturers' discursive repertoires' (Trowler, 2008) for this study has exposed the importance of identity for creative arts lecturers and of seeing 'images of ourselves in this world, with pasts and futures and possibilities envisaged within the community of practice' (Shreeve, 2009:157). The research findings have highlighted that professional terms and concepts used in education are problematic for dual practitioners, where there may be a 'dichotomy between the two social practices of being a practitioner in the creative arts and being a teacher in the creative arts' (Sims and Shreeve, 2012; Hjelde, 2012). Respondents in this study rarely used pedagogical terms to describe their teaching and learning, preferring instead to introduce practices to their students which were more representative of creative arts industries and practices.

It is also worth considering the extent to which common pedagogic vocabularies introduced in academic development might become contested terms by practice-based academics (Hjelde, 2012). The words 'reflection' and 'practice' for example, were referred to by participants when talking about student learning, but not when talking about their own teaching. Rather than trying to sort out the matches and mismatches between professional educational discourse and creative arts practitioner discourse, this research illuminates the possibilities for developers to utilise dual identity in positive ways (Shreeve, 2009). One of the participants, Mary, for example talked about developers being honest about what they do not know:

I think when I did my PGCert I really felt that the staff delivering that did not have a clue about what we are about..at least they admitted it...(Mary)

Perhaps such perspectives also offer an insight into the more circumspect views of content knowledge in creative arts practices (Danvers, 2003; Souleles, 2013), where lecturers are less receptive to didactic models based on a certainty of expert knowledge (Sims and Shreeve, 2012: 2). Within the literature, it is suggested that developers explore ways of enabling practitioners to understand the diverse ways in which their identity as a practitioner can be maintained along-side an identity as an educator in creative arts subjects (Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Shreeve, 2009). Respondent initiatives might include the creation of

enabling structures to utilise lecturers social and collegial contexts as a means of talking about, valuing and practising teaching (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014; Roxa and Martensson, 2009). Academic developers might also employ more perspectivism in their conversations with creative arts lecturers, by recognising that learning is always contingent, informed and guided by earlier learning, by our needs, intentions and expectations, and by our beliefs and values (Danvers, 2003).

Adopting the findings from this study, where participants talked about the use of 'sandboxes' (Tim) and play-making techniques to promote creative thinking, similar dialogic approaches might also be employed to ease participants into their higher educational role. Using such approaches may help to build a sense of belonging and engagement rather than continue to perpetuate feelings of alienation or difference. By regularly asking the question 'how do I know what I don't know?' (Cousins, 2009), findings from this study suggest that academic developers are more likely to generate trust in academic development practices, where participants feel able to express themselves intellectually and emotionally, and know that such expression, and discussion of it, is legitimate and accepted (Boud and Walker, 1998).

### 5.3 Structural conditions for reflective teaching in the creative arts

As highlighted in the literature and my own experiences as a head of learning and teaching, it is not unusual for developers to find themselves at the epicentre of educational bandwagons for reflective practice (Gibbs, 2003; Land, 2001; Loughran, 2003). The 'wicked problem' (Rittel and Webber, 1973) of reflective teaching which has formed the rationale for this study, promotes reductive views of the benefits of reflection for improving teaching practice in the creative arts. As well as highlighting the disconnect between educational and creative arts discourse on reflection in teaching, this wicked problem also acknowledges the shifting landscapes and competing priorities of higher education teaching professionals (Barnett, 1997; Copeland, 2014; Di Napoli, 2014; Locke *et al.*, 2016; Turner *et al.*, 2013). The problem of not 'having time to think' to identify personal professional development needs and goals may influence staff dispositions to reflection as they juggle competing needs, space and time (Burnard *et al.*, 2006; Locke & Whitchurch, 2016; Orr *et al.*, 2010). The consequence of this is that 'critical conversations on where reflection in, on and for action can lead, have been lost in the evanescence of competing needs, space and time' (Burnard *et al.*, 2006). Such structural factors might contrive engagement with reflective practice (D'Andrea and Gosling (2005), Di Napoli (2014); Di Napoli, Gibbs, 2012; Land, 2001). The following sections consider what structural conditions have emerged from the analysis of the talk which might be helpful for heads of learning and teaching in a similar HE

context. I consider what I have learned about daily teaching realities from talking to participants, where creative arts educators are juggling multiple tasks and processing information on many levels (Barnett, 2000).

### 5.3.1 *Social and interactive pedagogies*

Because a lot of art and design courses are studio-based, there is continual formative feedback in the dialogue and discussion with students. (Katherine)

The quote above illustrates the relational and dialogic modes of meaning-making inherent in creative arts practice (Buss and Gretton, 2002; Danvers, 2003; Sims and Shreeve, 2012; Souleles, 2013). These conversations could also be characterised as ‘sticky’ (Orr and Shreeve, 2017) reflecting the uncertainty and open-ended nature of creative arts disciplines (Orr and Shreeve, 2017:143). Lecturers recounted their continuous interactions with students through discussion and debate and described their pedagogic interventions to engage students’ imagination (Danvers, 2003; Davies, 2003; James and Brookfield, 2004) using the various ‘signature pedagogies’ (Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Shulman, 2003) found in the creative arts. The dialogic encounters located in this study, illuminate the dynamic and emergent nature of discussion and debate in the creative arts, where teaching is characterised as a facilitative exchange of ideas, rather than a didactic transmission based on a certainty of expert knowledge (Shreeve *et al.*, 2012:2). The findings infer that structural conditions for creative arts lecturers should be cognisant of these social and interactive practices. To give an example, instead of writing teaching and learning policy that promotes teacher pedagogies such as giving lectures and seminars, developers may find it more productive to introduce workshops on improving tutor-student relationships through reflective listening or open questioning.

While the learning intentions of dialogic exchange may be clearly signalled in art and design pedagogy (Buss and Gretton, 2002; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims and Shreeve, 2012; Solueles, 2013), the lecturers interviewed for this study spoke about students seeking more deterministic assurances of value for money (Addison, 2014; Gravells and Scanlon, 2011):

I have had two students who have been very confrontational by nature – I have had one student get up and walk out of the class because they haven’t agreed with something that another lecturer has said. (Mindy)

There is a point of tension in the room in terms of the teacher relationship and there needs to be a partnership. (Mindy)

Mindy's accounts of her student cohort illustrate the dysfunctional relationships between tutor and student located in this study, which challenge notions of authority, expertise and power. Indeed, amongst participants, there would seem to be a powerlessness in terms of these learning and teaching exchanges, compounded by the tensions which surround the 'academization' of the art school (Orr and Shreeve, 2017). Tutors may be well intentioned in these exchanges, seeking to engage imagination and the development of a questioning criticality, but students may be seeking more deterministic measures of interactivity, such as more contact time or more lectures:

I don't quite get a grasp of what stage the wheels came off so where's the traction go and what made this thing a thing they failed to understand continuously for that period. (Carl)

Carl's reflections illustrate the extent to which lecturers may be seeking more intra-relational forms of pedagogic development to improve student understanding and engagement in studio and tutorial interactions (section 4.6.3). Such considerations pave the way for what Bostock and Baume (2016: 32) term a 'pragmatic professionalism' which might include the ability to facilitate conversations about theory and practice and their interrelationships, among ourselves and with all disciplines and professions. As one of the participants suggests below, this might actually lead to a "real conversation" about teaching which is embedded in the social and structural context of real-world relationships:

I've never heard somebody have a real conversation about teaching and learning. I mean maybe I missed it. (Eleanor)

### *5.3.2 Legitimacy in work practices*

This small-scale exploration of reflective teaching talk in the creative arts has provided a snapshot of practice based specific teaching and learning practices in the creative arts. Of note from the analysis of the talk, is the importance lecturers placed around context and relevance to the subject (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014:45):

'What is this about, what is the inspiration, what's the research behind this, why does it look this way...you need to know where you are coming from.' (Trevor)



The meaning of 'context' in this study is closely aligned with fashioning a creative arts practitioner identity. The lecturers talked about their efforts to encourage students to view the world from different perspectives, enabling students to challenge their own conceptions of the subject they are studying (Davies, 2012: 7). Here, Katherine highlights the importance of context in her theatre context:

But I'm sure I've explained to some people about.. without context, things can be really shallow, and it doesn't take long to exhaust everything you've got there. But with context, comes things like critical thinking. (Katherine)

Consistent with the literature, both Trevor and Katherine are creative practitioners who do not just receive opinions, dogmas, and assumptions, but tend to interrogate, revise and redefine through their own values and belief systems (Danvers, 2003: 55). This finding is noteworthy for heads of learning and teaching who may be charged with writing policy and practice in their own university. Though national policies, institutional and disciplinary cultures have a role in shaping teaching and learning, these influences can play out differently depending on the department or workgroup in which we work (Trowler and Cooper, 2002). This study has highlighted the tendency of lecturers to more likely accept as legitimate reflective activities that emerge from everyday work, and which potentially connect with colleagues' values because they concern teaching practices that make a difference (Loads and Campbell, 2015; Roxa and Martensson, 2009):

If you have a really fantastic idea and then you tell me in French only and only one of them (students) knows French, it's like the idea is useless because they can't understand it as a group. (Phil)

We are not really sure about the terminology you (developers) are using. (Mary)

As outlined in the findings of this study (section 4.6.4), lecturers in the creative arts are more likely to doubt curricular enhancements which may be perceived as technocratic and overly deterministic (Addison, 2014; Orr and Shreeve, 2017)

I am still not convinced that it is a good construct actually....it shouldn't be final, it should all be about suggestion and experiment and innovation. (Tim)

Given the interrogative nature of creative arts disciplines (Danvers, 2003), there would seem to be some value to introducing discursive opportunities for 'professional conversations' (Danielson, 2009) within teaching and learning development programmes. These would be

learning spaces for 'intelligent conversation' (Land, 2001) with teaching colleagues in which the balancing of different views, in relation of local to wider practitioner/perspectives, leads to critical synthesis and department production of new shared insights and practice' (Land, 2001: 6):

Instead of discussing problems of organisation, we could discuss how our teaching is going, what we are doing well. (Pedro)

## 5.4 Chapter Summary

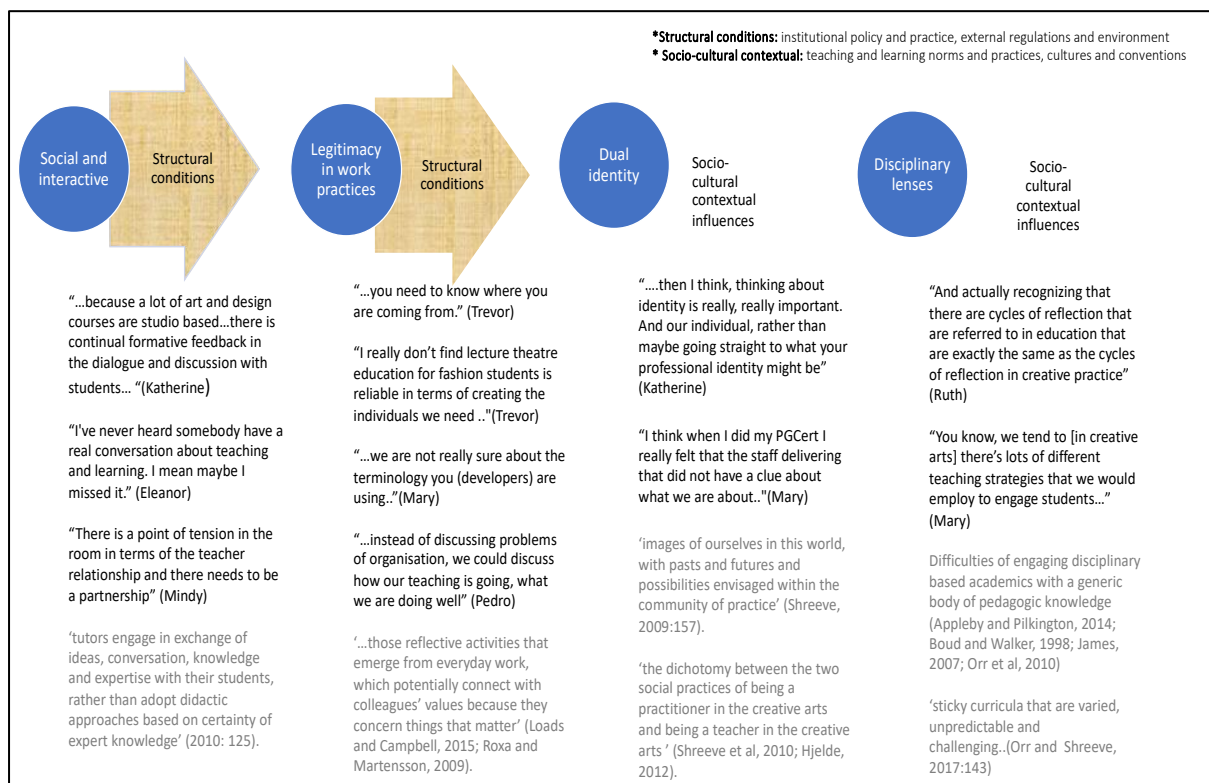


Figure 5.1: Helpfulness of talking about reflecting on teaching for a head of learning and teaching

Using the four themes outlined, the analysis and discussion for this chapter has been conceptualised around Figure 5.1 (Helpfulness of talking about reflecting on teaching for a head of learning and teaching). The discussion has considered the socio-cultural contexts and structural conditions signalled in sections 1.2.2 and 2.3.3 and utilised in the earlier thematic analysis, to explore what might be helpful for a head of learning and teaching responsible for academic development in a higher education context. The narrative is drawn from the rationale for this study (Chapter 1), the literature reviewed for this study on *Reflective teaching: definitions and interpretations; Reflective practice and academic*

*development in higher education and Creative arts reflective teaching in higher education* (Chapter 2) and the discussion of the findings (Chapters 4 and 5).

## Chapter 6: Thesis Conclusion

### 6.1. Introduction

This final chapter summarises the findings and the implications that can be drawn from this small-scale qualitative-interpretive exploration of how creative arts lecturers in higher education talk about reflecting on teaching. The chapter includes a discussion of the implications of the findings, an evaluation of the research methodology, combined with some suggestions for further research and concludes with some personal reflections on the impact of this research project on my practice as a researcher and head of learning and teaching.

### 6.2 Summary of the main findings

To ensure a full exploration of the overall research question of how creative arts lecturers talk about reflection on their teaching, this topic was examined through three research questions:

RQ1: What words, phrases and metaphors do creative arts lecturers use when talking about reflecting on their teaching?

RQ2: What incidents, experiences and events do creative arts lecturers refer to when talking about reflecting on their teaching?

RQ3: How might creative arts lecturers' talk about reflection on teaching be helpful for a head of learning and teaching?

The analysis of 'discursive repertoires' (Trowler, 2001; 2008) in this study suggests that how creative arts lecturers talk about reflecting on their teaching in higher education might be better understood through their dual identities and disciplinary practices in the creative arts (Drew, 2004; Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims and Shreeve, 2012). The ten lecturers interviewed for this study talked about the social and interactive nature of their teaching and learning contexts and their tendencies to contest reflective practices that do not take account of their workplace contexts. Considering this, the research advocates detailed discussion with those who are actively involved in teaching and learning practices in ways that pay attention to the local contextualised frameworks in which these practices are acted out. Within the parameters of this study, local contextual frameworks are interpreted as the socio-cultural contextual influences (teaching and learning norms and practices, cultures, and conventions) and structural conditions (institutional policy and practices, external

regulations and environment). The insights from talking to creative arts lecturers encourage building in dialogic reflective prompts (Figure 6.1: Dialogic prompt cards for reflecting on teaching), to encourage academics to reflect on their teaching through their own lenses as practitioners, subject experts and researchers.

### *6.2.1 Rationale and conceptual structure of the study*

An important element of this study has been the foregrounding of socio-cultural forms of academic development (Appleby and Pilkington, 2014; Boud and Brew, 2013; James and Brookfield, 2014; Kahn *et al.*, 2006; Roxa and Martensson, 2009, 2012) which pay attention to the social and cultural processes influencing the way teachers construct and maintain an understanding about teaching and learning. The emphasis placed on socio-cultural forms of academic development originates in the rationale and review of literature for this study (Chapters 1 and Chapter 2) where the desire to engage in a shared sense-making accepting of multiplicity, is signalled for a researcher without a propositional knowledge of creative arts reflectivity. The conceptual structure of this study therefore acknowledges that lecturers do not think about their teaching practice in isolation, but co-construct in dialogue with others (Boud and Brew, 2013; Roxa and Martensson, 2009, 2012). The decision to use an interpretive-qualitative methodology for this exploration of lecturer's reflective talk has provided an opportunity to utilise the qualitative research methods of semi structured interviewing and reflexivity to let the research unfold and gather new perspectives on the reflective teaching practices of lecturers teaching in higher education.

To fully explore respondent's narrative positioning, communicative contexts, conversational organisation and multivocality (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995), the first two research questions were designed to capture as many variables of the talk as possible:

- The first research question explored the words, phrases and metaphors used by creative arts lecturers when talking about their teaching in higher education. The analysis focused on the conversational organization and multivocality within the talk.
- The second research question explored the events, incidents, and experiences that lecturers referred to when talking about reflecting on their teaching. The analysis focused on the respondent's communicative contexts and narrative positioning within the talk.

The third research question was designed to integrate the findings of the first two research questions, to explore what might be helpful from the talk for a head of learning and teaching. The analysis concentrated on the socio-cultural contexts (teaching and learning norms and practices, cultures and conventions) and structural conditions (institutional policy and practice, external regulations and environment) of the lecturers' reflective talk, which emerged from the 'constructionist thematic analysis' (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

#### *6.2.2 Words, phrases and metaphors used in reflective teaching talk (RQ1)*

The first research question asked what words, phrases and metaphors creative arts lecturers use when talking about reflecting on their teaching. The findings of the study suggest that lecturers' talk through their identities as creative arts practitioners rather than as educators in the creative arts. Participants for this study used words, phrases and metaphors that reflected their experience in the creative industries and vocational education, rather than frames of reference found within higher educational literature. Indeed, there was a particular acquiescence around educational vocabulary, with the ten tutors circumnavigating the right pedagogic term to use, while others seeming apologetic for their lack of knowledge. The analysis of the talk highlights some of the disconnects between teaching terms used in academic development and the disciplinary teaching realities reflective of everyday discourse in the creative arts. The use of metaphors was particularly prevalent in the lecturer accounts, reflecting lecturers' uneasy relationship with higher education structures which are perceived to clash with the liminal and ambiguous intentions of the creative curriculum (Orr and Shreeve (2017:11)). Metaphors used included 'see saw' (Carl), 'ping pong' (Mindy), 'standing out from the crowd' (Trevor) and 'walking a tightrope' (Phil), illustrating the shifting landscapes and competing priorities of being a creative arts lecturer in higher education. This discourse also highlights the conflicted identities of practice-based lecturers who may feel alienated from higher education discourse (Shreeve, 2009) and view teaching and practice as two separate, sometimes irreconcilable practices.

#### *6.2.3 Events, incidents and experiences referred to in reflective teaching talk (RQ2)*

The second research question asked what events, incidents and experiences creative arts lecturers referred to when talking about reflecting on their teaching. The analysis of the interview data highlighted that lecturers are concerned with engaging student learners in the 'signature pedagogies' (Sims and Shreeve, 2012) of art and design and navigating institutional structures for student progression and attainment. Lecturers are torn between staying true to their creative arts practitioner identities, (for example, promoting risk taking and divergent thinking) and acquiescing in safe learning experiences (Addison, 2014) to

respond to higher education agendas for student satisfaction and employability. Legitimacy and authenticity are important values to creative arts lecturers, and they are more likely to respond to development practices that are relevant to their studio-based teaching realities. Of note in this study is the extent to which lecturers talk about the social and interactive nature of their roles, supporting students to fashion a creative arts identity through dialogue and exchange. The pedagogic interactions they describe also highlight the sometimes-dysfunctional relationships between staff and students, particularly where students may be seeking more deterministic assurances of value for money (Danvers, 2003; Gravells and Scanlon, 2011).

#### *6.2.4 Helpful aspects of reflective teaching talk for a head of learning and teaching (RQ3)*

The third research question asked what might be helpful for a head of learning and teaching, from talking about reflecting on teaching with creative arts lecturers. The research has highlighted the different orientations a head of learning and teaching might take to develop a university's academic endeavours and where this might mesh or clash with creative arts lecturers. For example, the research has shown that learning and teaching academic development terms and concepts are problematic for dual practitioners in the creative arts, where reflection and practice might be understood through a disciplinary or dual identity lens. Instead of attempting to sort out the 'matches and mismatches' (Akerlind, 2017) between these discourses, the findings promote dialogic approaches in academic development which foreground disciplinary discourse (and associated practices), as a means of more authentically engaging academics in conversations about developing their teaching that are embedded in their workplace contexts. If a university is committed to making use of the UKPSF (2011a), for example, promoting positive associations and affirmations around dual identity and discipline, may inspire lecturers to engage with the framework in a more meaningful way. In the short term, by keeping connected with the teaching contexts of academics, heads of learning and teaching can stay abreast of teaching realities and gain a more authentic understanding of faculty who are 'rooted in particular contexts, with distinctive protocols, methods, conventions, and literatures (Akerlind, 2017:35; Fanghanel, 2009). In the long term, heads of learning and teaching might consider modelling a more 'emergent' leadership style associated with bottom-up and horizontal influence' (Bolden, Petrov and Gosling, 2009:257), which is sympathetic to the social and cultural influences on reflection, and which advocates practice sensitivity through active listening and empathy.

### 6.2.5 Implications

The findings of this research project emphasise the importance for academic developers of reflecting in, and on academic development. As Sutherland (2013) opines, ‘Critical reflection requires us to ponder our practices, processes and identities. It also requires us to look beyond our own circumstances to the external factors, policies, and people that might influence the choices we make and the actions we take.’ (ibid:111). This study draws attention to the critically reflective educational discourse used in academic development, inferring such talk can be alienating to academics who might see teaching as additional to their profession or discipline. The discoveries from this research suggest that creative arts academics are inherently reflective in their teaching but tend to talk about these reflections through their identities as dual practitioners rather than with reference to educational literature or pedagogic constructs. Academic developers might therefore consider their role as more like a facilitator, steering essential conversations about teaching which reaffirm the different elements of academic practice individuals negotiate in their everyday lives. To illustrate this thinking, this thesis provides a set of dialogic reflective prompt cards (Figure 6.1 ‘Dialogic prompt cards for reflecting on teaching’) which stem from the research highlights, which might stimulate meaningful reflective conversations.



Figure 6.1

A useful insight from this study is the value of metaphor for encouraging lecturers to talk about their reflections on teaching (James and Brookfield, 2014; Kerchner, 2006). Incorporating metaphor into reflective teaching development potentially opens fresh



possibilities of thought and action, encouraging lecturers to see elements of their own practices in common with reflective constructs in academic development. Participants enjoyed locating their own expressions for reflectivity which were often connected to the student experience. For example, terms such as ‘engaging imagination’, ‘thinking through making’ and ‘encoding thinking’ were seen as more viable as expressions of reflection in a student context. Fostering approaches to reflective teaching development which encourage the surfacing of these student-centred references may also blur the boundaries between generic and discipline specific pedagogies, to support better relationships and conversations between academic developers and lecturers.

The implications for policy from this study are that specialists and generalists can see the world differently. Appreciating that lecturers are values-based individuals with diverse histories (rather than empty “vessels”) seems an important implication for the development of policy, especially for a head of learning and teaching. Creative arts lecturers interviewed for this study, need to see the relevance of change initiatives in teaching and learning, before engaging with its documents and practices. The findings from this study surface the uneasy relationship of creative arts disciplines with organisational policy and procedure (section 4.4.6), and the importance of research-based pedagogies (section 4.4.4). Given the constructivist roots of creative arts learning and teaching, characterised as ‘kind of exchange’ (Orr and Shreeve, 2017; Sims and Shreeve, 2012), where the lecturer’s role is more like a facilitator than a didactic expert, policy and practice might recognize this by deferring from generalized terminology to describe teaching and learning. Applying this insight to the development of university learning and teaching, heads of learning and teaching might for example, think differently about their application of the UKPSF (2011a) in accredited teacher development. Rather than expecting lecturers to engage with a professional discourse involving “evidence” “skills” and “enhancing your practice”, a first step might be to provide safe spaces for lecturers (whose first discipline is not education) to deconstruct these terms and come up with their own glossary. Additionally, this study promotes the benefits of making space for dialogue within institutional processes and systems, by promoting a teacher reflectivity which utilizes socio-cultural, relationship-based contexts. The insights from this research highlight possibilities for heads of learning and teaching to develop a ‘pragmatic professionalism’ (Bostock and Baume, 2016:32), which is less about being an educational expert, and more about facilitating dialogue based on a desire to learn from each other. This understanding may also be useful to paradigmatically shift the trademark image of academic development as a decontextualised “service” to one which is guided by previous experiences of individuals and the history of development that they bring to the workplace.

### 6.3 Original contribution to knowledge

This exploration of reflective teaching talk in the creative arts, has illuminated a topical concern in academic development which is the lack of knowledge on what reflective teaching looks like in specific disciplinary contexts (Bleakley, 1999; Clegg *et al.*, 1999; Kreber and Castleden, 2009; Lindblom-Ylance *et al.*, 2006; Roxa and Martensson, 2009). The research has specifically explored creative arts reflective teaching talk, through an examination of lecturers' 'discursive repertoires' (Trowler, 2008) contributing to a holistic and more nuanced understanding of the reflective teaching practices of creative arts lecturers working in higher education contexts. Apart from creating possibilities for more authentic reflective practices and an increased awareness of individuals' pedagogical point of departure, this study has brought forward some of the different discourses respondents in the creative arts are involved in via their roles as higher education lecturers. The findings have highlighted the oblique characteristics of reflective teaching conversation captured across a wide range of symbiotic forms, expressive languages and actions (Eisner, 2002, quoted in Burnard *et al.*, 2006: 7). The many different discourses seen through the words, phrases, metaphors, events, experiences, and incidents of the reflective talk, highlight the importance of recognising disciplinary identity and offering diverse ways of practising and documenting reflection. This research is potentially important to higher education as it encourages a more diverse appreciation of socio-cultural contexts and structural conditions for reflective teaching through inter-subjective understanding and imaginative engagement (James and Brookfield, 2014).

The original contribution of the thesis is its consideration of the 'wicked problem' (Rittel and Webber, 1973) of reflective teaching, which is a disconnect between academic development discourse or "education-speak" and the more socially situated, culturally imbued dialogue on reflection that arises from creative arts teaching contexts. The study has illuminated the dialogue of creative arts lecturers, giving voice to this under-represented participant group, and highlighting their reflective pedagogic practices. Drawing on creative arts practitioner 'discursive repertoires' (Trowler, 2001; 2008) has enabled a rich understanding of teaching and learning contexts in higher education and the benefits of adopting more divergent reflective practices to engage faculty in meaningful conversations to reflect on their teaching. Therefore, this study extends understanding of how heads of learning and teaching might build trusting working relationships to connect in with academic communities.

### 6.4 Further research needed

To begin, this research was based on an interpretive paradigm where reflective teaching talk was studied in a social constructivist framework. Given the qualitative-interpretive research methodology employed for this research project, the findings cannot be considered as 'facts' in some ultimate sense, but rather 'situated accountings of the research topic' (Baker, 2002, quoted in Roulston, 2010: 60) produced through an interactive process between researcher and respondent. Adopting this methodology has enabled a depth of exploration and shared sense-making for the purposes of this study, but not enough to fully examine the full phenomenon of reflective teaching in the creative arts. This study has only captured explicit and surface meaning rather than underlying ideas and personal observations amongst a small sample population. As a result, the insights obtained in this effort do not speak to other possible socio-cultural and structural variables, such as power dynamics, research-teaching nexus, learning and teaching cultures or academic leadership. These would be interesting aspects to research further, particularly given the calls within the literature for a 'more accurate understanding of the actual experiences, needs and concerns of the individual' (Locke *et al.*, 2016:81).

Throughout the research process, I have presented work in progress at EdD weekend seminars or within my employing university (Appendix J: Research work in progress presentations). These interactions with research audiences have provided great opportunities for feedback on the research findings and to gather new perspectives and areas for further research. By constantly interacting with the rich data sets gathered through the inquiry, more topics for further exploration have emerged, which I list below as a set of questions:

- How do the characteristics and behaviours of creative practitioner's mesh with their roles as higher education lecturers?
- How do the opportunities and demands of today's HE environments play into the work lives of creative arts faculty?
- Why do creative arts lecturers talk about the importance of student reflection and not their own reflection?
- How does inclusive practice sit alongside creative arts pedagogy, given that one is open and transparent, and the other is sticky and ambiguous?
- What does industry really mean in the context of creative arts learning and teaching?

In response to the variability of the creative arts reflective teaching discourse recounted for this study, it would be interesting to explore these reflective practices further. As Orr and Shreeve (2017) suggest, 'this is a sticky curriculum, complex, rich, mutable, and variable

(Orr and Shreeve, 2017: 73). The pedagogic reflectivity of the ten creative arts lecturers interviewed for this study could be conceived as oblique: diverging from a straight line or course of action. There is a sense from this research that lecturers may be more receptive to radical pedagogies which are cognisant of the dialogical and interrogative disposition inherent in creative arts practices (Danvers, 2003:55). This contrasts with corporate pedagogies, aimed at achieving institutional targets around teaching excellence (Bleakley, 1999; Clegg *et al.*, 1999; Clegg, 2000), which may be conceived as technocratic and unrepresentative of creative arts practice. Concurring with the literature, these are practitioners who are used to critical interrogation, revision and redefinition within their own creative art and design practice which leads to an inherent instability, which is seen as positive, dynamic and productive (Danvers, 2003:54). The themes interpreted from this study (section 4.6) which are *dual identity*, *disciplinary lenses*, *legitimacy in work practices* and the *social and interactive pedagogies*, might be drawn together to form a set of 'Oblique strategies for reflecting on teaching in higher education' (Figure 6.2, below) for lecturers undertaking professional development in teaching. These strategies could be explored further through academic development workshops.

<b>Use your own ideas (Dual identity)</b>
<i>Apply reflective practices that are personally meaningful and that connect in with the realities of your educative context.</i>
<b>State the problem in words as clearly as possible (Social and interactive)</b>
<i>Talk through your educative challenges with your colleague (s) aiming to distill from each other's dialogue, your understanding of the problem.</i>
<b>Work at a different speed (Legitimacy in work practices)</b>
<i>See something new in yourself as an educator, by locating previously unconscious material or seeing familiar aspects in fresh ways.</i>
<b>Turn it upside down (Disciplinary lenses)</b>
<i>Disrupt reflection on your educational practices by thinking about it as a provocation, a story, poem or a metaphor.</i>
<b>Don't avoid what is easy (Disciplinary lenses)</b>
<i>Set up safe spaces to deconstruct teaching terms, experiment with educative technology and "un-learn" practices.</i>
<b>Use an old idea (Legitimacy in work practices)</b>
<i>Locate an idea from your disciplinary practice to put a fresh perspective on your reflection as an educator.</i>

Figure 6.2 Oblique Strategies for reflecting on teaching in higher education

## 6.5 Personal reflection and evaluation

Finally, some reflections are offered on the impact this project has had on my own personal and professional development. Embarking on this research has created a number of mixed emotions for me in juggling my positionality as an educational researcher with a leadership position in a creative education context. I have come to realise through various stages of the research, that despite being drawn to divergent practices, I also tend to want to define or make assumptions quickly, rather than explore different interpretations. For years as an academic developer, for example, I had believed that creative arts lecturers did not reflect properly because they did not embrace reflective schemas for teaching observation. Indeed, the idea for this study was originally formed from a belief that I could unlock the 'hidden frames of reference' (Hjelde, 2012) in creative arts reflection to build a more authentic framework for reflective teaching in the creative arts. But by using an interpretive-qualitative methodology, I have come to believe that it is better to accept more dialogic and facilitatory expressions of reflectivity, which are more about careful listening, active questioning, and openness to change one's beliefs, than unlocking some secret formula.

The reason I embarked on a professional doctorate was to support my work as a head of learning and teaching, by deepening my understanding of creative arts learning and teaching, by sharpening my research skills and by exploring my own biases and subjectivities as a hybrid professional. In an earlier reflection recorded in my reflective journal, I am reminded how the hesitations and doubts I had about my own professional journey from librarian to academic, were similar to the pedagogic uncertainties of the creative arts participants in my study:

Why did I ever leave the comfort of libraries for this in-between world? I am neither an academic or a creative practitioner, neither fish nor fowl. Instead, I have entered a new world of uncertainty and self-doubt...

Excerpt from researcher's reflective journal, January 2018

Looking back through my journal, I found other examples of empathetic association with my lecturer participants, especially the reflections which highlighted my search for authenticity:

I am struck by how much of my existence has been about a quest for authenticity and wanting to stand out from the crowd. From the early fascination with libraries to the latter quest to explore the 'back stage' of teaching, I am always wanting to move beyond the mainstream.

The habit of keeping a reflective journal throughout this project has helped me to develop a mutuality with my participants and create a narrative of thoughts and emotions which recognise researcher centrality and influence in the research process (Fine, 2002; Yanos and Hopper, 2008). Whilst such reflexivity can never fully mitigate against researcher bias and subjectivity, recording these narratives has been integral during the interpretation stages, to remind me of my positioning as an 'outsider looking in' (as opposed to an 'insider looking around' (Muchmore, 2002)).

The use of a reflective journal has also been helpful in rationalising thoughts and recording anxieties with the qualitative-social constructivist underpinning of the research. Recognising that my preferred operational style is to rationalise complexities and provide solutions, I relaxed into the unknowns of this inquiry, using the opportunity to think with the data and root me into the interpretation. The close analysis of the interview transcripts that I describe in the extract, enabled a further sensitivity concerning what I did and said in the interview interactions. By adopting a semi-structured approach to the interviews, I had been attempting to put aside expectations of finding an "answer," and instead, to generate situated understandings and possible ways of talking about the research topic (Roulston, 2010: 60). The centrality of interactions, exchanges, negotiation of meaning between two parties (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) has been important all through this inquiry, to remind myself of the socially constructed philosophical premise of this research, where basic generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction with human beings (Cresswell, 2013).

As a piece of practitioner research, this study has influenced my role in learning and teaching, encouraging me to think about more of a servant style of leadership (Hafeli, 2014), which is appreciative of different perspectives by actively listening to lecturers, observing and becoming aware of teaching realities in higher education. The experience of using open questions and reflective listening through the main data source of semi structured interviews for this research, has also informed a new 'Talking Teaching' online resource I am developing in my employing university. Modelling the literature reviewed for this study, the conceptualisation of this resource is based on a type of reflective conversation which includes questioning and formulating multiple solutions to daily challenges that arise in arts practice captured across a wide range of symbiotic forms, expressive languages, and actions (Burnard and Hennessey, 2006; Eisner, 2002).

This project has provided me with the space to explore the socio-cultural and structural contextual influences in teacher reflectivity signalled in Chapter 1, which I could not fully appreciate because I was not imbued with the pedagogical knowledge and expertise of these disciplines. Traversing through the many stages of this research inquiry, I now feel instilled with the many and varied teaching and learning practices in creative education. For example, I have learned about how much of the curricular experiences are based on a horizontal exchange between tutor and student; I have learned of the importance of practitioner identity and how knowledge is guided by earlier learning and by beliefs and values; I have learned that creative arts lecturers are more receptive to an initial framework for reflecting on their teaching, rather than just being presented with an open invitation to reflect; I have learned that lecturers like a safe space and time to reflect to explore improvements in their teaching; and I have learned that lecturers in the creative arts are inherently reflective practitioners, but that they like to talk about these practices using words, phrases, metaphors, events, experiences and incidents fused with their own creative arts identities. Most importantly, I have learned that making time for 'continued conversations with each other and with other colleagues' (Berg and Seeber, 2016: 85) is an essential resource for reflective academic development in a multi-disciplinary, higher education context.

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## Appendices



**Interview Schedule : *How do creative arts lecturers in higher education talk about reflecting on their teaching?: an exploration of the talk of creative arts lecturers.***

Introduction – Introduce myself, talk briefly about my research, establish ground rules for discussion, reiterate privacy and confidentiality, allow questions

**Tell me about your current teaching role**

- what you teach, why you teach in the ways that you do..
- What words come to mind when you are thinking about your teaching/lecturing role?
- What does a typical day lecturing/teaching in the creative arts look like?

**Tell me about a recent incident, experience or event in your teaching**

- what happened and what resonated for you?
- How relevant and useful was this to your teaching?
- What was the outcome, for you and your students?
- What's next – will you continue the same approach or are you planning further revisions?

**Do you think there are things academic developers should know about the ways creative arts lecturers reflect on their teaching?**

- How would you reimagine reflection to work for you and your academic practice?
- What are the support mechanisms to nurture reflective practice to make it common practice?

**Is there anything else you would like to add?**



## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask the researcher (details below) if you would like further information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

### **Title of Research Project:**

How do creative arts lecturers in higher education talk about reflecting on their teaching? An exploration of the talk of creative arts lecturers.

### **Researcher Details:**

Annamarie McKie, University of Roehampton, Email: [mckiea@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:mckiea@roehampton.ac.uk)

I am a part time Educational Doctorate student at the University of Roehampton. In my full-time professional role, I am a Teaching and Learning Development Manager at the University for the Creative Arts, leading a team of educational developers engaged in initial and continuing professional development provision for creative arts lecturers.

### **About the Project:**

This research project will be exploring how creative arts lecturers in higher education talk about reflecting on their teaching using their own discursive repertoires. The research aims to increase the understanding of heads of educational development into the reflective teaching practices of creative arts lecturers. The researcher, Annamarie McKie, will be asking participants about their creative arts teaching roles and the important critical incidents and events that have shaped their approaches to teaching and supporting learning in the creative arts. The research is responding to a gap in the educational developer knowledge base on the reflective teaching practice of creative arts lecturers. Whilst there is considerable research on the role of reflection in the professional pedagogic development of higher education lecturers, the disciplinary discourse of reflective teaching, remains largely unexplored.

The participants I am seeking for this research inquiry will be 10-12 creative arts lecturers who are teaching in higher education. For the purposes of my research, I am defining creative arts lecturers as follows:

- Programme Leaders, Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Part-time, Sessional, Fractional lecturing staff working in higher education creative arts.
- Working in any creative arts discipline in a higher education setting

My research is being undertaken at two specialist arts universities in the United Kingdom.

### **What will participation involve?**

What I would like to do is to ask you to reflect on your creative arts teaching role(s) and the incidents and events that have shaped your approaches to teaching and supporting learning in the creative arts. I will invite you to a semi-structured interview in your own university, in a room of your choosing, which will take between 45 minutes and 1 hour to complete. All participation in this research is voluntary, and consent to participate can be withdrawn at any time. To take part in this study, please contact me directly by email [mckie@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:mckie@roehampton.ac.uk)

### **How will the data be collected for this study?**

During the research, data collected from the interviews will be audio recorded and a transcript will be produced. You will have the opportunity to view the data once transcribed before it is used in the project, and any amendments will be made. The data will then be used to identify themes, approaches, opportunities and barriers to reflective teaching in the creative arts. These findings will be disseminated through publication of articles, conference papers and presented within an Educational Doctorate thesis. If you should withdraw from this project your data might still be used in a collated form.

### **What are the risks involved in this study?**

Participation in this project is anonymous and I will respect your privacy and confidentiality at all times. You have the right to stop the interview or withdraw from the research at any time. The transcript of the interview will be analysed by me and access to the interview transcript will be restricted to me only. Personal data will be stored on password-protected, encrypted devices. The recordings from the interviews will be kept on my Mac and coded in files where the names will be anonymised.

In accordance with the University of Roehampton Record Retention Schedule, all consent forms will be retained for 6 years after the completion of the project. Any other data will be kept for 10 years after the completion of the project. Pseudonyms will be used throughout; there will be no identifying features on the interview schedules, or on any notes made in the interviews.

### **What are the benefits for taking part in this study?**

By agreeing to take part in this study, you will be helping teaching and learning development managers to gain a better understanding of the ways in which this creative arts lecturers reflect on their teaching. Data that I collect from my conversations with you will be used to draw out themes from talking about reflecting on teaching, with a view to locating more practice-adaptable reflective activities to enhance teaching and learning cultures in the creative arts. You will receive a copy of the final research report, and be contacted when the research is made available through academic publication.

### **What are your rights as a participant?**

Taking part in the study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw at any time without prejudice (for example, to your job, studies or well-being) and without providing a reason. I am more than willing to discuss any concerns that may arise as a result of your participation in this study. I will have the university's support numbers to hand should you feel any physical or emotional discomfort (eg counsellor, GP, support groups).

### **Will I receive any payment or monetary benefits?**

You will receive no payment for your participation. The data will not be used by any member of the project team for commercial purposes. Therefore, you should not expect any royalties or payments from the research project in the future.

**For more information:**

The project has been approved under the procedures of the University of Roehampton Ethics Committee. If you have any questions before, during or after the interview, please contact me at my University of Roehampton email address [mckiea@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:mckiea@roehampton.ac.uk)

**What if I have concerns about the research?**

If you have a concern about any aspect of your participation or any other queries please raise this with the Director of Studies (details below). However, if you would like to contact an independent party please contact the Research Lead, Professor Vini Lander (details below)

**Director of Studies contact details:**

Dr Julie Shaughnessy  
School of Education  
University of Roehampton  
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Tel: 020 8392 3493.  
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**Research Lead contact details:**

Professor Vini Lander  
School of Education  
University of Roehampton  
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SW15 5PU  
Tel: 020 8392 3865  
[vini.lander@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:vini.lander@roehampton.ac.uk)

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**Privacy statement**

By agreeing to take part in this research, you are confirming that you have read, understood and agree with the University's Data Privacy Notice for Research Participants (see separate attachment). You will be agreeing for the researcher to record the interview for the purpose of analysis. Transcripts will be stored securely in accordance with the University of Roehampton policy on the UK Data Protection Act and will comply with legal requirements in relation to the storage and use of personal data as stipulated in the UK by the Data Protection Act (2018) and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Your identity and your institution's will remain anonymous both for the purposes of the project and any publications that arise out of it. Any personal details will be password protected and encrypted and retained for 6 years after the completion of the project.

You will be free to withdraw from the research at any point without giving a reason by contacting the researcher, Annamarie McKie. If you do withdraw, your data will not be erased but will only be used in an anonymized form as part of an aggregated dataset. Any personal data collected from you during the course of the project will be used for the purposes outlined above in the public interest.

If you would like to take part in this research, I will ask you to **sign two forms** consenting to the interview. The consent form is attached, and I can collect the signed copy when we meet.



**Invitation to go on the staff portal or email system of the participating institution**

'How do creative arts lecturers in higher education talk about reflecting on their teaching? An exploration of the talk of creative arts lecturers.

Dear Colleagues,

As part of my Educational Doctorate research, I am inquiring into reflective teaching practices of creative arts lecturers in higher education. I am specifically seeking creative arts lecturers, who I am defining as follows:

- Programme Leaders, Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Part-time, Sessional, Fractional lecturing staff working in higher education creative arts.
- Working in any creative arts discipline in a higher education setting

**The research study**

will be exploring how creative arts lecturers in higher education talk about reflection in their teaching. The purpose of the research will be to gain insights into how university lecturers talk about reflection in their teaching using their own disciplinary frames of reference.

**Information**

is included in the attached participant information sheet, but please do contact me directly if you have any further questions: [mckiea@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:mckiea@roehampton.ac.uk)

**If you would**

like to participate, please email me briefly outlining your current role and creative arts background.

**Please do cascade**

to any of your creative arts lecturer colleagues who may be interested in participating.

**This project has**

been approved under the procedures of the University of Roehampton's Ethics Committee

Kindest regards

Annamarie McKie

Educational Doctorate Researcher, University of Roehampton  
Tel: 01227 817448, Email: [mckiea@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:mckiea@roehampton.ac.uk)





**Title of Research Project:**

How do creative arts lecturers in higher education talk about reflecting on their teaching? An exploration of the talk of creative arts lecturers.

**Brief Description of Research Project**

This research project will be exploring how creative arts lecturers in higher education talk about reflecting on their teaching using their own discursive repertoires. The research aims to increase the understanding of heads of educational development into the reflective teaching practices of creative arts lecturers. The researcher, Annamarie McKie, will be asking participants about their creative arts teaching roles and the important critical incidents and events that have shaped their approaches to teaching and supporting learning in the creative arts. The research is responding to a gap in the educational developer knowledge base on the reflective teaching practice of creative arts lecturers. Whilst there is considerable research on the role of reflection in the professional pedagogic development of higher education lecturers, the disciplinary discourse of reflective teaching, remains largely unexplored.

For more details about the project please refer to the attached 'Participant Information Sheet'

For the purposes of this study, creative arts lecturers are defined as follows:

- Programme Leaders, Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Part-time, Sessional, Fractional lecturing staff working in higher education creative arts.
- Working in any creative arts discipline in a higher education setting

The research is being undertaken at two specialist arts universities in the United Kingdom.

**What Participation Involves:**

Participation in this project is anonymous and privacy and confidentiality will be respected at all times. Participation is voluntary and involves a 45-60 minutes interview with the research student, Annamarie McKie, which will be audio recorded. Interviews will take place in the participant's place of teaching a. Every effort will be taken by the researcher to ensure that participants are made to feel as comfortable as possible and the participant has the right to withdraw at any time.

**Investigator Contact Details:**

Annamarie McKie  
School of Education

University of Roehampton  
London  
SW15 5PJ  
[mckiea@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:mckiea@roehampton.ac.uk)

The project has been approved under the procedures of the University of Roehampton Ethics Committee.

### Consent Statement

I confirm on behalf of the [name of institution] that I have read and understood the Information Sheet dated [ ] and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I agree on behalf of the [name of institution] that creative arts lecturers teaching at this university can take part in this research and that the research student, Annamarie McKie, is permitted to conduct research interviews on university premises and will be given access to teaching spaces within this university to interview participants.

I agree on behalf of the [name of institution] to advertise the research on our staff portal/email system using the invitation/information sheet provided. Whilst I will be communicating the research opportunity to potential participants, I will not be passing on messages to or from participants to ensure confidentiality and anonymity at all times. I understand that all enquiries about the research will be addressed to the researcher.

I understand, on behalf of the [name of institution] that the information provided and that data from participants from the [named institution] will be treated in confidence by the investigator and that the identity of the institution will be protected in the publication of any findings. I am aware that participants are free to withdraw at any point without giving a reason by contacting Annamarie McKie.

I understand, on behalf of the [name of institution] that if any participants from the participating institution withdraw, their data may not be erased but will only be used in an anonymised form as part of an aggregated dataset. I understand that the researcher will not be releasing participant identities and data to the participating institution (or to their employing university).

I understand that the personal data collected from participants at [name of the institution] during the course of the project will be used for the purposes outlined above in the public interest.

By signing this form, you are confirming that you have read, understood and agree with the University's [Data Privacy Notice for Research Participants](#)

The information you have provided will be treated in confidence by the researcher and your identity will be protected in the publication of any findings. The purpose of the research may change over time, and your data may be re-used for research projects by the University of Roehampton in the future. If this is the case, you will normally be provided with additional information about the new project.

Name of institutional contact .....

On behalf of [name of institution] .....

Signature .....

Date .....

**Copies:** *Once this has been signed by the institutional representative, the institution should receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form. A copy of the signed and dated consent form will be placed in the main project file which will be kept in a secure location.*

Please note: if you have a concern about any aspect of your participation or any other queries please raise this with the investigator (you can also contact the Director of Studies.) However, if you would like to contact an independent party please contact the Research Lead (details below).

**Director of Studies contact details:**

Dr Julie Shaughnessy  
School of Education  
University of Roehampton  
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Tel: 020 8392 3493.  
[J.Shaughnessy@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:J.Shaughnessy@roehampton.ac.uk)

**Research Lead contact details:**

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SW15 5PU  
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[vini.lander@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:vini.lander@roehampton.ac.uk)



## **PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM**

### **Title of Research Project:**

How do creative arts lecturers in higher education talk about reflecting on their teaching? An exploration of the talk of creative arts lecturers.

### **Brief Description of Research Project:**

This research project is exploring how creative arts lecturers in higher education talk about reflecting on their teaching using their own discursive repertoires. The research aims to increase the understanding of heads of educational development into the reflective teaching practices of creative arts lecturers. The researcher, Annamarie McKie, will be asking participants about their creative arts teaching roles and the important critical incidents and events that have shaped their approaches to teaching and supporting learning in the creative arts. The research is responding to a gap in the educational developer knowledge base on the reflective teaching practice of creative arts lecturers. Whilst there is considerable research on the role of reflection in the professional pedagogic development of higher education lecturers, the disciplinary discourse of reflective teaching, remains largely unexplored, the ways in which lecturers reflect on their teaching within their own disciplinary based teaching cultures, remains largely unexplored.

For more details about the project please refer to the attached Information for Participants.

For the purposes of this study, creative arts lecturers are defined as follows:

- Programme Leaders, Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Part-time, Sessional, Fractional lecturing staff working in higher education creative arts.
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Participation in this project is anonymous. Participation is voluntary and involves a 45-60 minute interview with the research student, Annamarie McKie, which will be audio recorded. Interviews will take place in the participant's place of teaching.

### **Investigator Contact Details:**

Annamarie McKie  
School of Education

University of Roehampton  
London  
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[mckiea@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:mckiea@roehampton.ac.uk)

The project has been approved under the procedures of the University of Roehampton Ethics Committee.

**Consent Statement:**

I agree to take part in this research, and am aware that I am free to withdraw at any point without giving a reason by contacting Annamarie McKie. I understand that if I do withdraw from this project, my data may not be erased but will only be used in an anonymised form as part of an aggregated dataset. I understand that the personal data collected from me during the course of the project will be used for the purposes outlined above in the public interest.

By signing this form, you are confirming that you have read, understood and agree with the University's [Data Privacy Notice for Research Participants](#)

The information you have provided will be treated in confidence by the researcher and your identity will be protected in the publication of any findings. Any data collected is for this project only and will only be used by the named researcher.

Name .....

Signature .....

Date .....

**Copies:** *Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form. A copy of the signed and dated consent form will be placed in the main project file and kept in a secure location.*

Please note: if you have a concern about any aspect of your participation or any other queries please raise this with the investigator (you can also contact the Director of Studies.) However, if you would like to contact an independent party please contact the Research Lead (details below).

**Director of Studies contact details:**

Dr Julie Shaughnessy  
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**Research Lead contact details:**

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[vini.lander@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:vini.lander@roehampton.ac.uk)

## Appendix F: Early Memo-ing of Transcripts

### Research Interview Transcript A

How do creative arts lecturers talk about reflecting on their teaching: Interview with Carl

Creative arts discipline: Design and coding

Interview length: 31.53 mins

#### Coding legend

**Pink** = words, phrases and metaphors

**Yellow** = incidents, experiences and events

IR:

Carl, can you tell me a little bit about your teaching role at ????? How long you have been teaching, your students, subject areas?

Carl:

My background is not teaching in any formal sense, except for occasional sessional posts. I was hired by ????? when we were running a kind of experimental Fe unit for kinda of an apprenticeship /pre degree – to gain IT skills whilst having placements in companies. That was given the name ‘Codes Owners’ not by me but the name inherited. We ran that for 2 or 3 years whilst the financial model supported it – financial model supported by companies – paid for the education of students two days a week and students would go on placement two days – kinda of an experiment, to see if we could make that cross funded, pilot an apprenticeship system work if you like – and yeah we kinda could – had its pros and cons. . That’s kind of 5 years ago – probably more useful to look at more recent years. After that, I was kind of taken on temporarily to run one of our UG courses called Design and Coding to School of Design – kind of a mix of product design, visual design, coding skills – I then took on 1 day a week being course leader for web media course – coded teaching hours so got the last year of that – yeah, that’s kind of a content production course oriented towards the web – I am running that course for 1 more year – 2 more years to run. And I also teach on Graphic Design I teach on music, I do some work on visuals, Ive taught on post grad – so I have got these two fixed term contracts for these 2 posts I am running out plus a whole pile of fractional engagements – and yeah my background is software engineering and computational digital art – sound and visuals, so I am kinda using what I can of those skills as in a teaching environment as and when that works..that

IR:

So in some ways an emerging teacher in higher education? Your background is mainly in industry and business ?

Carl:

that sounds fair

Carl

..and arts practice and festivals

IR:

So, that now you are in a teaching role, perhaps that is inviting you to compare your industry role with teaching..so what is a typical day like for you at ????? Is there one? Ha ha

Carl:

I don’t know...Probably similar not typical. I am sure it is the same answer most people who taught give you which is a mix of doing the teaching and doing all the kind of boring admin

required for that..plus as possible and when time permits devising material, doing bits of research, kind of shaping bits of the curriculum whether that's course validations or whatever else is required, plus as course leader thousands of assorted little bits of administration.

Carl:

Yes, ever so much the case for programme leadership? Um, when you think about your teaching role, what springs to mind?

Carl:

In what context, in my role in general?

IR:

Yes, just what comes to mind..

Carl:

I guess cos I have so many years experience as a freelancer...I see myself in that sense as not really being/seeing myself as not really being/having a specific role as a course leader on a particular course, partly as I am teaching on courses that are running out now..what interests me most is that I think there is a particular process and way of thinking about software mathematics and design and art that I am really interested in applying across the institution and see (for what of a better word), how this disrupts for want of a better word' which is what I have been teaching in music and various other subjects as and when possible.

IR:

So what you are describing is a particular area of interest which you are keen to take forward

Carl:

that's fair

IR:

...a strong mindset/strong sort of impulse to keep teaching?

Carl:

Its yeah I am interested in taking the skills I have acquired and putting a pedagogic vent on those and pass across a particular way of thinking about the medium in the context of UG teaching..I guesss that's the best way of putting it though sounds a bit cumbersome

IR:

No, it seems to make sense..yeah. I suppose my next question moving on from this is if you see that as a strong ethos, how does that then connect with the students you are seeing – how do you then fire their imagination and what do you do if they are not on your wave length?

Carl:

Ah, there's a leading question? What you are talking about is student engagement isn't it?

Carl:

One of the things I learned through having a technical education in computer science is that there are skills which are fundamental and foundational for which you don't see the immediate benefit. So, one of the aspects of what I am trying to do I think is to somehow engage students in fundamental ways of thinking that are transferable to different toolsets and environments and which are disruptive in the sense it will change the way they think about the medium they are working with.. but this is not the kind of thing you can teach as is

at all..certainly not in an institution like ?????? which is going on about how it is a vocational institution with high employability rates and so on...so to some extent I put myself on the opposite end of the see saw from that – I say yep, I see where you are coming from..but also what's really important what you should do at university is to teach fundamental skills which are the ones that would not be highlighted in a completely vocational educational system..and I can cite all sorts of examples where I think that's important from personal experience and elsewhere..but this is not something you can pitch to students who have just plonked down 9k for thire first years teaching..so you have to think of ways of abstracting from the specific to the general..so they learn specific things you kinda of in software design you give em exercises immediately where they feeling of empowerment that they can do things..they can achieve things..and then you give them enough of those and then you start I guess trying to generalise.. you've done this thing and this thing in fact the two things you have done in fact are the same thing and this is why..so its kind of encouraging reflective process of abstraction..so they can see that there are commonalities, fundamental kind of undercurrents to the things they are doing..eh because these things are fundamental they can be transferred to new things they might do that they wouldn't necessarily associate with things they've done before..so if they have been working in eh software for doing visual art like on screens like this, then maybe the things they've learned there would also work when they start working with electronics and verbal technology. If they think about things in the right way then in fact the same skills they've learned for problem solving/analysing should with some intellectual effort transfer to new situations..but that's speculative..I've not been here long enough, or had enough control over the material to see whether that works, but that's what I am hoping might work, to see what happens.

IR:

I'd like to pick up on that point you said about thinking what if they are just not getting it? What if they don't think in this way – what if they are just not getting it?

Carl:

I have to say we haven't really had a chance to really push this so we would have to speculate on that. I think if they are doing a concrete exercise and feeling empowered by those, then to a certain extent that's enough.Maybe not enough for me, but enough for them

IR:

But its part of the unit brief your you know

Carl:

No, the unit brief is not really about abstraction..the unit brief is about building this safe learning..you get the learning outcomes from this thing and then you are on to the next one..

IR:

But what you are describing are building blocks? You've got a view of how those might eventually sink in and become part of this bigger picture

Carl:

Yeah, kind of mindset skills . So maybe in that case I should be arguing for getting these things in some codified form into the briefs as outcomes.

IR:

Perhaps yes

Carl:

Cos we don't really have any units here that are about software design or computational thinking. I think we should but we damn well should but we damn well don't. So I am



working..I don't have support from the academic structures of the teaching material to do this except really through the back door.

IR:

Yeah..

Carl:

which is fine I mean you know we are currently revamping the way PG works here so that may be an opportunity.

IR:

Yeah, but I suppose sort of following on from that I am interested in the ways you might ascertain that particular teaching content is challenging the mindsets...how do you get a sense of whether it is working or not

Carl:

Er the difficult thing with teaching software is that it is detailed, intricate, its quite mathematical but it is very subjective in that students build mental models of the things they are trying to reason about..the things they are trying to build and they are very individual mental models..so one student will think about something in a very different way to the way the next student will think about it and I build up from my UG experience where I was in with a cohort and the way I understand things would be completely different to the way someone else would understand if we were kind of discussing it..to an extent, I mean something is concrete in terms of what you might want to but the way you conceptualise about the way you are working with the material, I think is in a sense very personalised..so yes, what is interesting is how to teach students to build their own conceptual models of things..even though they might be quite unique..one thing I experimented with now, just started this year, is for software teaching is to do it very visually, very hands on, lots of paper and pencil, lots of drawing stuff, even abstract things, so paper structures..out-bibbing ideas..working with notions of time, mutability, just got out there and put some paper out there and draw pictures and stuff..when I was at Cambridge we had a tutor for pure mathematics and the thing I remember about him is that he would get out bits of paper and draw these wonderful diagrams of mathematical structures with an old fountain pen..and I found that really useful cos he could draw set theory, group theory,,this kind of stuff..really kind of lovely, intricate drawings and I found that very hepful..not because I was thinking of things in the same way as him, but because I could develop a process in that worked in the same way as his process works ..this idea of building a very precise visual model of things and be able to shift that model cos you have to work in abstractions..you abstract in the abstract through layers all the time so you have to change the picture you have in your mind depending on what exactly which facet of something you are looking at..but that really stuck with me.so I just felt it would be nice if I could part way through a session where we are doing a software project, the students were all out with their notebooks drawing pictures of the conceptual things they are trying to build..that to me I think would hopefully be evidence of good reflection and internal co-creation connection of ideas , which they can then apply to solve problems and goals..but this is still as I say kind of speculative, as I have not really had a chance to really exercise this yet..I am not sure if that helps you or not.

IR:

no that gives me a really good illustration of the teaching that you are in a sense modelling. It seems I suppose my background is not scientific background..its slightly a scary world for me cos I am trying to relate myself to it. But I imagine that the kinds of students you get who are doing this course have this kind of mindset already?

Carl:

No, they don't, that's part of the problem

IR:

Or do you have to teach it?

Carl:

We are not seeing it as they are coming to first year. For design and coding we mostly have students who have some experience of product design and some graphic design

IR:

and they might have done that at foundation level or?

Carl:

They might have done at foundation or at school. So they come in generally with very strong design portfolios, design, illustration drawing. We are getting very few students with any software skills even now, albeit, our first year cohort I think we have one out of seven who have done any kind of software development. Maybe 2.

IR:

Perhaps this is down to the school curricula experiences..

Carl:

I assume so

IR:

but in terms of their numeracy? I would imagine they would have to have relatively high levels in terms of numeracy

Carl:

Mathematics is not a requirement

IR:

Key skills in maths

Carl:

No this year that has changed for matters of recruitment

Carl:

No, you know what I think about that. Guess what I think about that.

IR:

But that must be a key challenge..i mean how do the students cope, cos this is quite an advanced thinking process you are describing that you want them to eventually get to, but they have to get there first?

Carl:

Er It's a difficult one..certainly some of the students we are getting in here and from foundation..we are getting in some students from eastern Europe, who are extremely strong in mathematics..

IR:

yes its very strong in the curriculum there isn't it?

Carl:

yes, they really have a grasp for that. Students we are getting in from other countries they don't have it..and that is a real challenge and I am not really kinda sure how to address that other than to kind of go to the management here and say we are getting in students in who

don't have mathematics and you have no longer made it a requirement, so we have to revise the course to build in maths training because they need it..we cant assume that from in coming n from school that we cant make it a requirement, we have to make it part of our curriculum., I spose. I don't see any other way round it..like you say it is a challenge

IR:

Yes. Like you say, this is quite a gradual process that you are building in these experiences for students, but you are expecting a particular kind of student at the end of it., who has kind of grasped these concepts.and is then going out into some kind of..

Carl:

Yes, they have got a personal toolkit which has in some way grasped these concepts and which they've developed and kind of apply I guess

IR:

But what ..if you had to have different levels of outcome, what would be a good outcome for you in terms of your student achievement? What would you be happy with if you had to stick somewhere?

Carl:

I would probably veer towards the more academic institution – I would like to see them having an enjoyment of the abstract material..but that's completely a non-vocational argument so that's just personal taste to a large extent

IR:

that wont necessarily give them a first will it..?

Carl:

Er in some institutions it would..probably not in this one, because they are marked on to a large extent vocation and kind of applied others..ld like to see some learning oytcomes that are more abstract..we are where we are..thats what I would like to see..but if the stidents feel empowered and they feel or can demonstrate that they have a grasp of the fundamentals for which they can see the relevance as well feel it just good to know as part of an intellectual exercise..

IR:

You'd feel you had done part of your job?

Carl:

I think so..

IR:

We've talked about some of the challneges in terms of the entrance requirements.have changed. Have you got a particular incidence that has stuck in your mind that has made you think differently about your teaching?

Carl:

er, theres probably a few general trends things that crop up from time to time..and it just covers the material..it will a particular project..particular task in a project..there will be some principles behind it and we will go through that and exercise and do it and we will come back 6 months later and there will be this student..6 months on and they still don't understand it. and I don't quite get a grasp of what stage the wheels came off so wheres the traction go and what made this thing a thing they failed to understand continuously for that period.,it doesn't happen all the time it happens with some students and not the others and it is sometimes hard to tell which students it happens with cos they are smart enough..and they

might do the applied vocational craft based stuff very well and show progress there and yet there is some kind of blind spot this process of software thinking or abstraction that they don't get and still do not have and one thing I wonder ..to some extent this is a cliché, but it something that comes up time and time again..whether there is a particular kind of software thinking that varies in terms of actually teaching students..I hope not, I hope it is not based on aptitude..but as I said earlier if students have particular personalised ways of processing and kind of creating these mental models then maybe it's just that the mental models have so different so just so different..that any one teacher will teach something that happens with one kind of model and not with the other..then maybe we need some way of teaching this material such that if it shown from as many different angles as possible, everybody will get a chance to 'trick in' to it in a particular form and then equip themselves to be able to continue..

IR:

in a sense what you might be describing is a kind of self-diagnostic which forces the student to work out how they are going to approach something..what mental model they are going to use and gets them to articulate what that mental model is and then you could kind of send them on a particular route from there?

Carl:

yeah, that's why I think drawing stuff..you have presented purely in software terms..Now draw me a picture of what you think the problem is and what you think this is..and then you can explain what the different aspects of your diagrammatic layout mean to you and then we can investigate are those rigorous, are those consistent and how might you use this method of encoding your thinking on paper to go back and approach the problem and develop your thinking

IR:

Yes, could be. Moving on to the 3<sup>rd</sup> part of this interview I am interested in what you think people like me (ie educational developers) should build in more of for teaching staff . What struck me as you were talking is your constraint use of visuals – draw it out kind of thing. This seems important to you, but might this be helpful for PGCEs etc?

Carl:

I would have to research that..but if you get 'you tube' and look for technical presentations of software ideas..and certainly I do that a lot cos I am trained in that I do it without thinking about how hard it is ..maybe that's the problem..I assume it's easy, but it's not. Maybe I am learning that the hard way. But Yes, I have seen so much of this diagrammatic presentations of this stuff at conference level..and advanced level, that it seems an important way of approaching this kind of intricate, mathematical ..I guess I need to research that in more depth but it feels like that needs to be explored, maybe justified.

IR: yes, I am just interested in whether you think..

Carl:

I've started using it..

IR:

Maybe it's just a response to the question

Carl:

It's the realisation that what I do is not natural to students, trying to teach that as a skill as a process for learning

IR:

Writing it out or drawing it out seems important to do that

Carl:

I think that but I am not sure I am justified to do that

IR:

I am just thinking how that might help people like me? Do you think if we encouraged staff in terms of development opportunities to draw things out..in my naivety as a non-creative arts person . I said you must have all heard of rich pictures..I thought they would all be brilliant ..I made an assumption there that all these people were visual. So, what do you think might have worked better?

Carl:

I think you should do lots of mini assignments, do workshop assignments, make them small and unchallenging..we just did an exercise with the graphics students last week. and they were being asked to read fictional news stories..part of the assignment was to write it, part was to critique it and to do visualisations at the same time.. one inch square for visualisation..that's kind of non-threatening. You are not going to get creative block by filling in a one inch square..you can do it in ten seconds..something about making these things bite sized and non scary.

IR:

Yes, interesting. In my naivety I might give an open invitation expecting open responses. Sometimes if you give too much leeway, what I have found is anyway is that people don't respond to that..they might think oh god, where do I start?

Carl:

talk to any artist, any musician. They will all say that the thing that kills creativity is infinite choice – you want constraint. If you are in a frame, you are constrained by what you can do, then you become creative. Otherwise you just get creative block, no idea where to start, just being constantly distracted from your creative process by all things in front of you.

IR:

So the importance of bite sized chunks, non-threatening exercises

Carl:

Kind of doing by the back door..so doing the process..by not reflecting on it don't be too self critical, don't think about what the process you are doing, just do it anyway and then see what you get as a result of that.

IR:

I LIKE THAT

Carl:

Its not right now we are going to spend half an hour doing a such and such process..I say to students doing software, try and explain to me, draw a picture of what you are trying to do, I don't explain why they are doing that, I don't talk about the particular visualisation they are doing, I just say draw me a picture. If you try and explain which bit of your car has broken down – just draw a picture of where the smoke is coming out.

IR:

That is pretty much the end of the interview – is there anything else that you wanted to add to the discussion?

Carl:

I think that's covered it..as I said this idea of teaching abstract mathematical software thinking and how we do that and how the students can kind of abstract and generalise from that.

IR:

Is that something you are exploring in your PGCert?

Carl:

it is not one I can justify at the moment, but it is a genuine pedagogical interest

Appendix G: Example of an analytic grid for coding each data set

Research questions	Data extracts from semi-structured interviews	Initial codes	Socio cultural context (SCC) and Structural Conditions (STC)
What words, phrases and metaphors do creative arts lecturers use when talking about reflecting on their teaching?	we were running a kind of experimental Fe unit for kinda of an apprenticeship /pre degree – to gain IT skills whilst having placements in companies	Industry practice route into teaching	SCC
	kinda of an experiment, to see if we could make that cross funded, pilot an apprenticeship system work if you like	Piloting systems to see if they work	STC
	My background is not teaching in any formal sense, except for occasional sessional posts	No formal teaching background	SCC
	I was kind of taken on temporarily	Temporary contract in teaching	STC
	mix of doing the teaching and doing all the kind of boring admin required for that	Perception that teaching role requires boring admin	STC
	when time permits devising material, doing bits of research, kind of shaping bits of the curriculum	Focus on teaching and research only when time permits	STC
	I see myself in that sense as not really being/seeing myself as not really being/having a specific role as a course leader on a particular course	Not really seeing themselves as having a specific role in teaching	SCC
		Important that students think about things in the “right	SCC

	<p>If they think about things in the right way then in fact the same skills they've learned for problem solving/analysing should with some intellectual effort transfer to new situations..but that's speculative</p> <p>to some extent I put myself on the opposite end of the see saw from that</p> <p>what you should do at university is to teach fundamental skills which are the ones that would not be highlighted in a completely vocational educational system</p> <p>abstracting from the specific to the general</p> <p>you give em exercises immediately where they feeling of empowerment that they can do things..they can achieve things..and then you give them enough of those and then you start I guess trying to generalise..</p> <p>its kind of encouraging reflective process of abstraction..so they can see that there are commonalities, fundamental kind of undercurrents to the things they are doing..</p>	<p>way", ie that they learn a process for thinking</p> <p>View of higher education as a "see saw"</p> <p>Important to move beyond the limitations of vocational education and teach students fundamental skills</p> <p>Abstracting from the specific to the general</p> <p>Exercises to empower student learning and thinking</p> <p>Encouraging student reflective process so they are able to make connections with the world</p> <p>Thinking about things in the "right way" as a skillset to transfer to different situations</p>	<p>SCC</p> <p>STC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p>
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	<p>If they think about things in the right way then in fact the same skills they've learned for problem solving/analysing should with some intellectual effort transfer to new situations</p> <p>students build mental models of the things they are trying to reason about</p> <p>one thing I experimented with now, just started this year, is for software teaching is to do it very visually, very hands on, lots of paper and pencil, lots of drawing stuff, even abstract things, so paper structures..out-bibbing ideas..working with notions of time, mutability, just got out there and put some paper out there and draw pictures and stuff.</p> <p>I don't quite get a grasp of what stage the wheels came off so wheres the traction go and what made this thing a thing they failed to understand continuously for that period</p> <p>some kind of blind spot</p> <p>maybe we need some way of teaching this material such that if it shown from as many different</p>	<p>Encouraging students to build "mental models"</p> <p>Experimental pedagogies that encourage visual thinking processes</p> <p>The "wheels come off" when students fail to understand</p> <p>Looking for a way of teaching that gives students to a chance to 'trick in' to content.</p> <p>Encouraging student thinking by the "back door"</p>	<p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p>
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	<p>angles as possible, everybody will get a chance to 'trick in' to it in a particular form and then equip themselves to be able to continue..</p> <p>Kind of doing by the back door..so doing the process..by not reflecting on it don't be too self critical, don't think about what the process you are doing, just do it anyway and then see what you get as a result of that</p>		
<p>What incidents, experiences and events do creative arts lecturers refer to when talking about reflecting on their teaching?</p>	<p>I have so many years experience as a freelancer...</p> <p>I have got these two fixed term contracts for these 2 posts I am running out plus a whole pile of fractional engagements</p> <p>particular process and way of thinking about software mathematics and design and art that I am really interested in applying across the institution and see (for what of a better word), how this disrupts for want of a better word'</p> <p>I am interested in taking the skills I have acquired and putting a pedagogic vent on those and pass across a particular way of</p>	<p>Freelancer identity</p> <p>Freelancer identity</p> <p>Divergent thinking for disruptive outcomes</p> <p>Putting a pedagogic vent on practitioner skills</p>	<p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>STC</p>

	<p>thinking about the medium in the context of UG teaching</p> <p>One of the things I learned through having a technical education in computer science is that there are skills which are fundamental and foundational for which you don't see the immediate benefit.</p> <p>what I am trying to do I think is to somehow engage students in fundamental ways of thinking that are transferable to different toolsets and environments and which are disruptive in the sense it will change the way they think about the medium they are working with.</p> <p>this is not something you can pitch to students who have just plonked down 9k for their first years teaching</p> <p>we haven't really had a chance to really push this so we would have to speculate on that.</p> <p>the unit brief is not really about abstraction..the unit brief is about building this safe learning..you get the learning outcomes from this thing and</p>	<p>Foundational and fundamental skills that are not of immediate benefit</p> <p>fundamental ways of thinking that are transferable to different toolsets and environments</p> <p>Creative educational methods are difficult to pitch to students paying for their education</p> <p>Not having the time to explore a new idea in teaching</p> <p>Creative curricula are at odds</p> <p>Getting these things in some codified form</p>	<p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>STC</p> <p>STC</p> <p>STC</p> <p>STC</p> <p>STC</p>
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	<p>then you are on to the next one..</p> <p>So maybe in that case I should be arguing for getting these things in some codified form into the briefs as outcomes.</p> <p>I think we should but we damn well should but we damn well don't. So I am working..I don't have support from the academic structures of the teaching material to do this except really through the back door.</p> <p>Id like to see some learning oytcomes that are more abstract..we are where we are..thats what I would like to see..but if the stidents feel empowered and they feel or can demonstrate that they have a grasp of the fundamentals for which they can see the relevance as well feel it just good to know as part of an intellectual exercise..</p> <p>what is interesting is how to teach students to build their own conceptual models of things..even though they might be quite unique..</p> <p>when I was at Cambridge we had a tutor for pure mathematics and the thing I remember</p>	<p>Not feeling supported by academic structures</p> <p>Empowering students through a more abstract curriculum</p> <p>Getting a grasp of the fundamentals</p> <p>Teaching students to build mental models</p> <p>Visualising processes through pen and paper</p> <p>Preference for the abstract is at odds with institutional culture</p>	<p>STC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>SSC</p>
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	<p>about him is that he would get out bits of paper and draw these wonderful diagrams of mathematical structures with an old fountain pen</p> <p>I would probably veer towards the more academic institution – I would like to see them having an enjoyment of the abstract material..but that's completely a non-vocational argument so that's just personal taste to a large extent</p> <p>that to me I think would hopefully be evidence of good reflection and internal co-creation connection of ideas , which they can then apply to solve problems and goals..but this is still as I say kind of speculative, as I have not really had a chance to really exercise this yet.</p> <p>We are getting very few students with any software skills even now, albeit, our first year cohort I think we have one out of seven who have done any kind of software development.</p> <p>No this year that has changed for matters of recruitment</p> <p>that is a real challenge and I am not really kinda sure</p>	<p>Applying a process for problem solving</p> <p>Student deficit in software skills because of changes to recruitment</p> <p>Changes due to recruitment pressures</p> <p>Adjusting curriculum to fit changes in recruitment</p> <p>Drawing a picture of the problem</p>	<p>SSC</p> <p>STC</p> <p>STC</p> <p>STC</p> <p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p>
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	<p>how to address that other than to kind of go to the management here and say we are getting in students in who don't have mathematics and you have no longer made it a requirement, so we have to revise the course to build in maths training because they need it.</p> <p>draw me a picture of what you think the problem is and what you think this is..</p> <p>It's the realisation that what I do is not natural to students, trying to teach that as a skill as a process for learning</p> <p>I think you should do lots of mini assignments, do workshop assignments, make them small and unchallenging</p> <p>You are not going to get creative block by filling in a one inch square..you can do it in ten seconds..something about making these things bite sized and non scary.</p>	<p>Teaching a process for learning</p> <p>Small and unchallenging tasks</p> <p>Bite sized and non-scary teaching</p>	<p>SCC</p> <p>SCC</p>
<p>Early thinking on how "talk" about reflecting on teaching might be helpful for a head of learning and teaching supporting creative arts</p>	<p>I think you should do lots of mini assignments, do workshop assignments, make them small and unchallenging</p>	<p>Small and unchallenging tasks</p>	

<p>pedagogy in higher education?</p>	<p>You are not going to get creative block by filling in a one inch square..you can do it in ten seconds..something about making these things bite sized and non scarety.</p> <p>the thing that kills creativity is infinite choice – you want constraint.</p>	<p>Infinite choice can stifle creativity</p>	
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Appendix H: Relating the codes to the literature

Research questions	Data extracts from semi-structured interviews	Themes from the literature that informed the research questions
<p>What words, phrases and metaphors do creative arts lecturers use when talking about reflecting on their teaching?</p>	<p>Students Thinking Practice Studio Making Practice Ping Pong See Saw Encoding thinking Tricking In Sandbox Mental Models Giving permission Know where you are coming from Latitude within a structure Talk the talk Copying a methodology Thinking through Making Industry Standing out from the crowd Pedagogic vent transferable Toolsets Disruptive Abstraction Pitch empowerment undercurrents transferability codified you can mess up Failure is an important part of art and design pedagogy Seg-waying adding to the ballast of your knowledge Presence comes out of structure Being diverse is an absolute</p> <p><b>Categories/themes:</b></p> <p>Talking the talk Thinking through Making</p>	<p>Arts-related reflective processes embrace a wide range of symbolic forms, expressive languages and actions (Eisner, 2002)</p> <p>Creative arts staff may be seeking more imaginative, sociable and non-threatening modes of reflection (Burnard <i>et al</i> 2006, p.190).</p> <p>more accurate understanding of the actual experiences, needs and concerns of the individual' (Locke <i>et al</i> 2016, p.81)</p> <p>Quest for more socially situated, culturally imbued understandings and engagement with reflection in practice settings (Boud &amp; Walker, 1998; McCardle &amp; Coutts, 2012).</p> <p>Reflective processes in the arts may involve the critical deployment of multiple discourses (Barnett, 1997; Bleakley, 1999)</p>



	<p>Latitude within a structure          Standing out from the crowd          Knowing where you are coming from</p>	
<p>What incidents, experiences and events do creative arts lecturers refer to when talking about reflecting on their teaching?</p>	<p>Individuality is key and there is a direct correlation to diversity and standing out from the crowd. This is encouraged in creative arts teaching.</p> <p>Last 'go to' is fashion - Important to 'un-think', un-learn; to build in strategies to introduce creative arts lectures to educational ideas.</p> <p>- you know the basic design process is about discovering insights to design problems and then it is about defining and narrowing down from that research – so you are having to constantly reflect on what you have done before in order to develop the right design solution – cos it is all about communication –</p> <p>Values and beliefs are important to creative arts lecturers - I feel like if theres a chance of changing the horrible, why cant we start?</p> <p>If you have a really fantastic idea and then you tell me in French only and only one of them (students) knows French, it's like the idea is useless because they can't understand it as a group</p>	<p>Typical reflective processes viewed as linear (active, persistent thought process leading to identifiable actions). Reflection may be more dynamic in the creative arts (Bradbury et al, 2010)</p> <p>reflective practice conversations might include questioning and formulating multiple solutions to daily challenges that arise in arts practice' (Burnard &amp; Hennessey, 2006, p.10).</p> <p>critical incidents and disruptions can stimulate action, change of direction, identification of a problem, a solution or a revelation.( Burnard &amp; Hennessey, 2006, p.10)</p> <p>'critical conversations on where reflection in, on and for action can lead, have been lost in the evanescence of competing needs, space and time..' (Burnard &amp; Hennessey, 2006, p.ix)</p>

	<p><b>Categories/themes:</b></p> <p>Structuring learning</p> <p>Institutional constraints for teaching</p> <p>Disrupting thinking (eg un-learning)</p> <p>Connecting curriculum to industry</p> <p>Creative teaching techniques to engage students, ie visual models, disrupting thinking</p> <p>Students as consumers vs students as creative producers</p> <p>Uneasy fit of outcome-focused education ('Academization of the art school)</p> <p>Critical pedagogy (with a particular focus on social justice)</p> <p>Engaging imagination/"Tricking In" to content</p> <p>Reflecting through disciplinary lens</p> <p>Enabling structures to talk about teaching</p>	
<p>How might "talk" about reflecting on teaching be helpful for a head of learning and teaching supporting creative arts pedagogy in higher education?</p>	<p>what do you care about? Having an ethical dimension to educational development work. I didn't want it to be add-on and tokenistic.</p> <p>Importance of showing understanding of terrain</p>	<p>Enhancing the discursive resources of teachers through individual teacher education and ongoing professional development remains an important avenue towards a more agentic teacher profession (Gert Biesta, Mark Priestley &amp; Sarah Robinson, 2017)</p>

	<p>- need to keep in touch with student experience challenges in creative arts, eg delivering content to larger numbers of students.</p> <p>'When actually, it's not that the whole thing is new, it's just understanding "oh, all right, okay, there's something theoretically that supports what I'm doing there." And actually recognizing that there are cycles of reflection that are referred to in education that are exactly the same as the cycles of reflection in creative practice and the things that are happening all the time</p> <p>Themes:</p> <p>Dual identity  Disciplinary lenses/filters  Social and interactive pedagogies (  Legitimacy in work practices (context is key)</p> <p>.</p>	<p>Matches and mismatches between academic developers and faculty 'rooted in particularly disciplinary contexts, with distinctive protocols, methods, conventions and literatures (Akerlind, 2017:36)</p> <p>Loads (2014) Academic Developers need to achieve a balance between meeting the needs of senior management and seeking overall institutional enhancement and those of the academic community as it seeks autonomy in its pursuit of academic challenge, freedom and integrity (Gibbs 2013)</p> <p>Academic developers seeking more context-adaptable reflective practices to engage professionals in 'critical professionalism' (Barnett, 1997, Pilkington, 2012).</p> <p>Reflection on teaching - can suggest there is a 'right way to reflect" (Hjelde, 2018:45)</p>
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## Appendix I: Excerpts from reflective journal 2018-2020

April 2018

It seems to me that much of my rationale for this research pivots around my quest to move away from centralised models of learning and teaching in which the academic developer “helicopters” in to sort out the messy problems of practice. These kind of models encourage a dependency on the “system” which by default, encourages a contrived collegiality (love that term from Hargreaves work on teacher professionalism) and of ‘playing the reflection game’ (good old Bruce Macfarlane!) through a simulacrum of practice that is far removed from the disciplinary discourses really going on...So, how might it be possible to create more contextualised approaches to reflective development to cope with the ever diverse student cohorts and supercomplex HE organisations?

May 2018

So, why don't I understand creative arts lecturers and why do I want to talk to them about reflection? As a former librarian with a first discipline in history and sociology, I struggle to understand the worlds of creative arts lecturers which seem difficult, disruptive and interpretive spaces. In some ways I am fearful of these worlds; yet I am also drawn to them and the riskier creative thinking that permeates the discourse. I am interested in the lived realities of others, but I want to be able to categorise these experiences rather than accept the multiplicity of realities that they evoke...I often get exacerbated when creative arts lecturers seem to want to see everything through their own disciplinary terms of reference rather than ideas in education – what is all that about? I wonder if I would like to be them, ie a creative arts academic able to reflexively question and find disruptive patterns in the everyday? Instead, I am neither fish nor fowl, neither an academic or a creative..

June 2018

I reflected on a recent PGCert teaching session on reflective teaching in which a lecturer had argued that studio-oriented teaching was not the same as a traditional classroom, or lecture-based education. He followed this up with a whole load of waffle about ‘actor-theory network’ which I found really difficult to decipher. It seems to be that very few lecturers are interested in theoretical ideas in teaching and learning. I wonder to what extent they even see themselves as teachers...

September 2018

It is that time of year again, where I gently urge all those lecturers without teaching qualifications of the Teaching and Learning Development CPD opportunities available to

them. I have already had a number of emails from lecturers asking what I would recommend as a “fast track” route. As I view the HR database for the forthcoming HESA return, I can’t help feeling at the epicentre of a reflective bandwagon – are these academics really going to get anything out of reflecting on their teaching through the UK Professional Standards?

September 2018

The day before my oral presentation, I distilled 44 slides down to 21 and in the process got a clearer sense of my research rationale and associated methodology. My main worry was around my data analysis and what tool I could use to transcribe my data. I read up a little on discourse analysis, narrative analysis and thematic analysis, opting for an ethnomethodological approach using conversation analysis, enabling me to pick up nuances and the in-between aspects of the semi structured conversations I will have in the interviews. But, during the presentation I realised that this is not what I wanted to do. I am not doing an ethnomethodological piece of research, nor am I doing a phenomenographic..I found myself writing out five times..am I interested in how creative arts lecturers talk or what’s behind the talk?

November 2018

Been working on my ethics application and informed consent form. Thinking about risk and harm to participants in my study, has enabled to distill the aspects I do need to focus on in my research and the need to keep developing the connection between my research questions and the interview schedule. I can’t ask participants what words, phrases and metaphors they use when reflecting on teaching, for example..

June 2019

First practice interview. Felt a bit frustrated during the interview that I could not find more ways to interact with the conversation. My interview questions seemed to invite a monologue rather than a two way conversation. How can I relax participants into speaking in terms that they feel more comfortable with?

August 2019

The first interview with Pedro seemed to go well, perhaps because we met in a neutral space (Pedro was used to an open plan office with teaching colleagues). We quickly established that he had read the information sheet and was interested in the research we

quickly began an exploration of his architectural teaching role. During the interview I found it a challenge to listen and follow Pedro's train of thought partly because I kept thinking I would have to think of something from teaching and learning theory which would correspond with his reflective experiences. I think that sometimes, during the interview, my positivist inclination was to try and make sense of the situation too quickly and I had to stop myself. It is a good discipline for me to stand back from teaching and immerse myself in the participant's world view – I am learning so much.

October 2019

As I begin to analyse my data, I am reminded of my own emancipatory quests to find solutions to disjuncture in reflection; to democratise conversation by locating the magic formula to connect in with difficult creative arts "types". I have to recognise my own autobiography here and my lifelong desire to be the first one to find the answer... I must resist this and fully appreciate the exploratory intentions of this research. I am not analysing these encounters in terms of a reality report, with respondent answers and my comments.

November 2019

I was asked a very specific question in my recent interview about how my EdD research findings might help me in my new learning and teaching role. This got me thinking about my third research question and what might be helpful for a head of learning and teaching. I answered at the time that it enabled me to learn about creative arts practices and to re-imagine development that lecturers might more readily connect to. I began thinking about what was interesting from my findings – how lecturers like a framework as a way into expanding their creative thinking; how they enjoy more disruptive modes of thinking that encourage more divergent experiences rather than an outcome focus...I began scouring through the transcripts again..

January 2020

Sitting on the train back from London, I have an epiphany about thematic analysis and realise that I can look at the data through a social constructivist lens. I start to go back through my early memoing to start categorising and search for patterns and connections

March 2020

As I begin to analyse my data, I am reminded of my own emancipatory quests to find solutions to disjuncture in reflection; to democratise conversation by locating the magic formula to connect in with difficult creative arts types. I I have to recognise my own

autobiography here and my lifelong desire to be the first one to find the answer... I must reign myself in and fully appreciate the exploratory intentions of this research. I am not analysing these encounters in terms of a reality report, with respondent answers and my comments....

## Appendix J: Research articles and 'work in progress' presentations

McKie, A. (2017) 'Postcards from the edge: a journey of transition from art librarian to educational developer.' *Art Libraries Journal*, 42(2), pp. 63-65

McKie, A. (2019). 'Reflective conversations through peer-supported review'. In: Davis, C. L. and Fitzpatrick, M. (Eds.), *Reflective Practice*. (pp. 16-21). London, UK: SEDA. ISBN 978-1-902435-65-7

McKie, A. (2019) 'Reflective teaching in the creative arts.' *Journal of Useful Investigations in Creative Education*, <https://juice-journal.com/2019/05/21/reflective-teaching-in-the-creative-arts/>

McKie, A. (2019) *Entering the field of study: exploring the reflective teaching talk of creative arts lecturers*. Presented at: EdD weekend, University of Roehampton.

McKie, A. (2019) *Connecting with creatives through their reflective teaching talk*. Presented at: MA Research Design Symposium, Kingston University.

McKie, A. (2020) *What I learned from talking to creative arts lecturers about teaching reflective teaching in the creative arts*. Presented at: Teaching and Learning Exchange Symposium, University of the Arts London.

McKie, A. (2021) *Oblique strategies for enabling reflective conversations about teaching?* Presented at: Graduate School Lightning Talk, University of Roehampton.



