Changing direction: trainee teachers’ beliefs about and perceptions of Creative Practice

Submitted by Sara Rose Mills to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Education in Education, March 2014.

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(Signature) ..................................................
Abstract

In recent years there has been increasing interest in developing greater creativity in education. This study focuses on trainee teachers during their initial teacher education and explores their beliefs about and perceptions of developing greater creativity in their practice. The work is located within the context of a school-based initial teacher education course and considers whether and how continuing moves towards school-based training in England can support the impetus towards greater creativity in teachers and their pupils.

The study draws from qualitative research undertaken with a small group of trainee English teachers during a one-year School-based Initial Teacher Education course in England. Working from a social constructionist perspective, this research uses the methodology of Action Research. Employing a range of qualitative methods, including discourse analysis of group discussions, individual interviews, a silent discussion, and writing and analysing metaphors, it provides some insight into the trainee teachers’ complex understandings of creativity in the classroom, and how these understandings connect with their developing identity as teachers and with their pedagogy, practice and philosophy. It offers an insight into the trainees’ beliefs about and perceptions of moving towards creativity in their teaching, and the barriers and supports to such practice they encounter, both within the training course and in the partner schools.

Reviewing a range of approaches to teaching and learning and considering the trainees’ beliefs and perceptions, the study suggests that agency is central to creativity, and that approaches which support the agency both of trainee teachers and of pupils are most likely to result in greater creativity in the classroom. The study regards creativity as a situated and highly contextual quality, and discusses practical approaches to teaching and learning, gathered under the term Creative Practice, which may be most likely to occasion greater creativity in the classroom. It offers suggestions for teacher educators as to how to better support trainee teachers in moving towards Creative Practice.
# Table of contents

Table of contents ........................................................................................................ 3

List of Tables and Figures ......................................................................................... 6

List of abbreviations used ......................................................................................... 7

Chapter 1: Introduction .............................................................................................. 8

1.1 The study .............................................................................................................. 8
1.2 Personal context and positioning ...................................................................... 9
1.3 The national context: School-Centred Initial Teacher Education ............... 11
1.4 The institutional context: the Western SCITT ............................................. 11
1.5 The significance of the study ............................................................................ 13

Chapter 2: Literature review .................................................................................... 15

2.1 Introduction ........................................................................................................ 15
2.2 Defining creativity .............................................................................................. 15
   2.2.a The discourse of the arts ............................................................... 16
   2.2.b The discourse of democratic creativity, agency and life-skills ........ 18
   2.2.c The discourse of economic innovation and growth ................. 19
   2.2.d A social constructionist perspective and ‘contextual’ creativity .... 21
2.3 Perspectives of creativity in the classroom ................................................. 28
   2.3.a Teaching creatively ............................................................................. 29
   2.3.b Teaching for creativity ...................................................................... 30
   2.3.b.i Possibility Thinking ....................................................................... 31
   2.3.b.ii Dialogic teaching .......................................................................... 32
   2.3.c Contextual creativity and Creative Practice: summary ............... 34
2.4 Learning to teach in a school-based context .............................................. 35
   2.4.a The competency model .................................................................... 36
   2.4.b The enhanced role of the school .................................................... 38
   2.4.c Creative Practice and teacher education ...................................... 42

Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods ................................................................. 47

3.1 Introduction ....................................................................................................... 47
3.2 Methodology ...................................................................................................... 47
3.3 Research Design ............................................................................................... 49
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.4 The participants</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 The implementation of the study</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.a The Creativity Framework</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.a.i The rationale for a Framework</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.a.ii Limitations of the Framework</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.b Group Discussions</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.b.i Group Discussion 1</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.b.ii Group Discussion 2 and The Creativity Framework</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.b.iii Group Discussion 3</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.c Individual Interviews</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.c.i Implementation of the Individual Interviews</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.d The Silent Discussion</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.e Writing Metaphors</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Data Management</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.a Transcription and analysis</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.b Data coding</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7 Ethical issues</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8 Validity and limitations of the study</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: Findings</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Introduction</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 An overview of the themes in the data</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Group One Themes: Definitions of Creativity</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.a Theme 1: Creativity as inherent</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.b Theme 2: Creativity as artistry</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.c Theme 3: Creativity as a life-skill</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.d Theme 4: Creativity as requiring knowledge / ability</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Group Two Themes: Classroom practice</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.a Theme 5: CP and the risk to pupils learning</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.b Theme 6: CP and engaging pupils</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.c Theme 7: CP and outcomes</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.d Theme 8: CP and learner agency</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Group Three Themes: The SCITT course</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.a Theme 9: CP and flexibility / responsiveness</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5.b Theme 10: CP and the risk to positive assessment</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5: Discussion................................................................. 123

5.1 Introduction ........................................................................... 123
5.2 What do the trainees consider creativity to be?....................... 123
  5.2.a Definitions and discourses of creativity: the arts discourse .... 123
  5.2.b Definitions and discourses of creativity: the economic discourse... 125
  5.2.c Creativity and ability .......................................................... 126

5.3 What are the trainees’ perspectives of classroom practices that
appear to support creativity?..................................................... 129
  5.3.a The Creativity Framework .................................................. 129
  5.3.b CP, dialogic teaching and learner agency ............................ 131
  5.3.c CP and the risk to pupils’ learning .................................... 134

5.4 How does the SCITT course as a whole...support or hinder the
trainees’ use of CP? ...................................................................... 136
  5.4.a. The Western SCITT, CP, planning and flexibility ............... 136
  5.4.b The training context, CP and identity .................................. 138
    5.4.b.i Identity, control and the teacher persona ......................... 138
    5.4.b.ii Resisting identity pressures ......................................... 142
  5.4.c The partner schools: trainee agency in communities of practice .... 144
    5.4.c.i Positioning and improvisations ...................................... 144
    5.4.c.ii Positioning in contested spaces .................................... 147
    5.4.c.iii Adapting to the context ............................................. 150
    5.4.c.iv Summary: trainee agency in communities of practice ....... 151
Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations ........................................... 153

6.1 Introduction ......................................................................................... 153
6.2 The research design and its limitations ......................................... 153
6.3 Summary of findings and contribution ........................................... 158
  6.3.a Creativity, the SCITT context and teacher education ................. 158
  6.3.b Creativity and agency ...................................................................... 163
  6.3.c Trainees voices and capturing perspectives on creativity .......... 164
6.4 Recommendations .............................................................................. 165
  6.4.a For teacher educators ................................................................. 165
  6.4.b For further research ..................................................................... 166

Appendices .......................................................................................... 168

Appendix 1: The background of the Creativity Framework ............... 168
  Planning ................................................................................................. 168
  Standing back ........................................................................................ 171
  Profiling Learner Agency ..................................................................... 171
  Creating time and space ..................................................................... 173

Appendix 2: The Creativity Statements for the Silent Discussion ....... 175
Appendix 3: The Creativity Statements and Group Discussion 2 ......... 176
Appendix 4: The Coding process – an example ................................. 180
Appendix 5: Themes, codes and data sets: an overview .................... 181
  Group 1 themes .................................................................................. 181
  Group 2 themes .................................................................................. 181
  Group 3 themes .................................................................................. 182

References .......................................................................................... 184

List of Tables and Figures

Table 1: Overview of data collection ...................................................... 51
Table 2: The Participants ......................................................................... 52
Figure 1: The Creativity Framework ...................................................... 54
Figure 2: Discussion Schedule for Group Discussion 1 ......................... 58
Figure 3: Discussion schedule for Group Discussion 3 ......................... 60
Figure 4: Discussion schedule for the individual interviews ................. 62
Table 3: Individual Interviews: summary of implementation ................ 63

6
List of abbreviations used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td>Action Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>BERA</td>
<td>British Educational Research Association</td>
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<td>CoP</td>
<td>Community of Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>Creative Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DfE</td>
<td>Department for Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DfEE</td>
<td>Department for Education and Employment</td>
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<tr>
<td>EBITT</td>
<td>Employment-based Initial Teacher Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD1</td>
<td>Group Discussion 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD2</td>
<td>Group Discussion 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD3</td>
<td>Group Discussion 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>GTP</td>
<td>Graduate Teacher Programmes</td>
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<td>HEI</td>
<td>Higher Education Institution</td>
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<td>II</td>
<td>Individual interviews</td>
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<td>ITE</td>
<td>Initial Teacher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>ITT</td>
<td>Initial Teacher Training</td>
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<td>LOs</td>
<td>Learning Outcomes</td>
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<td>MoS</td>
<td>Members of staff in the partner schools</td>
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<td>NACCCE</td>
<td>National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>NQT</td>
<td>Newly Qualified Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ofsted</td>
<td>Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PGCE</td>
<td>Post-graduate Certificate of Education</td>
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<td>PT</td>
<td>Possibility Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>QCA</td>
<td>Qualifications and Curriculum Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBITT</td>
<td>School-based Initial Teacher Training / Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCITT</td>
<td>School-centred Initial Teacher Training / Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Silent Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDA</td>
<td>Training and Development Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TED</td>
<td>Technology, Entertainment and Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEFL</td>
<td>Teaching English as a Foreign Language</td>
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<td>WAM</td>
<td>Writing and Analysing Metaphors activity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1: Introduction

In this chapter I briefly outline the study. I then move on to explain how my background in school-based teacher education and my interest in creativity led to my research topic, and describe the national context of teacher education and the specific context within which I work. Finally, I comment on the potential significance of the study.

1.1 The study

In recent years there has been ‘an increased call for creativity in education’ stemming from a perceived ‘need for greater creativity in order to both survive as well as thrive in the twenty-first century’ (Craft 2006 p.337). At the same time, there has been an expansion of models of teacher education beyond the traditional Higher Education Institute (HEI) route. This research presents an exploration of trainee teachers’ beliefs about and perceptions of engaging in creative practice in the classroom during a School-based Initial Teacher Education (SCITT) course, and explores what barriers and supports to such practice the trainees encountered during their training year. I wanted to develop an understanding of what creativity looks like in the classroom, why trainees may or may not adopt this practice in their teaching, and what influences this. The research questions which arose from these concerns and which guided this study were therefore as follows:

1. What do the trainees consider creativity to be?

2. What are the trainees’ perspectives of classroom practices that might support creativity?

3. What are the trainees’ perceptions of how the SCITT course as a whole, including the practice of the partner schools, and the broader context of the SCITT model of training, supports or hinders their use of creative practice?

In addressing these questions, I develop an understanding of creativity as ‘contextual,’ and offer an account of teaching and learning approaches which may be more likely to foster this version of creativity both in the classroom and in the teacher training lecture room and whether continuing moves towards
school-based training can support the impetus towards greater creativity in education.

1.2 Personal context and positioning
I have taught English in state secondary comprehensive schools since 1991. In 2000 I became the Subject Leader for English on a then newly-formed SCITT course, referred to in this study as the 'Western SCITT' in order to preserve the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. This was a part-time role and I continued working as a classroom teacher in one of the Western SCITT’s partner schools.

I became interested in creativity in teaching, influenced by Robinson’s presentation on creativity in schools at the Technology, Entertainment and Design conference (2006), and Craft’s work on creativity in education (2001, 2003, 2005, 2006) which helped me to clarify and articulate my unease with the increasingly regulated modes of teaching promoted by the ‘New Labour’ government in the late 1990s and early 2000s, as exemplified in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies (Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) 1998a, 1999b). While the introduction of the National Strategies was ‘just one element of a long process of curriculum reform stretching back to the introduction of the National Curriculum’ (Whitty 2006 p.6), these and other related reforms under New Labour were ‘qualitatively different’ in that they attempted to prescribe not just the content of teaching, but the method too, detailing ‘a well-defined sequence and structure to lessons,’ and the ‘promotion of particular teaching approaches’ (Whitty 2006 p.6). These approaches seemed to draw on the didactic, teacher-centred practices associated with ‘transmission teaching,’ such as teaching to narrowly defined objectives, the rigid structuring of lessons, and teaching as delivery. In my own subject, English, the influence of the National Literacy Strategy was widely felt, and the ‘Key Stage 3 National Strategy for English’ (DfEE 2001) officially extended the approach into the secondary sector. Working on the SCITT course threw the discord between my personal views and those of ‘official policy’ into high relief, as I felt that I was required to explain, justify and promote practices and pedagogies which I didn’t support.
As a teacher, I was drawn to learner-directed activities and took a constructivist approach to education. Throughout this study I use the term ‘constructivism’ to refer to the theory of learning which arises from the work of Dewey (1964), Piaget (1954) and Vygotsky (1962) and which sees ‘learning’ as:

a complex, uncontrollable phenomenon because it arises not just in experience but in biologically enabled, culturally conditioned, and socially situated experience.

(Davis 2004 p.133)

In this view, as Davis (2004) says, teaching is ‘facilitating,’ ‘guiding’ or ‘enabling’ (p.133), rather than the ‘instructing’ or ‘informing’ (p.78) more often associated with transmission teaching, and I use the term ‘transmission’ teaching to refer to more didactic and teacher-centred views of teaching. In constructivist approaches, rather than ‘causing or compelling learners to learn specific things in specific ways’ (Davis 2004 p.133), the teacher’s role is to enable learners to actively construct their own knowledge.

I place this constructivist view of learning within a broader epistemology of ‘social construction’ which sees all meaning as socially constructed or derived. This view arises from ‘a critical or ideological critique of dominating discourse[s]...and a social critique that emphasizes the communal origins of knowledge claims’ Gergen and Gergen 2008 p.817).

The terms constructivist and constructionist have some similarities and overlap but in this research I use the term constructivism to refer specifically to a theory of learning, and social constructionism to refer to the broader understanding of society and knowledge as socially constructed.

Given that my constructivist approach seemed to be in conflict with official versions of ‘proven best practice’ (DfEE 1998b p.1) and with the claim that ‘the principles of teaching and learning on which...[the strategies and frameworks are]...founded are universal and well established in research and practice’ (DfEE 2001 p.16), I wanted to explore the theoretical background to creativity and to establish, for my own practice as a teacher and teacher educator, whether pursuing ‘creativity’ could be justified as a credible alternative to the prescribed approaches, rather than just being my personal preference.
1.3 The national context: School-Centred Initial Teacher Education
Circular 9/92 (DfE 1992) led to the increased involvement of schools in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and also allowed for teacher education to move out of the HEIs, and for school-centred and school-based ITE courses to be formed, run by ‘consortia of local schools [who] are entitled to conduct a government endorsed training programme leading to formal teacher qualifications’ (ten Dam and Blom 2006 p.648). These moves, in the post-Thatcher Conservative era, have been widely viewed as politically rather than educationally motivated, aimed at reducing the power of HEIs and increasing the potential for governmental control and the introduction of market-led reforms into education (see Goodson 1997, Dainton 2005, Whitty 2006). Much of the direction of travel continued under the following ‘New Labour’ government, who continued to support a centralised model of education.

The landscape of ITE continues to change with the 2011 White Paper: ‘Training Our Next Generation of Outstanding Teachers’ (DfE 2011) which further shifts the balance towards schools, suggesting that rather than being school-based, training should become school-led. The Paper introduced ‘Teaching Schools’ and ‘Schools Direct’ where funding and training places are given directly to the schools, who may then seek out HEI partners, rather than vice versa: as a result ‘the balance of power between universities and schools’ is likely to ‘be appreciably altered’ (Smithers et al 2012 p.39). It also allows for other changes such as drawing the Graduate Teacher Programmes under the aegis of SCITTs and expanding the ‘Teach First’ programme. As a result, the school-based model of teacher education is likely to further expand.

1.4 The institutional context: the Western SCITT
The Western SCITT offers a one-year Post-graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) course in a range of secondary school subjects. The course takes about 80 trainees each year, with 10 places on the English course, and prepares them to achieve Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and gain a PGCE validated by The Open University. The Western SCITT operates as a consortium of 17 secondary schools and one tertiary college.
The course lasts for 36 weeks, following the pattern of school terms. It includes 150 days of school-based practice and c.1000 hours of academic study. The academic programme is delivered at the tertiary college. The training year is organised as follows:

- **Weeks 1-20:** 2 days a week at college; 3 days a week in school (observation building towards teaching)
- **Weeks 20-28:** Block placement in first school (leading towards teaching 40-50% of the normal timetable of a teacher by the end of the placement)
- **Weeks 28-35:** Block placement in second school (leading towards teaching 50-60% of the normal timetable of a teacher by the end of the placement)
- **Week 36:** Final week in college

As Subject Leader for English, I work with trainees for one day a week during weeks 1-20. I lead their subject-specific training, arrange their school placements, liaise with their school-based mentors, assess their teaching, sit on the examination board and provide references.

The annual ‘Good Teacher Training Guide’ aims to compare ‘teacher training routes and the individual providers’ (Smithers et al 2012 p.1) using rankings based on trainees’ entry qualifications, Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills) inspection findings, the take-up of teaching posts and the results of the Training and Development Agency’s (TDA) NQT (Newly Qualified Teacher) survey. Such a broad set of measures, combining both qualitative and quantitative data, may be seen as fairly robust and may indicate something of the quality of the context for this study. The Guide found that:

No one training route emerges as superior overall. University courses, on average, receive the highest grades from Ofsted and recruit the best graduates. But it was the EBITT [Employment-based Initial Teacher Training] trainees who were the most likely to enter and remain in teaching. SCITTs were rated best by newly qualified teachers.

(Smithers et al 2012 p.i)

The Western SCITT gained an overall ranking of 11th out of the 53 SCITTs operating in England for the year of this study (2010-11), suggesting that it is a relatively sound provider. The guide does not, however, measure the SCITTs
against other routes, although if the overall ranking scores are compared, the Western SCITT, with an overall score of 528, would fall within the top third of all providers, again suggesting that, on these measures at least, it is relatively effective.

The Western SCITT, in line with other SCITTs, scored particularly highly on the ‘quality’ measure, which is made up of a combination of NQT survey responses and Ofsted inspection data. For the year of this study (2010-2011), 69% of trainees rated the overall quality of their training as ‘very good’ on the Western SCITT compared with an average of 41% ‘very good’ across the school-based sector (TDA 2012). In its most recent inspection, Ofsted awarded the Western SCITT the highest grades (grade 1: ‘outstanding’) in all nine categories (Ofsted 2011).

On a number of measures the Western SCITT can be viewed as relatively effective, particularly in comparison to other SCITTs. As such it provides a relatively robust context for this research, in that issues that arise for trainee teachers are likely to go beyond any local failings or weaknesses of this particular ITE programme.

1.5 The significance of the study
Primarily, this research is designed to assist me in my own professional development by giving me the insight and understanding to better support the trainees with whom I work in developing creativity in their practice, and to better articulate why I believe this to be an important and valid approach.

This research may also prove to be of interest to others teacher educators. While there is a great deal of literature on creativity itself, on creativity in teaching, and also on teacher education, there is less research specifically exploring the development of trainees’ creativity during ITE:

The most striking aspect of the literature on creativity in teacher education is its sheer scarcity. The words ‘creative’ and ‘creativity’ hardly appear in the last ten years’ volumes of the major teacher education journals, nor is there a single book title bringing the terms together.

(Davies et al 2004 p.10)
Recent searches suggest that creativity in relation to ITE in England is still a less fully explored area. In particular, there is little work that seeks to understand creativity from the perspective of the trainees themselves. Focussing on the ‘voices’ and experiences of a group of trainee teachers, partly through the use of innovative research methods such as the Silent Discussion, may be useful in adding to this literature. Further, the development of a perspective of ‘contextual creativity’ and synthesising approaches which seem to support this into a Creativity Framework, may be useful to other teacher educators. Overall, the study may provide some indications about how to better support trainees to develop greater creativity in their practice.

This research may also be of interest to the wider teacher education community given its SCITT context. Currently, SCITTs are a minority route into teaching:

In 2010-11, there were 37,340 recruits to initial teacher training, nearly four-fifths to university courses, 16.6% to employment based programmes (EBITTs) and only 4.6% to school centred schemes (SCITTs).

(Smithers et al 2012 p.i)

However, this may not remain the case as ‘The SCITT route is likely to expand...particularly as EBITTs will have to convert to be able to participate in School Direct’ (Smithers et al 2012 p.38). As SCITTs become a more dominant model of ITE, exploring how qualities such as creativity fare under a SCITT programme may be useful. It may offer some insight into concerns that SCITTs, more than other approaches to ITE, promote a ‘limited and normative model of training’ (Browne and Reid 2012 p.507), and provide some understanding of the particular challenges and supports this training model offers to trainees moving towards creativity in their practice.
2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I begin by discussing definitions of creativity and develop a ‘contextual’ perspective of creativity. I then discuss literature around approaches to teaching and learning which may be seen as supporting this contextual version of creativity. Finally I take this understanding of contextual creativity and use it as a lens through which to view literature around training to teach, particularly in a school-based context.

2.2 Defining creativity

My first research question explores definitions, asking ‘what do the trainees consider creativity to be?’ This seems useful, given that creativity is a polysemic term operating across a huge range of fields and what ‘characterize[s] creativity as a valued human capacity remain[s] elusive’ (Burnard 2006 p.313). Common to definitions seems to be the view that creativity has, at its heart, a generative capacity, an ability to produce something new. Beyond this, however, definitions are highly contested and politicised. Since the late 1990s and New Labour’s ‘cultural turn’ (Buckingham and Jones 2001 p.1), creativity has, as Burnard says, become ‘a key element of the shifting education policy context’ largely because it is seen as ‘having an explicit role in the economy’ although ‘its individual, institutional and cultural value and purpose remain vigorously debated issues’ (2006 p.313).

A social constructionist perspective suggests that versions of creativity have been socially constructed and that critical attention needs to be paid to the ‘dominating discourse’ (Gergen and Gergen 2008 p.817), in this case discourses of creativity, which may illuminate some of the ways creativity is currently constructed and understood. Each discourse defines creativity slightly differently, deciding ‘what counts as central, typical cases, and what counts as marginal non-typical cases’ (Gee 2005 p.72). This effectively governs what is seen as creativity and what is not, with each referencing a different ‘virtual schema’ (Sewell 1992) of the broader purposes of education.
Gee (2005) distinguishes between the small d ‘discourses’ (specific and local instances of speech) which can instantiate, invoke or resist the capital D ‘Discourses’: the broader, socially recognised ‘forms of life’ (2005 p.7). Which ‘capital D’ Discourses trainees invoke in their discussions of creativity is likely to indicate and structure their views of what should be the purpose, function and outcome of creativity in the classroom, and is also likely to impact on how far they develop or support a view of creativity as contextual. In the following section I consider some common discourses of creativity.

2.2.a The discourse of the arts

Creativity in education has long had an association with the Arts (dance, drama, music, poetry and so on) and with creative writing in English. This study focusses on trainees within the secondary school subject specialism of English who might therefore be expected to have some affinity with the arts-based perception of creativity. Abbs, among others, argues strongly for English to be regarded as an Arts subject, seeing it as concerned with ‘creative mimesis’ and the creation of ‘our own ‘voice’” rather than communicative competence (1994 p.153). While this self-expression and self-actualisation view of creativity seems to have become less dominant of late, and is now found more frequently in psychological accounts where creativity is addressed in terms of the individual and their personality and aptitudes (for example Collins and Amabile 1999), it may still impact upon trainees. Marshall et al (2001) found that trainee teachers identify particularly strongly with the arts-based perspective and the view of English as concerning the development of the personal voice of the child. While there is much to contest in Marshall et al’s research, relying as it does on reference to questionable, and perhaps somewhat arbitrary categories or ‘types,’ themselves constructed in Marshall’s earlier work (2000a, 2000b), their study does suggest that at the turn of this century the discourse of the expressive arts had particular relevance to trainees in English and therefore it is worth consideration here.

In this arts-based discourse, creativity is frequently allied with notions of self-expression and self-actualisation, seen as having potential to unlock the inner voice of the child, leading to self-discovery and personal growth. This relies to an extent on a humanist understanding of the individual as ‘a unified, fixed self
that has a stable, essential core’ (Jackson 2001 p.386) that can be discovered and expressed, and supports a view of creativity as an individual, inherent attribute.

A mid-90s survey of those who work in the field of education found that there was ‘a pervasive view that creativity is only relevant to the arts’ (Fryer 1996 p.79), but since then, there has been much work directed at changing this perspective:

> With all the definitional work being done in recent times to unhook creativity from ‘artiness’, individual genius and idiosyncrasy, and to render it economically valuable, observable and learnable…creativity has certainly become less mystical, and once rendered less mystical it can be engaged intentionally and systematically as a product of learning.

(McWilliam and Dawson 2008 pgs.636-637)

Concepts of creativity linked to self-expression and the arts appear to have been consciously and deliberately side-lined. For example, the CLASS (Creative Learning and Specialist Schools) project in the mid-2000s, whose aim was to ‘embed creative learning across the school,’ said ‘We are defining creativity in a way that goes beyond an Arts focus to include creative teaching and creative learning in all subjects’ (Wicksteed 2004 p.1). A participant in the research commented, ‘Creativity…isn’t just about the arts, so to speak, it’s about being creative with the curriculum, rather than just using the ‘arty-farty’ subjects’ (Fautley 2005 p.12).

The dominance of the economic discourse can lead to arts-based subjects and the creativity associated with these being denigrated as ‘arty-farty’ (Fautley 2005 p.12) and to the ‘dangers of creativity being perceived as just the elements of ‘making pretty things’ (Loveless 2009 p.30); likewise, an attachment of the discourse of the arts can lead to teachers seeing creativity as an inherent attribute. Adopting either of these perspectives is likely to affect trainee teachers’ view and use of creativity in the classroom, as discussed in 2.2.d below.
2.2.b The discourse of democratic creativity, agency and life-skills
The democratisation of creativity was popularised by the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE) report ‘All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education’ (1999). The report was commissioned by the ‘New Labour’ government as a response to a period of ‘rapid social and economic change’ (NACCCE p.18) including the changing demands of new technologies, the growing ‘knowledge economy’ and perhaps a realisation that the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies (DfEE 1998a, 1999b) ‘are not enough’ (NACCCE 1999 p.4). The NACCCE report sought the development of ‘a national strategy for creative and cultural education’ taking a utilitarian view of creativity as ‘essential to…Britain’s economic prosperity and social cohesion’ (NACCCE 1999 p.5). The report has been highly influential in shaping policy and practice around creativity in education in England throughout the 2000s and Craft (2005 pgs.10-14) provides a list of the many government-led policy moves, projects, schemes and initiatives which arose from the report. For this reason, the NACCCE report can be seen as a key contributor to the capital D discourse of creativity in England since the turn of this century. Therefore it is worth further exploring the view of creativity that the report promotes, in order to better understand the discourse of creativity which dominates recent education policy.

Central to the report is the belief in ‘democratic creativity,’ (NACCCE 1999 p.29) where ‘all people have creative abilities’ (NACCCE 1999 p.6). The report drew on work by Boden (1990) who distinguishes between H-creativity, ‘historical creativity,’ where ideas and so on have ‘arisen for the first time in human history’ (p.2) and P-creativity, ‘psychological creativity,’ of which everyone is capable, which involves generating ‘a surprising valuable idea that’s new to the person who came up with it’ irrespective of ‘how many people have had that idea before’ (p.2). Craft, a significant contributor to the NACCCE report, makes a similar distinction in her use of the term ‘little C creativity’ (2001 p.46) to describe ‘everyday creativity or democratic creativity’ (2005 p.52) involving ‘an idea or action [which] could be deemed novel or original within the terms of reference of the individual’ (2005 p.52), as opposed to ‘high creativity’ or ‘big C creativity’ (2001 p.46). Creativity is thus removed from the realm of genius and
re-designated as a property available to every person. This can be seen as a positive move in that it recognises widespread and ‘ordinary’ creativity.

This democratisation supports a view of creativity as related to agency. Craft suggests that little C creativity is essential to ‘a person’s ability to cope with the basic challenges which life throws at them’ and that it is a basic ‘life skill’ (2001 p.59), seeing creativity as a form of agency which allows people the ability to ‘exert control over and give direction to the course of their lives’ (Biesta and Tedder 2007 p.135). Agency can further be defined as ‘the capacity of actors to critically shape their own responsiveness to problematic situations’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.971). However, given the NACCCE report’s aim of developing a ‘national strategy’ for creativity as a driver for ‘Britain’s economic prosperity and social cohesion’ (1999 p.5), it is not perhaps surprising that the version of agency and creativity promoted is rather functional. Creativity and agency are seen as essential life-skills needed to navigate in the increasingly uncertain world of ‘late capitalism’ which has ‘produced a situation where individuals are compelled to learn all the time in order to find their place in society’ (Jarvis 2007 p.5). In this respect creativity may become part of a ‘functional view of education’ (Maisuria 2005 p.144). The discourse of creativity as democratic and as related to agency can be seen as not just overlapping with, but as almost subsumed by the third discourse, that of economic innovation and growth.

For trainee teachers, their view of their own and their pupils’ creativity may depend partly on their conception of creativity as typically ‘big C’ H-creativity, or as ‘little C’ P-creativity (Craft 2001, Boden 1990), and on how far their view of agency and creativity is linked to the various discourses of emancipation, life-skills or economic success.

2.2.c The discourse of economic innovation and growth
The third prevalent, and seemingly most dominant ‘capital D discourse’ (Gee 2005 p.7) is that of the market and economic growth, which can be seen as overlapping with, or even as instigating, the ‘democratic creativity’ discourse discussed in the previous section. The colonisation of education by the marketplace has been long-recognised (see Hargreaves 2000, and Troman et al 2007) and, further, ‘Economists are now seeing creativity as a form of capital,
and thus as an engine of economic growth and social dynamism’ (McWilliam and Dawson 2008 p.635). From this perspective, creativity is needed ‘for the purposes of adding a competitive commercial edge’ (McWilliam and Dawson 2008 p.635) and the recent growth of interest in creativity in education may be regarded as driven by economic demands for increased competitiveness in the world marketplace. Certainly the impetus behind the commissioning of the NACCCE report, and much of the work that followed it, was explicitly linked to this economic purpose.

From the market-driven perspective, the value of creativity is tied to the economic benefits which accrue from it. While this has clearly provided an important driver to supporting creativity and agency in the classroom, it may also act as a limit on what is regarded as valuable or worthwhile creativity, privileging a narrow, functional view of creativity, and part of the ‘vocationalising [of] the curriculum’ (Maisuria 2005 p.144). Wood comments about the inclusion of ‘play’ in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, saying that:

this outcomes-focussed agenda is controversial since it seeks to manage and control play, and to impose adults’ views of what play should be and what play should do for young people.

(Wood 2009 p.47)

Similar concerns can be voiced about creativity in the later years of schooling, where its very inclusion as an aspect of the curriculum may seek ‘to manage and control’ what counts as creativity, and impose, if not an adult’s, then a committee’s view of what creativity should be. This is likely to reduce what makes creativity so valuable: namely a capacity to move beyond what has already been defined. At the time of writing, the new National Curriculum for England (Department for Education 2014) is in its draft stage but it seems likely that it will reduce the role and place of creativity within the curriculum. While this initially seems to devalue creativity, it may also prevent it from becoming absorbed into the narrow and fixed learning outcomes and assessment matrices that tend to dominate curricula.

Overall, the economic and vocational discourse links to and can subsume the discourse of agency and life-skills where such life-skills are regarded essentially as employment skills, and ‘life’ is reduced to work. In this case, creativity and
agency are only viewed as useful where they enhance employability. While the economic discourse tends to absorb the life-skills discourse, its utilitarianism displaces and devalues the discourse of the expressive arts, which is seen as less valid as it is less useful in the workplace.

Exploring the trainees’ understandings of creativity and where they locate it within capital D discourses may help to clarify their approach to creativity in the classroom, and what they see as its purpose within education. Certainly, examining such discourses makes it clear that creativity itself operates within a web of meanings where it cannot be isolated as an independent or value-free quality but is inherently webbed into issues of educational philosophy and values, of approaches to policy and to pedagogy, and even to our understandings of the broader purposes of life.

2.2 A social constructionist perspective and ‘contextual’ creativity

Given the range of definitions and versions of creativity that exist, in this section I aim to clarify my own definition and understanding of creativity as this inevitably underlies the study.

I view creativity through a social constructionist lens, with the focus on trainees and their pupils as actors in social situations whose agency, and thus capacity to be creative, can be constrained or supported by these situations. This view derives partially from the work of Giddens (1984) whose theory of structuration:

places socially situated practices at its core in order to avoid an exaggeration of either the subjectivism of an overly agency-based approach or the objectivism of an overly structure-based approach.

(Stones 2005 p.322)

In clarifying my position, I consider how aspects of both structure and agency intersect with notions of creativity.

The focus on structure suggests paying close attention to the contexts for creativity. This bears many similarities to ‘confluence’ theories of creativity which assert that there needs to be a combination of many factors present in order for creativity to arise: ‘multiple components must converge for creativity to occur’ (Sternberg and Lubart 1999 p.10), creativity can arise only when ‘the conditions are right’ (NACCCE 1999 p.29) and creativity requires ‘the right
environment’ (Craft 2005 p.7). One of the factors required in confluence theories is generally taken to be appropriate knowledge, and it has been suggested that ‘there may be thresholds for some components (e.g. knowledge) below which creativity is not possible’ (Sternberg and Lubart 1999 p.11). At one extreme, Torrance proposed the ‘the threshold hypothesis’ (1974) where low intelligence, as measured by tests, was suggested to correlate with low levels of creativity. On the contrary, a social constructionist view suggests that:

the presumptions that there is something called individual intelligence, that a series of question and answer games reveal this capacity, and that some people are superior to others in this regard, are all specific to a given tradition or paradigm.

(Gergen and Gergen 2008 p.818)

While the NACCCE report steers away from specifically citing intelligence as a precursor to creativity, maintaining that ‘All people are capable of creative achievement in some area of activity,’ it does continue by saying that this is only ‘provided…they have acquired the relevant knowledge and skills’ (1999 p.29). Similarly, although Craft regards creativity as a basic ‘life skill’ (2001 p.59) and claims that ‘everyone is capable of being creative, given the right environment’ (2005 p.7), she also says that ‘little C’ creativity does require some ‘prior knowledge’ (2001 p.49) although this aspect of creativity is not stressed as much as its potential as a learned ‘can-do’ (2001 p.53) attitude to life. In the classroom, an emphasis on gaining prior knowledge and skills may make creativity available only to those who have been educated or inculcated into a specific area and, as a corollary, imply that pupils who have difficulty developing the necessary knowledge and skills are unable to exhibit creativity or to participate in creative activities.

A social constructionist perspective suggests that patterns and instances of learners being viewed by teachers as having acquired the relevant prior knowledge, whether this be shown through the acquisition of qualifications, the achievement of certain standards, or through placement in a ‘top set’ at school for example, may be constructed phenomena which act to privilege some learners at the expense of others, perhaps where those with greater social and cultural capital are judged to be more capable of, or ready for, creativity.
If this is the case, then those working in education should hold up to question judgements which say that one pupil, or group of pupils, has the innate capacity, the intelligence, or the prior knowledge and skills to be creative, whereas another does not. Such judgments are likely to be at some level social constructs which may serve to perpetuate existing differences. At a simplistic and extreme level, some teachers may suggest that lower or ‘bottom’ set pupils shouldn’t engage in creative activities, or have no potential to be creative, given they have not mastered sufficient knowledge or skills as measured by tests and evidence which in themselves may be flawed and subjective. The end result may be that certain groups of pupils may be as disenfranchised when it comes to creativity as they are in more traditional aspects of their schooling. Unpicking or being aware of such assumptions is clearly of importance to training teachers who are likely to be working with varied groups of pupils during their training course including those pupils regarded as or labelled as ‘least able’ or ‘lower set.’ Taking a more social constructionist perspective might prompt trainee teachers to ask what it is about the context that allows some pupils to exhibit more or less creativity or ability, and to become sensitive to patterns of achievement that may owe more to the structuring context than to any inherent quality within the pupils themselves.

A second key assumption underlying confluence theories is the tendency to view all individuals as equally free to act within a context, and to assume that differences in their actions may be the result of differences in their inherent capacities, such as knowledge, intelligence, personality, motivation and so on. In contrast to confluence theories, social constructionism draws more attention to how agency is afforded and constrained by the structures of society. To discuss this aspect of creativity, I initially make the case for creativity to be regarded as related to agency, using the work of Biesta and Tedder (2006, 2007) and Emirbayer and Mische (1998) as a starting point. To further consider how individuals are situated within contexts, and thus how much agency and creativity they may be able to exhibit, I draw on ‘positioning theory’ (Harré and van Langenhove 1999). I then consider how an understanding of creativity that takes agency and positioning into account is likely to be relevant to trainee teachers.
Making the connection between creativity and agency seems important if creativity is to be seen as contextual rather than inherent, and as subject to issues of power and inequality rather than equally available to all. The connection between learning and agency is well-established within the constructivist view of learning: Piaget (1954) suggested that learners actively construct their own knowledge out of their experience rather than simply absorbing what they are taught. Similarly, there has been much work which has linked agency to creativity, such as work arising from the CLASP (Creative Learning and Students’ Perspectives) project (Jeffrey 2005a, 2005b) and Jeffrey and Craft’s (2004) work which sees ownership and control as central to creativity, discussed below. Further, Craft (2005) reports on teaching strategies where pupils ‘engage actively in their learning as autonomous problem-solvers’ (2005 p.60), concluding that, due to its focus on ‘active learning,’ ‘in a constructivist frame, learning and creativity are close, if not identical’ (Craft 2005 p.61).

Such work suggests that agency is central to learning and that learning is more likely to arise when the agency of the learner is promoted by giving the learner ownership and control. Additionally, it suggests that creativity is linked to agentic learning, although the mechanisms and process of this have been less well-documented.

To develop this point I use the work of Emirbayer and Mische (1998) who, although they don’t comment on creativity per se, offer a useful theorisation of agency from a social constructionist perspective. Moving beyond the utilitarian model of rational action which seems to underlie most confluence theories, they develop ideas of agency as a social process occurring in a situated context, where ‘ends and means develop coterminously’ (1998 p.967). Connections between agency and creativity can be seen in the following description of agency as:

A temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past (in its habitual aspect), but also orientated towards the future (as a capacity to imagine alternative possibilities).

(Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.963)
Although they don't draw attention to this aspect of it, it is likely that it is within this future-focussed ‘capacity to imagine alternative possibilities’ and in the ‘imaginative engagement with the future…the hypothesization of experience’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.984, italics in original) that the potential for creativity lies. This suggests that having sufficient agency in a context may be a key aspect of creativity. If creativity is dependent on agency, then enhancing and supporting agency becomes a key driver or pre-condition for creativity. Recognising the centrality of agency may thus become important for trainee teachers if they are to promote creativity in their classroom practice.

To further explore agency, I use the work of Biesta and Tedder (2006, 2007). Their theoretical and conceptual insights into the relationship between agency and learning are drawn from a substantial body of research, a large-scale four year study. While they had no explicit focus on creativity, their analysis and explication of agency, which also draws on the work of Emirbayer and Mische (1998), makes clear the role of agency in learning. I extrapolate from their work to suggest that where agency can arise, as a result of having ‘control over the ways in which we respond to the situation’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 pgs.20-21) then creativity becomes possible, and suggest that the understanding of agency developed by Biesta and Tedder also applies to creativity.

Biesta and Tedder apply the idea of situatedness to agency, suggesting that it ‘is not something people can have’ rather it is ‘something that people can achieve’ and only ‘in transaction with a particular situation’ (2006 p.19); as such, agency may fluctuate, and people may exhibit significant agency in some contexts and less in others. I suggest that if creativity requires agency to occur, then it too must be regarded as situated, fluctuating and responsive to the context. Of particular relevance to trainee teachers is the point that if creativity, like agency, arises in specific contexts and not in others, we need to consider what it is about these contexts that affords or constrains creativity. While each context is necessarily unique, the lesson in the classroom may be seen as a patterned and recurring situation, where each instance bears some similarities to previous instances and, further, where as a teacher, one has a degree of control over the context. It suggests that while ‘the past (in its habitual aspect)’ may be unchangeable, how far pupils are encouraged or supported to imagine
‘alternative possibilities’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.963) in their engagement with the future may be within the teacher’s remit. If trainees were to take a situated perspective, working from the social constructionist view and seeing creativity as ‘occasioned’ in response to specific situations, they may be more likely to engage in trying to develop the conditions and contexts for creativity to arise.

Further, if creativity arises from agency, and agency is bound by issues of structure, then creativity is similarly bound and constrained. Many confluence theories imply that individuals within any given context start from a position of equality, and are all equally free within that context, having equal agency and equal opportunity to exhibit creativity. From a social constructionist perspective, this engagement in contexts of action is never neutral and ‘different individuals are situated within contexts in different ways’ (Vannini 2008 p.816), perhaps especially so in classroom contexts with the asymmetric roles of teacher and learner.

This unequal engagement in contexts can be theorised through ‘positioning theory’ which has a social constructionist focus on language as a key construct, and explores ‘the rhetorical and linguistic means by which individuals position themselves and continually negotiate their positions’ and ‘how communication shapes identity’ (Kroløkke, 2009 p.765). Positioning theory can also be applied more broadly, moving beyond the verbal to include other ‘positional markers’ by which one is both positioned and positions oneself in a situation following Holland et al’s ‘cultural’ approach (1998) where they use positioning theory to explore issues around agency and identity. Although Holland et al (1998) tend to work with marginalised groups, the theoretical insights they develop, and their descriptions of positioning-in-action can, I suggest, be usefully applied to issues of agency and engagement in the classroom, where positioning may be achieved by language, by access to material resources, such as the space and equipment of the room, by access to social resources such as friendship groups, and by access to cultural resources, such as knowledge. In each case, social and cultural capital may dictate how far one can make a claim to these resources, and how far these claims are recognised and acceded to, or denied, by others:
entitled people speak, stand, dress...in ways appropriate to both the situation of the activity and to their position within it. Those who speak, stand, dress...in these proper ways are seen to be making claims to being entitled.

(Holland et al 1998 p.132)

In this way, positioning and power contribute to developing or constraining agency within each context, and so to the potential for generative action, for creativity. Both how trainees position their pupils and how trainees are positioned by more powerful others may impact on creativity in the classroom and be of relevance my second and third research questions of ‘What are the trainees' perspectives of classroom practices that might support creativity?’ and ‘what are the trainees' perceptions of how the SCITT course...supports or hinders their use of creative practice.’

Confluence theories and democratic creativity are both useful starting points for exploring creativity, but both tend to emphasise agency rather than structure, and further, to see agency as neutral rather than socially constructed and occasioned. From this perspective, varying levels of creativity are likely to be ascribed to an individual's inherent capabilities or capacities, rather than to the context which occasions or constrains them. Sosa and Gero (2003) discuss this tendency and refer to the ‘fundamental attribution error’ hypothesis in their research into creativity and design systems, arguing that it is common to ‘over- emphasise dispositional factors about the actor and under-emphasize situated factors’ and to ascribe creativity to ‘extraordinary personal traits’ rather than to ‘objective situated features and subjective construals’ (2003 p.26), and this may be the stance of trainee teachers.

If such attribution errors are indeed commonplace, it may be beneficial to address this perspective, and to promote a more contextual view of creativity. While ever creativity is regarded as an individual, inherent attribute, it is largely beyond the teacher's scope to do more than reveal what is pre-existing, limiting the impact of the teacher on pupils' creativity. Regarding creativity as a situated activity, however, makes the trainee’s role, as one of the ‘strategically placed actors’ (Giddens 1984 pgs.27-28) much more central to pupil creativity. If creativity is viewed as related to agency, power and access to resources, then
how trainee teachers position pupils and govern access to resources is likely to impact on the pupils’ potential to develop or exhibit creativity and to have this creativity recognised. Likewise, how trainees are positioned and given or denied access to resources may affect their own ability to achieve creativity, and to see themselves as creative practitioners.

Taking this view of creativity as contextual suggests that developing creativity becomes less a matter of finding and supporting those rare creative geniuses, or of working with those who have acquired specific knowledge and skills, and more a matter of trying to provide situations which support agency as a key driver for creativity, of ensuring equal access to resources, and of considering how one’s actions and the situation serve to position others to support or reduce their ability to achieve creativity within each context. I term this understanding of creativity as ‘contextual creativity’ and I use this term to describe my view of creativity as dependent on agency, as socially constructed through positioning and access to a range of resources, as fluctuating in different contexts, and as being occasioned by contexts as much as a result of an individual’s inherent abilities.

It seems clear that in this study the participants’ understanding of creativity, shown in their reference to various social discourses of creativity in education, and in their view of creativity as an inherent trait or as a situated or contextual achievement, is likely to impact on their understanding of their role and purpose as a teacher, on their practice in the classroom and on their interactions with pupils.

2.3 Perspectives of creativity in the classroom
Having considered some of the key discourses of creativity in education and developed a contextual view of creativity, in this section I consider how these more abstract understandings may translate into day-to-day practice in the classroom. This relates primarily to my second research question: ‘What are the trainees’ perspectives of classroom practices that might support creativity?’

Aiming for creativity in teaching and learning inevitably has a philosophical and political dimension as ‘practical educational questions about what to teach and how to teach are always’ related to the broader ‘political questions about which
existing patterns of social life ought to be reproduced or transformed’ (Carr and Kemmis 2009 p.76) and reflect epistemological and ontological perspectives. Every action and reaction within the classroom can be seen as the local instantiation of these broader understandings and perspectives of what creativity is, what purpose it serves, and beliefs about who can achieve and exhibit it.

Given the teacher’s privileged position in shaping the particular situations that occur in classrooms, I assess classroom strategies which purport to foster pupil creativity from the perspective of how far they are likely to support the agency of pupils and contextual creativity, focussing on ‘how different forms, practices and processes of learning influence the capacity of individuals’ to develop agency (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.6). Firstly I consider ‘teaching creatively’ and secondly, ‘teaching for creativity,’ terms which were used in the NACCCE report (1999) and which have been more fully explored by Jeffrey and Craft (2004). I then summarise teaching approaches which may best support contextual creativity.

2.3.a Teaching creatively

‘Teaching creatively’ as referred to by NACCCE (1999), Jeffrey and Craft (2004) and Ofsted (2010) can be described as ‘using imaginative approaches to make learning interesting and effective’ and as involving teaching which is ‘dynamic’ ‘exciting’ ‘hands-on’ and ‘an adventure’ (Jeffrey and Craft 2004 pgs.79-80), where pupils are involved in activities and the teacher may move away from some traditional teaching approaches like whole-class instruction and transmission teaching.

While ‘teaching creatively’ seems to support a more constructivist approach to learning, the focus on teaching approaches rather than on learning suggests it remains a teacher-centred approach, concerned with new ways of delivering existing knowledge rather than on supporting the pupils in developing new knowledge. It has similarities with the idea of teacher as entertainer and Humphreys and Hyland (2002), for example, use the metaphor of a jazz musician to describe teaching as a ‘synergistic combination of planning and improvisational performance’ (p.12). Despite their focus on improvisation, the
teacher remains the ‘performer’ with the class as ‘audience’ (p.11). In extreme cases, the teacher may be so concerned with their own performance that the learners become largely irrelevant and ‘such self-centred creativity may even squeeze out the learners’ own responses’ (Halliwell 1993 p.69). Unless the pupils become part of the performance there are limited possibilities for the pupils to ‘influence…the conditions that shape the context for action’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.9).

Ofsted (2010) suggest that pupils require ‘regular structured teaching’ to provide ‘a firm base for more innovative approaches’ (Ofsted 2010 p.18). Creativity is thus located as separate from learning, as an additional approach rather than as a vehicle for learning in itself.

While ‘teaching creatively’ offers some potential for greater pupil agency and creativity, it can also fit within traditional transmission approaches to teaching, where teaching is ‘concerned with logical, carefully planned movements through topics’ which are planned in ‘the absence of any connection to any particular group of learners’ (Davis 2004 p.78), albeit presented in a more exciting and dynamic way. As such, ‘teaching creatively’ may not be a useful model for trainee teachers to follow if they seek to develop greater creativity in their practice.

2.3.b Teaching for creativity

‘Teaching for creativity,’ a second term taken from the NACCCE report (1999) and further explored by Jeffrey and Craft (2004), is focused much more on the learners and on the teacher’s relationship with the learners. It involves ‘passing back control to the learner’ (Jeffrey and Craft 2004 p.81) who becomes a ‘co-participant’ (p.82). The approach tends towards the ‘collaborative’ and the ‘learner’s experience and imagination’ are ‘a major part of the process of investigating knowledge’ (Jeffrey and Craft 2004 p.84). This pedagogy draws from constructivist approaches and seems to support learners in developing the agency required for creativity, allowing pupils not only a degree of control over their responses to the situations created by others, but also some ‘control over the conditions that shape one’s opportunities for action’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.8).
Below, I consider two approaches which appear to support teaching for creativity, both of which focus on the language of the classroom and how it can be used to position learners to have greater agency.

2.3.b.i Possibility Thinking
Craft further developed aspects of ‘teaching for creativity’ in her work on possibility thinking (PT), undertaken with Cremin et al (2006) and Chappell et al (2008) where they see PT as ‘at the core of creative learning’ (Cremin et al 2006 p.109). PT seems to offer the potential for pupils to develop significant agency by providing the gaps and spaces for them to engage in the ‘hypothesizing’ and ‘projectivity’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 pgs.984 and 988) needed for creativity, and even to move towards the development of new knowledge rather than new ways of investigating existing knowledge. The emphasis in PT is on posing open or broad possibility questions which can reposition learners by encouraging them to move from a consideration of ‘what is’ to ‘what might be’ (Chappell et al 2008 p.268); because of this Chappell et al suggest that ‘PT can be construed as the ‘engine’ of creativity’ (2008 p.267). It is in these gaps and spaces for exploration of ‘what might be’ that the opportunities for creativity appear to lie, where pupils can engage in ‘generating alternative possible responses’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.984) by the ‘free play of possibilities’ (p.990).

PT positions learners as co-participants in the learning process by using language which refrains from positioning the teacher as the single knowledgeable authority and learners as passive receivers of this knowledge. In addition to a change in language, PT also requires broader changes in approach on the part of teachers, including ‘standing back, profiling learner agency and creating time and space’ (Chappell et al 2008 p.283), all of which are needed if pupils are to develop or exhibit agency.

While PT offers potential as a model for trainee teachers who seek to develop creativity in the classroom, Chappell et al (2008) and Cremin et al (2006) developed these ideas through work with Primary and Early Years teachers, different sectors from that of the trainees in this study. Primary and Early Years teachers are generally regarded as having more control over the pace and
organisation of their teaching, as a result of their having the same class all day, all year, whereas teachers in the secondary sector may see a class for only three clearly defined non-consecutive hours across a week. As a result, PT may not transfer easily to the secondary sector.

In addition, the research underlying PT focused on the work of three experienced teachers, each of whom had previously been identified as a successful creative practitioner in a Qualifications and Curriculum Authority report (QCA 2005). It might be assumed, therefore, that these teachers had developed successful strategies and approaches, and, perhaps, that they had accrued a degree of respect and status as result of their selection for both the QCA report and the PT research. These teachers may be in a much more secure position to explore techniques such as PT, whereas adopting aspects of PT may be more difficult for trainee teachers. As a social construct, ‘teaching is embedded in historical, social and material contexts’ (Arnseth 2008 p.290) and ‘teaching fixes, and sanctions, the power relations of the institutional / cultural context in which it is enacted’ (Chapman 2002 p.197); doing teaching differently can also serve to ‘unfix’ these power relations especially where it may be only by enacting power differentials and ‘the epistemological dominance of the teacher’ (Lyle 2008 p.225) that one is seen as a teacher. As a result, trainee teachers are likely to experience a greater sense of risk from ‘doing things differently’ than the high-status experienced teachers with whom Cremin et al (2006) and Chappell et al (2008) were working.

2.3.b.ii Dialogic teaching
PT bears similarities to work on ‘dialogic teaching’ by Alexander (2001, 2004, 2008, 2009), Mercer (1995) and Lyle (2008), as both approaches pay close attention to how the language of the classroom positions the learners within it and both seek to enhance the agency of pupils through this use of language.

The central tenet of dialogic teaching is the need to move away from didactic and teacher-centred approaches which create a monologic classroom where the teacher’s voice dominates and move towards a dialogic approach where pupil contributions are genuinely valued. The monologic classroom is typified as one which relies on the three-part ‘initiation, response, feedback’ exchange (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975) which has some similarities with the narrow
possibility question-types explored by Chappell et al (2008), where questions have clear right and wrong answers, and where the pupils’ role is to supply the correct responses to the teacher’s questions. These monologic discourses may ‘disenfranchise learners’ (Klein 2001 p.269) as their agency is limited; their input has largely been predetermined by the teacher’s script and will have little effect on the endpoint or outcome of the lesson. Similar to narrow and predetermined Learning Outcomes (LOs), a highly scripted lesson reduces the possibilities for pupils to ‘engage in imaginative, projective responses’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.16) as the permissible inputs and outcomes have been predetermined. In such lessons, the gaps and spaces for pupils to exhibit agency have been closed down and pupils have little influence or impact over what or how they learn. Further, there tends to be an emphasis on the product or outcome of learning, rather than the process itself. Lyle (2008 p.225) usefully summarises the difference between monologic and dialogic types of talk:

Monologic talk focuses power on the teacher; it stifles dialogue and interactions between pupils and their ideas. Dialogic talk creates a space for multiple voices and discourses that challenge the asymmetrical power relations constructed by monologic practices.

(Lyle 2008 p.225)

In dialogic approaches, what a pupil says may actually change the course or direction of the lesson and, as in PT, the endpoints or outcome cannot be predetermined as the pupils’ contributions cannot be pre-known. The effect of this could be profound: lesson plans move from scripts to be followed to ‘exercises in anticipation’ (Davis 2004 p.182), the focus shifts from the product or outcome of the learning towards the process of learning, and the pupils not only have some control over ‘the ways in which...[they]...respond to the situation’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 pgs.20-21) but also some ‘control over the conditions’ themselves (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.8). Such an approach does not fit neatly within a linear curriculum or transmission teaching’s ‘logical, carefully planned movements through topics’ (Davis 2004 p.78).

Despite the potential for increased pupil agency and creativity in dialogic teaching, the approach assumes equality of opportunity for all pupils. Language learning and language use is, however, subject to issues of power: some pupils, perhaps those with more access to forms of Standard English, or those from cultures where oracy is valued, or where engaging in discussion and debate
with adults is acceptable, may be seen as more able to engage in dialogic talk or activities, and thus more able to be creative. A contextual view of creativity would direct greater attention to the contexts which allow, or occasion, greater dialogicity in some pupils than in others.

Much of Alexander's work on dialogic teaching (2001, 2004, 2009) is focused on the Primary classroom and Lyle (2008, and with Thomas-Williams 2012) draws much of her view of the success of dialogic teaching from her research into the ‘Philosophy for Children’ movement, also in Primary schools. The philosophy movement operated outside of formal assessment matrices and it may be expected that in a subject like philosophy, discussion and debate without a clear endpoint, is acceptable or even expected. Dialogic teaching may be more difficult in a secondary school classroom in a subject such as English where working towards very specific predetermined endpoints, in order to meet the ‘performative’ and ‘assessment regimes’ that permeate education (Troman et al 2007 p.549-550) is a prominent and normalised feature of the context.

Despite these caveats, and the risks which may accrue to any move beyond traditional transmission teaching and teacher-pupil roles, dialogic teaching seems to have significant potential for increasing pupil agency and thus creating an environment which fosters creativity.

2.3.c Contextual creativity and Creative Practice: summary

Teaching for creativity, PT and dialogic approaches seem to offer significant potential for developing creativity within the classroom. Drawing these together into a pedagogy which I call Creative Practice (CP) may provide some indication of the ‘forms, practices and processes of learning’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.6) which may support contextual creativity and thus provide a starting point to answer my second research question of ‘What are the trainees’ perspectives of classroom practices that might support creativity?’ In Section 3.5.a below I present an encapsulation of CP in the Creativity Framework.

In summary, I define CP as pedagogy within the constructivist tradition and with a social constructionist perspective. Pupils are positioned to be active co-participators in the construction of knowledge, and to have genuine agency, and
outcomes are not always predetermined by the teacher. The outcomes may emerge from and be co-constructed by the pupils during the learning in response to the pupils’ input, and pupils may achieve different outcomes both from each other and from what the teacher anticipated. As such, CP may provide part of the answer to the following questions:

What is it that makes it possible for people to engage in imaginative, projective responses? And what makes it possible for people to engage with the present situation in an agentic way?  

(Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.16)

Contextual creativity, as instantiated in CP, may open up the gaps and spaces to engage in ‘imaginative, projective responses,’ and this applies to all learners: to trainees learning to be teachers as much as to pupils in the classroom.

The implications of this approach are, however, far-reaching and may pose substantial risks to teachers, especially in their training year. Exploring these risks is likely to form part of the discussion arising from my question of how far the contexts of the Western SCITT course and the school-based model of training support or constrain the trainees’ use of CP.

CP also has implications for my own practice as a teacher educator and in the next section I take this understanding of contextual creativity and CP in the classroom and use it as a lens through which to view literature around training to teach.

2.4 Learning to teach in a school-based context

In this section I review literature around training to teach, focussing particularly on that which addresses training in a school-based context, and consider it from the perspective of how far approaches to teacher education appear to support the development of the trainees’ potential to engage in creative practice. This relates to my third research question of ‘how the SCITT course as a whole… supports or hinders the trainees’ use of creative practice.’

The literature identifies a number of concerns about school-based teacher education, including the growing control of central government over teacher education as instantiated through competency-based assessments, school-based rather than HEI-based programmes, and the effect of increased time in
schools and the concomitant lack of academic input on these school-based programmes. While it is not within the scope of this research to provide a comprehensive discussion of these issues (for this, see Bridges and Kerry 1993; Richards et al 1998; Smithers et al 2012), I address them insofar as they intersect with concerns around how trainees can develop as creative practitioners. Firstly I consider the competency model and the broader context of school-based training. Secondly I consider concerns around the enhanced role of the school, including the case for seeing the school as a community of practice (CoP), and issues around trainee teachers’ identity and learning in school-based settings. I then offer a brief summary of how an understanding of contextual creativity may impact on the teacher educator, relating this to the question of how the contexts of the Western SCITT training are likely to impact on the trainees’ use of CP.

2.4.a The competency model

From their inception in 1992 School-based ITE courses have been linked to the development of the competency model of training and there have been suggestions that ‘SCITT programmes have a key role to play’ in the agenda of ‘accountability and standards’ (Coles 2000 p.59). The 2011 changes are seen as continuing this move towards ‘the centralized, micro-management of teachers’ in order to bring ‘market reforms’ more fully into education, where ‘the changing dynamics of power that the proposals represent’ are likely to ‘lead to a new level of Government control over pupils, teachers and the educational ‘field’ itself’ (Stanfield and Cremin 2013 pgs.22-23). HEIs are seen by some as able to offer the academic knowledge that can provide some counter-balance to the competency model while school-based training models are considered less capable of this (see Goodson 1997, Davies and Ferguson 1998, Browne and Reid 2012, Stanfield and Cremin 2013). This suggests that the effects of the competency model may be more pronounced in school-based training.

Responses to the earlier changes to ITE in the 1990s suggested that that too much involvement of schools in ITE would cause ‘a collapse of the academic and theoretical mission of faculties of education’ (Goodson 1997 p.32). Such concerns arose from the epistemological view that teachers had ‘an equally legitimate but different body of professional knowledge from those in higher
education’ (Furlong et al 2000a p.33) where HEIs can give trainees access to ‘knowledge based on theory, on research and...the synthesis of a broad range of ‘indirect' practical experience encapsulated in professional literature’ whereas schools provide ‘access to knowledge based on direct practical experience itself’ (Furlong et al 2000a pgs.33-34). Removing the ‘knowledge-based’ aspect would ‘essentially deprofessionalize teaching’ with teaching becoming a ‘task for technicians’ rather than a profession based on ‘theoretical bodies of expertise and knowledge’ (Goodson 1997 p.32).

Similar concerns have been voiced in response to the latest series of changes, which continue to move training away from HEIs and into schools, with the suggestion that the 2011 White Paper may ‘mark the end of university-based teacher training’ (Browne and Reid 2012 p.503). Such structural changes are seen as engendering changes in the quality of ITE, causing the ‘the gradual shift away from teacher education as an academic study to one of preparation for a skill or craft-based occupation’ (Browne and Reid 2012 p.498) and towards ‘a new set of competency statements focused on professional practice, professional values and subject knowledge’ (Browne and Reid 2012 p.503).

Some positives have been noted and ten Dam and Blom suggest that SCITTs are more effective at trying ‘to bridge theory and practice’ (2006 p.657) than HEI-led courses, recognising that learning is situated and ‘should be understood as increasing participation in communities of practice’ (2006 p.657). Taking a view of learning as situated suggests that school-based courses offer the potential for ‘deep learning’ in ‘meaningful contexts’ (Raffo and Hall 2006 p.55) and for what Hagger and McIntyre (2006) term ‘practical theorizing,’ although this supposes that HEI-led courses have limited opportunities for practice-based learning, unlikely to be the case given their partnerships with schools. In supporting the role of teachers themselves as trainers, SCITTs may be seen as recognising that ‘the practitioner also creates knowledge’ (Coles 2000 p.57) working from ‘an epistemology that sees knowledge as essentially connected to practice’ (Noffke and Somekh 2009 p.21). Such positives, however, are related to the partnership training models developed post-1992, rather than to the post-2011 moves towards giving schools a singular eminence, which may not offer this same potential to explore the ‘dialectic’ (Furlong et al 2000a p.33) or for partnerships with HEIs. There are fears that a ‘practicum-based approach,
using an apprenticeship model and ignoring the dynamic of teacher professional formation’ may lead to ‘a limited and normative model of training’ (Browne and Reid 2012 p.507) where academic and critical input is greatly reduced in favour of practical experience.

Certainly the development of a competency model of teacher education may pose problems for trainees who seek to develop CP. By reducing the complex processes of teaching and being a teacher to a list of atomised standards, 33 standards up until 2012 (TDA 2007), and now a preamble and 11 standards (DfE 2013a), ‘what is knowable – or what ‘needs to be known’ – is ultimately definable and susceptible to inventorisation and tidy assessment’ (Moore 2004 p.103). The competences can be seen as the pre-determined endpoints, and as the ‘outcomes focussed agenda’ which seek ‘to manage and control’ (Wood 2009 p.47) what it means to teach and be a teacher, and as leading to:

an over-emphasis on universality, which deliberately marginalises the intuitive and idiosyncratic as well as ignoring the wider contexts at both the national and the local level.

(Moore 2004 p.93)

By existing as a single dominating ‘capital D’ discourse (Gee 2005 p.7), the competency model may work to construct a narrow and specific version of what it means to be a teacher, limiting trainees’ agency and thus their ability to enact aspects of CP. Further, trainees may experience conflict, or even risk, by seeking to engage in CP whilst also seeking to meet the standards and evidence the competencies on their teacher education course.

2.4.b The enhanced role of the school

Much research on teacher education focuses on the school practice as the problematic element of the training course, seeing it as essentially conservative; in school-based courses where trainees spend greater amounts of their time in schools, one would expect this problem to be magnified.

The Western SCITT course sees learning to teach as a socially and culturally situated process and Lave and Wenger’s work on communities of practice (1991) may usefully be applied to theorise aspects of the trainees’ movement from novice to expert. In the Western SCITT trainees are attached to a school for three days a week from the start of the course, beginning with ‘legitimate
peripheral participation’ (Lave and Wenger 1991) by observing experienced teachers, gradually taking on a more central position through collaborative planning and teaching of episodes, building towards teaching whole lessons, and eventually to block practice where they take ‘ownership’ of a limited number of classes, thus occupying a more central role within the CoP. The movement trajectory can be viewed as one of increasing agency, where, with each move towards the centre, the trainees are accorded, and can claim, more access to the resources of the community and increasing ‘control over the conditions that shape one’s opportunities for action’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.8). The implications of this model, and how effective it is, form part of this study and are considered in my question of how the SCITT course as a whole supports or hinders the trainees’ use of CP.

One set of issues raised in relation to the enhanced role of the school in SCITTs is that trainees ‘will be completely taken over by a specific school’ and that they will not have ‘enough time and space for distance and reflection’ (ten Dam and Blom 2006 p.657). The Western SCITT, however, places trainees on practice at two or three different schools during the training year, allowing for comparisons rather than subsumation. However, if schools are to operate as individual training schools in future, rather than as consortia, this may be less likely. Further, in the Western SCITT, trainees are additional to each school’s staffing but this may not be the case if schools move further towards the apprenticeship model. In Schools Direct, for example, the trainee is ‘selected by a school from day one’ and, the website reassures its readers, ‘Your school…will have a job in mind just for you’ (DfE website 2013b). Similarly, in Teach First, trainees are employees, immediately taking up the role of teacher.

Halliwell (1993) assumes that school-based programmes will offer limited opportunities to do anything other than teach and suggests that the risk-taking mentality, the flexibility and the insight needed to develop the ‘responsive inventiveness’ to become a creative practitioner will be difficult to develop in school-based training, overestimating the amount of time trainees will spend in the classroom. While she rightly states that ‘experience needs to be processed by the student teacher…not just survived’ she claims that ‘in school, there is often very little time for anything other than survival’ (Halliwell 1993 pgs.74-75).
She envisages trainees as primarily engaged in 'lone teaching,' whereas in the Western SCITT, for example, trainees have a much reduced timetable (generally 40-60% of that of a practising teacher) to allow time for planning and reflection. Even in the classroom, collaborative and episodic models prevail, giving the trainee the opportunity to step in and out of the role of the teacher. In cases like these, school-based training should not, in itself, prove a significant barrier to trainees' development of CP. Again, however, such safeguard may not remain with the expansion of teaching schools, Schools Direct and Teach First.

A second set of issues relate to the conservative effect of the school and classroom as a CoP. Raffo and Hall (2006) characterise schools as places ‘where critical reflection might be neither valued nor exemplified’ and where trainees may ‘struggle to sustain a critical outlook’ (p.55). Hagger and McIntyre (2006) describe how trainees move from the HEI, where they develop theoretical, often idealistic understandings of education, to the classroom where they go ‘into reverse,’ ‘change… their minds’ or hide their own opinions in order to ‘express views strategically consistent with school norms’ (2006 p.56). Perez-Gomez (2000) views teaching practice, and, by implication, the schools, as contexts where trainees are particularly subject to issues of power:

It would appear that the whole of the structure built up around the period of practical training induces the reproduction of dominant forms of teaching behaviour and styles in each particular scenario.

(Perez-Gomez 2000 p.126)

He suggests trainees have to adapt to the culture of schools:

When they enter a class, trainee teachers do so as new elements within a microculture whose rules and climate are already set. If they wish to be accepted, they have to adapt to the normal rules of the game already approved by tradition.

(Perez-Gomez 2000 p.126)

The pressure to conform may be magnified in the current climate where the ‘rules’ to which Perez-Gomez refers are not just cultural but also enshrined in the performative standards of the competency model of training, and require that trainees ‘be aware of the policies and practices of the workplace and share in collective responsibility for their implementation’ (TDA 2007 p.7) and ‘have
proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach’ (DfE 2013a p.10).

However, Perez-Gomez (2000) assumes that the school represents a single CoP, that such CoPs are total and fixed, and that the trainee has little or no influence over their manner of participation and the context. It seems more likely that the ‘mutual engagement…joint enterprise and…shared repertoire of ways of doing things’ that define a CoP (Wenger 2000 p.49) do not make it a neutral space where all participate equally and to an agreed agenda. CoPs may be better viewed as contested spaces, full of ‘conflict and disjuncture’ (Lewis et al 2007 p.xv) and ‘ideologically laden sets of beliefs, actions and assumption’ where ‘participants may have conflicting goals, aspirations and histories of participation’ (Rogers and Fuller 2007 pgs.79-80).

Lewis et al (2007) emphasise the power and agency of the individual to respond to the context: ‘one’s task is never simply to read a social scene and to adapt to it in a chameleon-like fashion,’ instead individuals choose how to respond and ‘invoke an identity or identities through which they can perform themselves… to accommodate or resist the varied audiences in the social scene they’ve entered’ (Lewis et al 2007 p.xvi). Holland et al (1998) refer to this process as ‘self-authoring’ (p.178) where individuals develop an ‘authorial stance’ (p.183) from which to address the context.

As a result of their joining the community and the authorial stance(s) they adopt, trainees may change the community: ‘purposes, meanings and conventions are negotiated or reinscribed—indeed newly created—over time’ (Edwards and Blake 2007 p.37). Raffo and Hall similarly emphasise the agency of the individual suggesting there is a level of ‘interdependence between context and individual agency’ (2006 p.56), as do Emirbayer and Mische when they claim that ‘human beings do not merely repeat past routines; they are also the inventors of new possibilities for thought and action’ (1998 pgs.983-984), and agency ‘both reproduces and transforms’ structures in the ‘interactive response’ of the actor’ (p.970).
How far the trainees in this study feel subsumed by the school or constrained by the norms of the CoP, and how far they feel they have the agency to ‘perform themselves’ and ‘self-author’ within these communities is likely to arise in response to my third research question which considers the impact of contexts on the trainees use of CP.

2.4.c Creative Practice and teacher education

In this section I consider the implications of supporting a model of contextual creativity for my own practice as a teacher educator, exploring approaches to teacher education which may best support the development of trainees’ potential to enact CP in the classroom.

Perspectives which emphasise the trainees’ inculcation into a CoP tend to see learning not just as role change but as identity change too. In occupying the central position in the CoP, trainees need to ‘see themselves as members, taking responsibility for their own actions (including the use of knowledge and skills) in that position’ and where this ‘learning process… implies a change in personal identity, in the way one presents oneself to others and to oneself’ (ten Dam and Blom 2006 p.651). Contextual understandings and a social constructionist perspective can also be applied to trainee identity as a locus for learning and development, suggesting that rather than being a fixed inherent quality, identity, much like creativity and agency, is ‘achieved’ in specific social situations: ‘identity is a becoming; the work of identity is ongoing and pervasive’ (Wenger 2000 p.163); it is an act which is ‘a performative accomplishment compelled by social sanction and taboo’ (Butler 2006 p.62). While this suggests that identity is fluid, there is also the ‘sedimentation of accrued prior experience… [which]… may be drawn on (performed, renegotiated, contested, subverted or of course ignored) in response to particular interactional contingencies’ (Swann and Maybin 2008 p.26), and such sedimentation may result in the habitual or ‘relatively stable patterns of interaction’ that people develop (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.982) in response to situations.

Much of the research literature on trainee teacher identity seeks to emphasise such sedimentation in identity performance, focussing on ‘the role of social and personal biography in establishing identity’ (Boreham and Gray 2006 p.5) rather
than the possibilities for development and change. Bullough (1997), Sugrue (1997), Knowles (1992) and Kelchtermans (1993), for example, all locate the reasons for trainees’ ‘success’ or ‘failure’ on teaching courses within this history or biography. Further, the influence of this history or biography tends to be viewed as largely negative, as an obstacle to the trainees’ development and as likely to generate a view of ‘teaching as transmission’ (Sugrue 1997 p.217). These authors tend to focus on the influence of ‘the accumulation of past learning’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.14) but pay less attention to how such schemas can change, as ‘people are able to distance themselves from their agentic orientations, i.e., make such orientations the object of reflection and imagination’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.21) and thus subject to ‘hypothesizing’ and ‘projectivity’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 pgs.984 and 988).

Olsen (2010), however, like Beijaard et al (2004), and to an extent Britzman (1986), moves away from a ‘potentially over-determining’ (Olsen 2010 p.6) view of identity, instead drawing on Holland et al’s work (1998) to see identity as a ‘dynamic constellation of situated understandings’ which arise from ‘macrosocial strata’ but also from ‘microsocial structures…in a particular social setting’ where individuals are not only positioned but are ‘are active, conscious agents’ who ‘employ intentionality, play, desperation, and improvisation to move themselves from one subjectivity to the next’ (Olsen 2010 p.7). He suggests that:

learning to teach is a continuous, situated, knowledge-and-identity process in which prior experiences produce deeply embedded ways of viewing the world that go on to organize current/future educational experience into professional meaning.

(Olsen 2010 p.7)

While Olsen recognises the situated and holistic nature of learning, and usefully describes it as an identity-knowledge construct, he seems to overemphasise the role of previous experience at the expense of current experience, perhaps underestimating the impact of the learning experiences during a training course to affect these ‘deeply embedded ways of viewing the world’ (Olsen 2010 p.7). Emirbayer and Mische suggest, however, that even in what might be considered the most conservative aspect of agency, the ‘iterational dimension’ individuals do not simply follow their accumulated schemas, but actively and ‘selectively recognize, locate and implement such schemas in their ongoing and situated transactions’ (1998 p.975). While history and biography need not be an
obstacle to the SCITT trainees’ development of CP, ITE courses may need to provide opportunities and support for the trainees to make their ‘orientations the object of reflection and imagination’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.21) and to re-examine and reconstruct their existing schemas.

Where trainees are expected or required to develop specific teacher identities, as a transmission teacher, for example, or as a Creative Practitioner, the contexts which may support or constrain the development of such an identity need to be addressed as much as the trainee’s history, biography and beliefs. Where trainees persist in invoking specific identities, as a transmission teacher, for example, it is worth addressing the context that occasions, ‘calls forth’ or supports such an identity, rather than viewing the trainee as either wilfully at fault or as at the mercy of their biography.

This view draws attention to the contexts of the training course and how the trainee is positioned within these. Russell, for example, argues that ‘How I teach IS the message’ (1997 p.33, emphasis in original): promoting CP within a model of transmission teaching is likely to undermine the message and position trainees as passive learners engaged ‘mainly in habitual schematic responses’ rather than in ‘imaginative, projective responses’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.16).

Stafford (2010), in one of the few papers to directly address creativity in pre-service teacher education, suggests that when she, as an ITE course leader, actively encouraged dialogic talk there was actually ‘little talk which one could identify as being at the dialogic extreme and very little scope for the generation of new or unique ideas’ (2010 p.41). Klein (2001) makes a similar point, giving an account of the contradictions that arise when trying to teach trainees to adopt constructivist approaches: even when promoting constructivist approaches, her ‘actions at another level cemented understandings of…the teacher as ultimate arbiter of authoritative absolute knowledge’ (2001 p.258) and she ‘subverted student autonomy and often ignored personally constructed knowledge’ and ‘reverted to practices of authoritative ‘telling’ about and policing ‘correct’ knowledge and behaviour’ (Klein 2001 p.260).
Klein also makes the point that humanism, in taking for granted ‘a free and autonomous individual who can choose, or not, to engage fully with classroom activities’ allows the teacher to ‘point the finger of blame at the student’ and to ignore the contextual and structural issues, the ‘power/knowledge relationships in classroom interactions that may preclude engagement for some students’ (Klein 2001 p.267) whereas Stafford seems to take for granted the equal and unconstrained agency of all participants, which somewhat limits her discussion.

Taking a social constructionist and situated approach shifts the focus away from the individual and their perceived deficits and towards the context, which may or may not support dialogic engagement, agency or creativity. This suggests that how the issue of CP is addressed on the Western SCITT course may be as important as the content of the message. Singh and Richards (2006) consider this point, drawing explicitly on Lave and Wenger's work (1991), seeing teacher education as identity work where identity is socially constructed and influenced by both ‘the powerful ideologies teacher-learners bring to the classroom’ and ‘the discourses and activities that shape the practices of teacher education’ (2006 p.152). They acknowledge the importance of agency, suggesting that it is central to the process of identity change:

> Whether teachers have the agency to remake themselves through repositioning within the course room will determine if they engage with or resist the activities and discourses of a course.

(Singh and Richards 2006 p.156)

Further, they suggest that trainees acquire agency as they move towards a more central position in the learning community and such a movement occurs where teacher educators ‘scaffold opportunities for learning, rather than transmitting ‘pre-set' theories’ and where they are ‘modeling good instructional practice, dialogically organizing instruction, encouraging participation in multiple discourses and setting up collaborative learning’ (2006 p.164).

However, like Perez-Gomez (2000), Hagger and McIntyre (2006) and Raffo and Hall (2006), Singh and Richards tend to identify the school as operating in conflict with the HEI, leaving trainees in a position where each ‘has to make a choice between two sets of Discourses calling out to her or him’ (Singh and Richards 2006. p.159). In reality, the situation is likely to be more complex than
this, with discourses being less polarised, less dichotomised and more multiple and overlapping, with aspects of each context occasioning different versions of teacher-identity and teaching and with the trainees themselves having some ability to impact on these competing and conflicting discourses.

In summary, the work of Russell (1997), Klein (2001), Stafford (2010) and Singh and Richards (2006) suggests that in the lecture room, just as much as in the classroom, the teaching method should not undermine or contradict the message: transmission approaches need to be set aside and replaced by an awareness of contexts and positioning. If trainees are to become creative practitioners rather than transmission teachers, the Western SCITT and its partner schools may need to offer the contexts and positioning which is likely to support, even to call forth agentic and creative practitioners.
Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods

3.1 Introduction
Firstly I discuss the methodology underlying this study and outline the research design and the participants. I then describe the implementation of the study and the management and analysis of the data. Finally, I consider the ethical concerns that arose from the study, and its limitations.

3.2 Methodology
This study is clearly located within the interpretivist paradigm as my research questions sought to understand trainee teachers’ perceptions and experiences, resulting in subjective accounts rather than a set of proven facts. Further, by focussing on a small group of trainees within a specific institution, I develop a detailed understanding of a local situation: rather than seeking to ‘find universals’ I provide ‘a full, rich understanding (verstehen) of the context’ (Willis 2007 p.240), supporting an ‘epistemology of the particular’ (Stake 2005 p.454) and valuing local and individual understanding.

I focus on the trainees’ experience from the perspective of the trainees themselves: on hearing and privileging their voices. It is their ‘lived experience,’ ‘from the point of view of those who live it’ (Schwandt 1994 p.118) which is valuable, but I interpret this with an awareness that this experience is given meaning by ‘the hold our culture has on us’ which ‘shapes the way in which we see things… and gives us a quite definite view of the world’ (Crotty 1998 p.58), and that ‘accounts of the world are governed in significant degree by conventions of language use’ (Gergen and Gergen 2008 p.818).

I use an Action Research (AR) approach, commonly used by practitioners interested in researching their own practice or context: ‘Action enquiries begin with the question, ‘How do I improve my work?’” (McNiff 2002 p.9) and much of my intention in this study is to understand how to better support the trainees with whom I work.

AR can be defined as ‘a small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such an intervention’ (Cohen
During the training year, I instigated various low-key interventions into the trainees’ understanding, and ‘plan, act, observe and reflect more carefully, more systematically, and more rigorously than one usually does in everyday life’ (Kemmis and McTaggart 1992 p.10) to consider the effect of these interventions.

AR supports ‘an epistemology that sees knowledge as essentially connected to practice’ (Noffke and Somekh 2009 p.21); this lends itself to an inductive approach where theory is generated from practice, suitable to the exploratory account of the trainees’ experience that my research questions generated. The inductive approach also reflects the epistemological position whereby knowledge cannot be divorced from the practical, local, contingent and material situation in which it is produced, and suggests that knowledge is located in each trainee’s own experience, itself contextual: ‘Action Research is rooted in each participant’s experience of the situation, rather than being removed from it’ (Coghlan 2007 p.295), cohering with the contextual view of creativity, identity and agency that underpins this study.

AR lends itself to work in the social constructionist tradition, which foregrounds political intentions and recognises the impact of social and material contexts. The aim of this project may be considered political and emancipatory in that it encourages both myself and the trainees to explore approaches which may alter the typical power relations between teacher educator and trainee and between trainee and pupils, by changing how agency is distributed in the lecture room and the classroom.

AR also reflects something of the philosophical basis of the Western SCITT which, as a school-based course, may be effective at trying ‘to bridge theory and practice’ (ten Dam and Blom 2006 p.657), recognising that learning is situated and ‘should be understood as increasing participation in communities of practice’ (ten Dam and Blom 2006 p.657). The Western SCITT also supports the view that practitioners are adept at theorising and employs practicing teachers to lead some aspects of the theoretical parts of the course, following Carr (1995) in negating the idea that ‘all practice is non-theoretical and that all theory is non-practical’ (p.62).
3.3 Research Design

The research design was modelled on constructivist ideas of learning, where the trainees actively construct their own knowledge as a result of their interactions with the social, material and theoretical contexts. It was also designed to cohere with contextual understandings of creativity, and, where possible, to demonstrate and model aspects of CP in being open-ended, dialogic and participant-led to an extent.

I used qualitative rather than quantitative methods as my aim was to gather subjective accounts of why something is happening, rather than to attempt to quantify aspects of what happens. Qualitative methods are also more likely to ‘actively involve participants,’ and are more able to ‘capture the depth and complexity of the particular situation under study’ (Small 1995 p.950), which coheres with the intention of this study. One of the key sources of evidence in AR is ‘the experiential knowledge of research participants,’ as they may ‘possess unique insights that may not be available to researchers and other outsiders’ (Small 1995 p.950) and methods such as interviews and discussions proved useful to capture the participants’ lived experiences and voices in this research.

I used a range of data collection methods, each of which is described in more detail below. Using a range can serve ‘to clarify meaning by identifying different ways the case is being seen’ (Stake 2005 p.454) and to record the ‘diversity of perception’ between different people and within the same person at different times, capturing the ‘multiple’ and ‘different realities’ that may exist (Stake 2005 p.454), given that there is no ‘single story of learning to teach’ (Britzman 2003 p.6). It also allowed me to build in participant scrutiny, and a more iterative approach. How this was achieved is described in more detail below and in Section 3.5, where an account is given of each ‘intervention’ or data generation and collection method.

The data collection period lasted for approximately one year and the majority of the data were collected during the training year, which ran from September 2010 until July 2011. The data collection was designed to focus on ‘each
participant's experience of the situation’ (Coghlan 2007 p.295) at various stages throughout the course. To this end, I explored the trainees’ initial understandings of creativity at the start of the course, prior to any intervention (September). This acted as a point of comparison when considering if, how far and in which directions trainees’ views and attitudes had changed during the course. Mid-way through the course I occasioned ‘a small-scale intervention’ (Cohen and Manion 1994 p.186) with the Creativity Framework and the Writing Metaphors activity. The Silent Discussion in April was designed to follow-up issues raised in response to the Framework. At the end of the course, in July, I revisited trainees’ understandings of creativity and CP, allowing me ‘a close examination of the effects of such an intervention’ (Cohen and Manion 1994 p.186), exploring whether their views and understanding had changed during the year.

I provide in Table 1 below a brief overview of the data collection, which clarifies the order and timing of the data collection processes and how each relates to my research questions. I describe each method in more detail in Section 3.5 below.
### Table 1: Overview of data collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Timing in SCITT Course</th>
<th>Method / event and abbreviation used to identify the data</th>
<th>Data outcome</th>
<th>Research question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 2010</td>
<td>Week 1 College-based training</td>
<td>Group discussion 1 (GD1)</td>
<td>Transcript of discussion</td>
<td>Q1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 2011</td>
<td>Week 20 Immediately prior to Block practice 1</td>
<td>Creativity Framework as prompt for Group Discussion 2 (GD2)</td>
<td>Transcript of discussion</td>
<td>Q2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing a metaphor (WAM)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Q1, Q2, Q3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2011</td>
<td>Week 28 Immediately prior to Block practice 2</td>
<td>Individual interviews (II)</td>
<td>Transcript of interviews</td>
<td>Q2, Q3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2011</td>
<td>Weeks 35/36 Final week of Block Practice 2 / final week of the course</td>
<td>Group discussion 3 (GD3)</td>
<td>Transcript of discussion</td>
<td>Q2, Q3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2011</td>
<td>Week 36 Final week of the course</td>
<td>Analysing metaphors (WAM)</td>
<td>Transcript of interviews</td>
<td>Q1, Q2, Q3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3.4 The participants**

The participants consisted of a single cohort of nine trainees enrolled on the secondary English Western SCITT course for the year 2010-2011. In the first term, one student (Sharon) left the course but her data has been retained; the remaining eight completed and passed the course.

The cohort was not unusual: they had no more or fewer academic qualifications, no more or less prior experience or interest in creativity, or other features that
distinguished them from previous cohorts. As such they can be regarded as an ‘average case,’ useful where ‘the objective is to capture the circumstances and conditions of an everyday or commonplace situation’ (Yin 2009 p.48). Their ‘averageness,’ may make aspects of their experience more readily transferable to similar contexts.

The participants selected their own pseudonyms by which they were to be known in the research. The pseudonyms reflect their gender and ethnicity. I outline some background information about each of them in Table 2 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Work experience in education prior to the course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMY</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2:1 English</td>
<td>1 year as teaching assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARABELLA</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2:2 English &amp; Media MA Broadcast Journalism</td>
<td>1 year as youth sports instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSTANCE</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1st English Literature</td>
<td>4 years part-time as teaching assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIM</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2:1 English &amp; Creative Writing</td>
<td>18 months as teaching assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEARL</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2:1 English Literature</td>
<td>1 year as TEFL teacher; 1 year as teaching assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REBECCA</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1st English &amp; Education</td>
<td>5 weeks observation; teaching practices during degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAM</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1st Drama</td>
<td>2 years working in ‘theatre in education’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHARON</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2:2 English &amp; Media</td>
<td>2 weeks school observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOM</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2:2 Media Production</td>
<td>2 weeks school observation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: The Participants

3.5 The implementation of the study
In this section, I describe the methods used. For each method, I explain my rationale, followed by a brief account of how it worked in practice. Firstly I consider the Creativity Framework, secondly the Group Discussions, thirdly the Individual Interviews, and finally the Written Responses, which includes both the Silent Discussion and the Metaphors.
3.5.a The Creativity Framework

While all of the data generation methods can be regarded as ‘interventions’ in that they raised the profile of certain issues and encouraged the trainees’ to construct ideas and opinions about them, the key intervention in this research was the Creativity Framework. The Framework was conceived in relation to my question of ‘What are the trainees’ perspectives of classroom practices that might support creativity?’ It was used as a prompt for Group Discussion 2, and trainees were asked to try to incorporate aspects of the Framework into their teaching. In the following sections, I explain the rationale for developing a Framework and discuss its limitations.

3.5.a.i The rationale for a Framework

Halliwell suggests the need for creativity can become a ‘burden, a paralysing obligation’ (1993 p.68) if what is meant by creativity is not fully explored. Therefore, I devised the Creativity Framework as an indication of the ‘forms, practices and processes of learning’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.6) which may support contextual creativity, to clarify what is meant by CP and to answer the question of ‘but how?’ that tended to arise when I promoted ideas of creativity.

The Framework consists of a simple, accessible distillation of the ideas of key authors identified in the Literature Review as having produced useful work on CP. In Appendix 1 I give a detailed account of how, where and why I have used and adapted the work of these authors.

The intention was to help trainees to bridge the gap between theory and practice by reducing theory to its actionable aspects; while this may be criticised for reductively atomising complex theories, it may allow theory to be taken more easily into the classroom and acted upon. Trainees may be encouraged to enact teaching and learning differently, and from this experience, they may be able to draw both abstract and self-knowledge: while ‘structures shape people’s practices…it is also people’s practices that constitute (and reproduce) structures’ (Sewell 1992 p.4).

The Creativity Framework presented to participants is shown in Figure 1 below:
The Creativity Framework

Planning
- Incorporate alternatives into planning – perhaps a branching model rather than a linear model.
- Celebrate unintended as well as intended Learning Outcomes
- Emphasise oral as well as written outcomes
- Co-construct the curriculum with pupils
- Provide opportunity for pupils to choose from a range of activities (individual, pair, group)
- Plan around overarching leading questions framed by broad possibility structure

Standing back
- Stop, observe, listen, notice
- Acknowledge pupils’ thinking
- Support pupils by being attentive and available
- Reflect on pupils’ learning

Profiling learner agency
- Pupils have the opportunity to initiate their own activities
- Pupils make their own choices, within a loose framework
- Pupils can try out possibilities
- Pupils’ ideas are taken seriously
- Teacher answers a question with a question
- Teacher uses overarching leading questions framed by broad possibility
- Teacher ponders aloud, speculative stance
- Teacher privileges talk as much as writing
- Teacher and pupils engage in lengthy discussions and dialogues
- Teacher feedback promotes learning, avoids simple evaluation

Creating time and space
- Encourage mutual ownership of the classroom
- Timing of activities is governed by engagement levels and intuition, not the clock

Figure 1: The Creativity Framework
3.5.a.ii Limitations of the Framework
There are clear limitations to condensing a complex approach to teaching and learning into a list or framework: it could be used as an atomised tick list without adopting or engaging with the underlying philosophy and values; it could be a further imposition on trainees who are already trying to teach to the competences and other requirements; it could be viewed as a method of changing the trainees in line with my own preconceived notions of ‘good teaching.’ It may be that how the framework is introduced and used with participants (discussed in Section 3.5.b.ii. below) is central to ensuring, as far as possible, that the Framework can support movements towards CP without imposing additional burdens or a specific point of view on the trainees.

In terms of content, a further limitation is that issues of the social construction of creative ability and of power and positioning are not addressed within the Framework. While the Framework is likely to lead to pupils in general being positioned to have more agency, it tends to assume that, given the same conditions, all pupils can exhibit agency equally rather than taking account of sedimented or occasioned inequalities in power or status. As a result of this I decided to address these issues more fully in the Group Discussions.

3.5.b Group Discussions
In this section I outline the rationale for using Group Discussions, considering both their potential and their limitations. I explain the composition of the group, how and where the discussions took place, and how the data was recorded. I then outline the nature and content of each specific Group Discussion.

I aimed to structure the Group Discussions to exploit their potential for critical pedagogic practice, after Freire (1970) for example, where the purpose is for ‘imagining and enacting the emancipatory political possibilities of collective work’ (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005 p.889). The use of ‘collective conversations or group interviews’ (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005 p.887) can support a constructivist epistemology, and can be empowering, with groups acting as ‘enabling structures that support…consciousness raising, critical theorizing and transformative actions’ (Elliot 2000 p.211).
Rather than viewing the discussions as ‘focus groups’ where participants ‘are drilled and mined for knowledge’ (Richardson and St Pierre 2005 p.971), framing the trainees in a somewhat powerless position, I aimed to follow the precepts of dialogic teaching, positioning them as more equal and agentic members in a process of ‘shared knowledge construction and deconstruction’ (Hedegaard and Fleer 2008 p.140).

As dialogic teaching may be ‘threatening to teachers’ (Lyle 2008 p.230) by reducing their dominance, dialogic discussion may reduce the researcher’s control as ‘the participants’ rather than the researchers’ agenda can predominate’ (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000 p.288). The risk here is that the research questions are not followed up: like a teacher engaging in CP, the endpoints and outcomes cannot be predetermined. However, given that this research is aimed at exploring the trainees’ perspective, it seems reasonable that their agenda should predominate and that my own should adapt accordingly: what seems irrelevant to me, as a result of my framing of the research, may be highly relevant to the trainees. This allows, to some extent, the research to be co-constructed with the participants, and for their ideas and responses to have a material impact on the direction and nature of the research. To this end, in the Group Discussions I asked a limited number of broad, open-ended questions which are detailed in the sections that follow.

In Group Discussions participants may explore taken-for-granted or tacit knowledge and ‘the synergy and dynamism…often reveal unarticulated norms and normative assumptions’ (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005 p.903). Where it is the normative assumptions and tacit knowledge about teaching and learning that provide the horizon of possibility, any opportunity for ‘broadening what is knowable, beable, doable’ (Davis 2004 p.184) will be useful. The discussions may provide a forum for the trainees to envisage ‘possible lines of action’ and explore ‘alternative means-ends sequence[s]’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.14). In such group hypothesising the trainees might ‘attempt to reconfigure received schemas by generating alternative possible responses to the problematic situations they confront’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.984). In this respect, group discussions may be useful for engendering the process of change, and the discussions themselves can be regarded as part of the intervention of Action Research.
While group discussions are likely to have positive synergistic effects where the combination of people and ideas may produce ‘data that are seldom produced through individual interviewing and observation, and… result in especially powerful interpretive insights’ (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005 p.903), such synergy may also have negative outcomes in the formation of a group voice and a dominant set of ideas: some voices and perspectives, especially the more divergent ones, may be lost. Therefore I found it useful to use additional methods of data generation and collection, including the individual interview and written methods, as discussed further below.

The group for the discussions consisted of the ‘naturally occurring’ group of trainees following the English ITE course. As part of the course, we met regularly for workshops on aspects of subject knowledge and pedagogy. The group discussions formed part of these workshops. They were held in same location and planned to feel like a normal part of the training, where discussions, debates and the sharing of ideas are customary teaching and learning approaches.

To preserve the discussions as data for future analysis, I used a voice recorder. The inhibiting effect of this was not too great. The ITE course provides each trainee with a video camera to use during their training and trainees are accustomed to filming themselves teaching. Recording only the voice seemed a less daunting imposition by comparison.

3.5.b.i Group Discussion 1
For Group Discussion 1 (GD1) I disaggregated my research questions into the questions shown in Figure 2 below:
Questions 3, 4 and 5 were designed to promote discussion of what the trainees consider ‘creativity’ to be, relating to my first research question.

Questions 6, 7 and 8 were designed to promote discussion of what creativity in the classroom might look like, and to elicit attitudes to creativity in the classroom, relating to my second question of the trainees’ perspectives of what classroom practices might support creativity.

Questions 1, 2, 9 and 10 were designed to encourage trainees to consider the potential impact of various contexts on the development of creativity in their practice, relating to my third question of how the course as a whole might impact on their use of CP.

Questions 2 and 5 also raised identity issues, making the connection between practice and person as some of the Literature suggested that identity was a key aspect of practice (Olsen 2010, Beijaard et al 2004, Raffo and Hall 2006), and
that this issue might be magnified in school-based practice (ten Dam and Blom 2006).

Overall, the discussion is likely to have immediately given creativity an elevated status as a topic worthy of discussion and one in which I, as Course Leader, was interested. From this perspective, holding this discussion in itself can be seen as an intervention into the trainees’ development.

The discussion took place during the first session on the subject-specific course. I began with an explanation of my research interests and a request for them to become participants in the study, as described further in Section 3.7 below. I asked the discussion questions, giving the trainees time to respond, or not, as they chose, allowing the discussion to free-flow. All the participants were present at this meeting and all participated in the discussion. The discussion lasted for about 45 minutes, with AMY, CONSTANCE, PEARL and TOM speaking the most, and ARABELLA saying very little.

3.5.b.ii Group Discussion 2 and The Creativity Framework
The second group discussion (GD2) was held mid-way through the course in February 2011. It formed part of the final subject group meeting before the trainees embarked upon their first block practice. This session included the introduction of the Creativity Framework and I chose to introduce it in this session as it was the closest to the Block Practice, with the reasoning that inputs at this time were most likely to influence practice.

Trainees had been given, as was customary, an academic paper to read in preparation for a discussion. The paper was Cremin et al's on Possibility Thinking (2006), central to many of the ideas underlying the Framework. I also gave each participant a copy of the Creativity Framework. We began with a discussion of the paper and then moved onto an exploration of the Framework, discussing which, if any, aspects of it the trainees felt they might be able to use in their classroom practice, and what barriers they foresaw to implementing ideas from the Framework. The focus was on the exploration of the ‘alternative means-ends sequence[s]’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.14) and on ‘expressing wishes, desires, anxieties, hopes, fears and aspirations’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.984) relating to new ways of teaching. The Framework proved a useful
discussion prompt and was generally received positively. The discussion lasted for an hour and a half, and formed the main session of the training that morning. Overall, TOM, REBECCA and AMY spoke the most while SAM, ARABELLA, PEARL and KIM also made frequent contributions. SHARON had left the course and CONSTANCE was absent from this session.

3.5.b.iii Group Discussion 3
The third and final Group Discussion (GD3) was held at the end of the course, forming part of our final meeting as a group and fitting quite seamlessly with other end of course evaluations and reviews. I also used this as an opportunity to remind the participants that they could withdraw their data from the research if they wished to do so, as described in Section 3.7 below.

The key prompts or schedule for this discussion are shown below in Figure 3:

| 1. Do you feel you became a Creative Practitioner? |
| 2. When did you begin to feel more like a teacher and less like a trainee? |
| 3. Share some examples of lessons or schemes of work that you feel were creative. |

Figure 3: Discussion schedule for Group Discussion 3

The first question was designed to encourage the trainees to reflect on their development and their creativity. The second related issues around CP to identity and change and what it meant to be a teacher. This question arose as a result of some trainees’ earlier comments which seemed to indicate that they felt they had been prevented from occupying the role of teacher and were thus unable to engage in CP. The iterative nature of this research allowed me to focus on this issue more closely in GD3.

The third question was designed to ascertain what trainees felt had been creative within their practice, and which aspects of the Creativity Framework, if any, they had incorporated into their practice. The trainees all shared instances
of what they felt was CP, describing individual lessons, entire schemes of work, or an underlying stance.

The discussion lasted for about an hour, with SAM and AMY speaking the most, followed by TOM and PEARL, and with ARABELLA, KIM and CONSTANCE making fewer contributions. SHARON had left the course and REBECCA was absent.

3.5.c Individual Interviews

In this section I outline my rationale for conducting individual interviews (II) with the participants and explain the approach to interviewing used. I then detail the implementation of the interviews.

Dialogic discussions in groups are valuable but may also be subject to pressures arising from the dynamics of the group, where ‘consensus often erases difference’ (Richardson and St Pierre 2005 p.968). As the course progressed, alliances and divisions developed within the cohort, which, I felt, could influence some trainees’ willingness to talk openly or to express divergent views. Therefore I decided to conduct individual interviews with participants at the end of the course to explore ideas which may not have arisen in a group forum and to better preserve their individual voice and their variant views.

I adopted a semi-structured, responsive and empathic approach to the interviews. While ‘the interviewer tends to define the situation, the topics, and the course of the interview’ (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000 p.122), using a semi-structured approach can be more dialogic and responsive to the interviewee’s agenda, with both interviewer and interviewee working together to construct meaning and produce a ‘collaborative effort’ (Fontana and Frey 2005 p.696) and addressing interviewees ‘as partners rather than objects of research’ (Rubin and Rubin 1995 p.10). Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) draw a distinction between the survey-type interview with standardised questions, which may be used in more quantitatively-orientated research and the more responsive interview, where interviewers:

do not usually decide beforehand the exact questions they want to ask, and do not ask each interviewee exactly the same questions, although
they will usually enter the interviews with a list of issues to be covered.

(Hammersley and Atkinson 1995 p.152)

I also followed ‘the empathetic approach’ (Fontana and Frey 2005 p.697), encouraging trainees to fully voice their views and values, rather than challenging their views and assumptions.

Interviewing is ‘inextricably and unavoidably historically, politically, and contextually bound’ (Fontana and Frey 2005 p.695). In this case, my role as Course Leader and the interviewees’ role as just-graduated teachers, brought issues of power into play, with the possibility that the trainees sought to give what they perceived to be the ‘correct’ answers. Using a semi-structured and empathetic approach is more likely to reduce the effects of this power differential and to allow the trainees’ agenda and views to emerge. Scheduling the interviews to occur when each trainee knew that they had passed the course successfully and all, except CONSTANCE, had gained their first post as a teacher for the following year is also likely to have reduced their perception of my influence and power.

3.5.c.i Implementation of the Individual Interviews

The individual interviews took place in the final two weeks of the course and in the week immediately following this. The content of the interviews was necessarily individualised: the trainees had had very different experiences during the course and the interviews reflected this. I had three broad questions in mind to guide the interviews, although each trainee took the interview in different directions to address their own particular concerns. The three key questions used are shown in Figure 4 below:

1. Have you turned out to be the sort of teacher you thought you might be when you started the course?

2. Is being creative important to you as a teacher?

3. What supports or barriers did you face in developing CP?

Figure 4: Discussion schedule for the individual interviews
With the first question, I hoped the trainees’ would reflect on their development during the course, considering their initial expectations, the effect of the various contexts of the course and reflecting on identity issues. The second question was designed to explore the trainees’ attitudes towards creativity in their teaching and revisit definitions of creativity. The third question focussed directly on the trainees’ perceptions of the contexts of the course.

During each interview, I checked my understandings with the interviewees and revisited ideas to clarify meanings, using a ‘flexible, iterative and continuous design’ (Rubin and Rubin 1995 p.43) where I could react to the interviewee’s comments. This allowed me to probe the interviewee’s meaning and to establish ‘an inner unity of the text, free of logical contradictions’ (Kvale 1996 p.48) as far as possible. The details of the interviews are shown below in Table 3 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMY</td>
<td>04/07/11</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
<td>Lecture room in college</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARABELLA</td>
<td>06/07/11</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>Lecture room in college</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSTANCE</td>
<td>01/07/11</td>
<td>1hr 15 mins</td>
<td>Subject-session room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIM</td>
<td>04/07/11</td>
<td>50 mins</td>
<td>Lecture room in college</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEARL</td>
<td>08/07/11</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
<td>Subject-session room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REBECCA</td>
<td>14/07/11</td>
<td>40 mins</td>
<td>Subject-session room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAM</td>
<td>14/07/11</td>
<td>40 mins</td>
<td>Subject-session room</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHARON</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Left the course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Declined to be interviewed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Individual Interviews: summary of implementation

As can be seen from Table 3, CONSTANCE’s interview was the most lengthy. While I followed a similar interview schedule as with the other interviewees, CONSTANCE had her own distinct agenda and wanted to talk about her recent job interviews and her views on why she hadn’t been appointed. In this case, I experienced some conflict of interest, in that, as her Course Leader I felt it my duty to listen to and advise her, whereas as a researcher I wanted to draw her
back to my own area of interest. In fact I moved between the two roles and the ‘creativity interview’ was interspersed with lengthy digressions where I operated more as a Course Leader. The other interviews largely followed the schedule. TOM declined to be interviewed, citing post-course exhaustion; SHARON had left the course.

3.5.d The Silent Discussion

While interviews are useful to move beyond the group voice which dialogic discussions may create, I also wanted to provide a forum where speech was not the dominant mode, and where more time could be given for thoughts to emerge. Writing is presented by Richardson and St Pierre as a way of accessing and recording that which would otherwise go undocumented, and they describe it as ‘a method of data collection’ (2005 p.970) where:

Thought happened in the writing. As I wrote, I watched word after word appear on the computer screen – ideas, theories, I had not thought before I wrote them.

(Richardson and St Pierre 2005 p.970, italics in original)

While they are referring to the researcher engaging in writing activities, such points seem to apply equally to other participants in the research process. Writing may be able to provide a set of data which complements or even challenges that gathered in other ways. While engaging in written activities might not suit all types of research participants, it can be assumed that these participants, all of whom are graduates in English or a related subject, will have a high level of literacy, some confidence in their abilities as writers and some enjoyment of the process of writing.

The Silent Discussion is a group writing exercise. It provides something of a middle way between the group discussion and the individual written comment, preserving some of the interactivity of a discussion, allowing ideas to be exchanged and responded to, but without the immediacy of speech. In a Silent Discussion each participant begins a ‘conversation’ by writing a comment on a piece of paper. Participants then move around the room without speaking and add to other written conversations. Replacing speech with writing may reduce the pressures on turn-taking, turn-holding and maintaining pace, and reduce the
effect of the imperatives to preserve status and avoid conflict, perhaps allowing each member of the group to contribute and be ‘listened to’ more equally.

The Silent Discussion may also be seen as modelling an aspect of CP. Dialogic teaching is rarely linked to the written rather than the spoken medium but this method allows some dialogicity into non-verbal activities. I used comments from GD2 as starting points for the conversations, allowing the trainees to probe their own and each other’s earlier comments in an ‘ongoing, recursive and elaborative process’ (Davis 2004 p.130) where their own ‘voices,’ rather than mine, dominate. This is likely to support the trainees to develop their thinking in an agentic way, acknowledging the constructivist view that learning is not ‘a matter of receiving or acquiring knowledge’ but more ‘a matter of modifying the knowledge we already have’ (Davis 2004 p.130), preferably in a ‘collaborative’ space’ (Singh and Richards 2006 p.164).

Using a Silent Discussion is an innovative approach and there is little in the literature on this as a research method; it does, however, have some precedence as a classroom teaching approach, as developed by Bintz and Shelton (1994) who describe it as a way of slowing down the process of conversation so that more attention can be paid to the ideas put forward. Using it in classrooms, they found that students would ‘really listen to each other’s writing,’ would ‘hear questions they weren’t asking themselves,’ and would ‘entertain hypotheses they hadn’t yet generated, and consider other positions’ (1994 p.502). As such, it seems a useful technique to encourage ‘possibility thinking’ and help drive ‘the shift from ‘what is’ to ‘what might be’” (Chappell et al 2008 p.284).

In preparation for the Silent Discussion (SD), I constructed a set of ‘creativity statements’ each of which made a fairly controversial comment about an aspect of CP. The statements were generated from comments made by the trainees’ in GD2, bringing out points of interest and concern that hadn’t been fully explored during that discussion. As such, they related largely to issues arising from the Creativity Framework which was the key prompt for GD2, and thus to my second research question about perspectives of classroom practices. I show
the Creativity Statements in Appendix 2. In Appendix 3 I show which comments from GD2 suggested each statement.

By drawing on statements made by the participants themselves in the group discussion, there was the potential to support the trainees in ‘subjecting their own agentic orientations to…critical judgement’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.1010l). Given that some ten weeks and block practice had also passed, it allowed the trainees to reconsider their initial statements in the light of greater experience, giving them more distance and perhaps showing whether their views had been changed by their experiences in schools. It allowed for the research to be responsive to the participants’ perspective, to be iterative and to support a form of member checking, where participants were encouraged to elaborate on or question their earlier comments.

The SD took place in April, after the trainees had completed their first block practice. Participants were each given a copy of the list of statements. Without discussion, they selected a statement from the list that they felt strongly about, cut it out and stuck it on a sheet of A3 paper. They wrote their response to the statement, then left their piece of paper and moved around the room, writing in response to others’ statements and responses, still without speaking. At the end they returned to their own sheet and wrote a comment in response to the other ideas written there. This took place in the normal room used for subject workshops and lasted for about 45 minutes. At the end of the session I collected the sheets in and initiated a discussion about the activity and its usefulness in the classroom, making connections between my research and their practice.

The pattern of participation was more equal in the SD, with each participant having an initial comment, and each participant making at least one comment on every other sheet. Some participants took the opportunity to comment more freely, and, unusually, ARABELLA was one of the most prolific contributors, in contrast to her rather reserved approach in other discussions and interviews. ARABELLA and PEARL each made 12 contributions, with all the other participants making between 7 and 10 contributions with CONSTANCE writing the least. SHARON had left the course.
3.5.e Writing Metaphors

In addition to the SD, I also employed a further method where writing rather than speech is the dominant mode, in an activity where the trainees write and analyse metaphors about themselves as teachers.

Metaphor is an aspect of language that has attracted attention for its creative and generative capacity. The use of metaphor can suggest new and different ways of understanding, moving away from the literal and logical. It can ‘force us to understand one thing in terms of another’ and can ‘elicit cognitive processes not ordinarily called upon by literal language’ (Winner 1997 p.17). Most often the more abstract idea is described in terms of something more concrete, such as in the common metaphor of life as a journey: ‘we have coherently organized knowledge about journeys that we rely on in order to understand life’ (Kovecses 2002 p.4).

Wilson suggests that focussing on teachers’ metaphors ‘allows researchers the opportunity to explore the beliefs and perceived realities of participants’ settings and lives and…their identity’ (2013 p.77); it is this focus on the perceived realities, and the self-identity of the trainees that is useful to this research, and which may help to explore issues around the trainees’ use of CP in the classroom and the contexts which impact on this use.

Anderson (1995) argues that the ‘metaphors we use to describe teachers… may impact on the roles that teachers assume…and on the perceptions that teachers have of themselves’ (p.3). Anderson focuses on metaphors used about teachers, but it is likely that metaphors used by teachers about themselves will also illuminate how they perceive and feel about their role. Davis suggests metaphor provides an insight into the ‘tacit knowledge’ that underlies ‘formal, explicit knowledge’ (2004 pgs.132-133); metaphors may provide insight into the virtual schemas (Sewell 1992) that trainees use to orient their understanding of what it means to teach. Lakoff and Johnson claim that sometimes ‘metaphors may be the only way’ to ‘highlight and coherently organize certain aspects of our experience’ (1980 p.132). This is supported by Sugrue’s research which suggests that metaphor can provide a way of expressing ‘unarticulated teaching identities’ (1997 p.218). The process of metaphor writing and analysis may contribute to making the trainees more
‘aware of this holistic identity process they are undergoing’ (2010 p.8) by helping to make their self-knowledge explicit rather than remaining ‘unconscious’ (Olsen 2010 p.8). Biesta and Tedder (2006) suggest that ‘through images, metaphors, or other meaningful practices’ people may be ‘able to distance themselves from their agentic orientations’ by making ‘such orientations the object of reflection and imagination’ (2006 p.21), and writing and thinking about metaphors of the self as a teacher may be one way for the trainees to achieve this distancing and reflection. I aimed to enhance this process of distancing and reflection by storing the trainees’ metaphors and re-presenting them to the trainees at the end of the course for the trainees to comment on.

There are also concerns over the use of metaphor as a research tool which largely relate to ‘questions about objective truth’ and ‘verifiability’ (Wilson 2013 p.75). However, many of these concerns originate from more positivist paradigms rather than from the constructivist epistemology, which accepts metaphor as a further method by which ‘the senses inevitably filter data and impose structure upon it’ (Wilson 2013 p.75).

Writing and analysing metaphors appears to support agency and identity work making it a useful tool in this research; it may also be useful in the classroom. Sanders and Sanders stress the importance of ‘metaphoric teaching’ (1984 p.308) for creative thinking. Writing metaphors, and the follow-up activity of commenting on these metaphors, can therefore be seen as supporting the development of trainee’s agency, and as demonstrating practice which may be used in the classroom to support pupil agency.

The Writing Metaphors activity was implemented on the same day as the second Group Discussion. The topic for the afternoon was Creative Writing in English and I added the Writing Metaphors activity to this. This seemed a productive context for the metaphors activity, with the trainees already ‘warmed up’, having engaged in a number of other creative writing activities. Presenting it without preparation or as an out-of-context task may not have been so successful. Towards the end of the session, I asked the trainees to think about how they felt about being a teacher, or about teaching, and to write a metaphor
which captured or reflected their current feelings. The exercise took about 15 minutes, and was followed by a discussion, generated and led by the trainees, of how metaphor could be used in the classroom to enliven creative writing, and to express difficult or complex feelings.

AMY wrote three metaphors, PEARL wrote two metaphors, and KIM, SAM, TOM and REBECCA wrote one metaphor each. CONSTANCE was absent; ARABELLA kept her metaphor private; SHARON had left the course.

I stored these metaphors for the duration of the course. At the end of the course, after GD3, I presented each trainee with a copy of their metaphor for comment and analysis. I asked each trainee to consider and make notes on what they thought their metaphor showed about how they were feeling at the time. Such analytical work is perhaps especially suitable to a cohort of graduates in English and related subjects who will be accustomed to such activities. By asking them to analyse their own metaphors I provided an opportunity for the trainees to achieve distance from their earlier voices, to subject ‘their own agentic orientations’ to ‘imaginative recomposition’ by writing a metaphor of the self, and then subjecting this to further ‘critical judgement’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.1010) through later analysis. It also allowed for another form of member checking, adding to the credibility of the research.

This activity occurred in our final meeting as a subject group, amongst other reflection and review activities, and took about 5 minutes. Each trainee who had written a metaphor commented on what they had written. TOM and REBECCA made only brief comments while SAM, AMY, PEARL and KIM all wrote substantially more. CONSTANCE had been absent for the initial metaphor writing, ARABELLA had not presented an initial metaphor, and SHARON had left the course.

3.6 Data Management
In this section I discuss approaches to the data and to the coding process.

3.6.a Transcription and analysis
This study generated different kinds of data: the voice recordings of the Group Discussions and Individual Interviews and the written data of the Silent
Discussion and the Metaphors. To analyse and interpret this data I used discourse analysis, broadly following Gee’s approach (2005), bearing in mind that rather than outlining a rigid protocol, he presents some ‘thinking devices’ to encourage ‘discourse-related reflection’ (p.115). These devices direct attention to the ‘seven building tasks’ of language which include its potential to ‘make certain things significant,’ to ‘enact’ activities, to build identities and relationships, and to ‘render certain things connected’ (Gee 2005 p.11-12). This reflects the social constructionist view that language contributes to constructing social reality.

Gee (2005) suggests his analytical approach can be applied equally to spoken and written texts. This may be particularly the case in this study where the written data are, like the spoken data, ‘an artefact of the research setting’ (Silverman 1993 p.208) rather than externally produced documents which represent an alternative or official perspective. In addition, the written data bear similarities to the spoken data in that they are personal, often interactional and produced for a very narrowly defined audience. As such, it seemed appropriate to use the same techniques of coding and analysis for both the written and the spoken data, bearing in mind the different conditions of production for each data set, which I discuss where relevant in my analysis.

The Group Discussions and Individual Interviews were recorded. I transcribed all the spoken data myself and constructing the transcripts necessitated ‘close repeated listenings to recordings which often reveal previously unnoted recurring features of…talk’ (Silverman 1993 p.117).

The process of transcription, lengthy and painstaking as it is, can also be seen as a first stage in analysis: ‘a transcript is a theoretical entity. It does not stand outside an analysis, but, rather, is part of it’ (Gee 2005 p.106). The meaning of any spoken language is always much more than a written transcript of the spoken words could convey. All the paralinguistic aspects such as eye contact, gesture, subtleties of tone, pace, intonation and so on add to the words themselves in creating meaning. A transcript can only ever be a partial, and therefore selective, reflection of this. Decisions have to be taken about what is included and excluded and ‘such judgements…are ultimately theoretical
judgments’ (Gee 2005 p.106) arising from the transcriber's views about what is relevant to the specific research problem: ‘everything depends on what you are trying to do in the analysis’ (Silverman 1993 p.124).

Throughout this study, ‘the topic of the research is not the interview [or other data] itself but rather the issues discussed in the interview’ (Peräkylä 2005) and the purpose of my transcripts is to explore my research questions and the topic of creativity. I followed the transcription conventions associated with discourse analysis and I transcribed all the words spoken, in the order they were spoken, noting pauses where they were long enough to be considered more than a simple hesitation (anything above a second), using commas to indicate the boundaries between units of meaning, question marks where relevant and including non-verbal vocalisations such as laughter or sighs where they appeared to be part of the meaning the speaker was trying to express or where they took the place of a turn. I excluded a huge level of detail such as micro-pauses, overlaps, details of pitch, volume and intonation and so on as they had no particular relevance to the purpose of this study.

The interviews and group discussions were each transcribed shortly after the recordings were made. Once transcribed, I asked the participants to view and comment on the transcriptions of their own interview and of the group discussions. One trainee read all the transcripts but made no additions or changes to them; other trainees read portions of the transcripts but again had no changes to suggest. This suggests that the transcripts largely cohered with the trainees’ recollection of the discussions and interviews.

3.6.6 Data coding
To begin to interpret the data I used coding and grouping techniques common to interpretive data analysis, as described by Kvale (1996) and Charmaz (2005). I read and re-read the transcripts and written responses and made comments, paying attention to the ‘seven building tasks of language’ (Gee 2005 p.11) where relevant. From these comments, I highlighted key words and phrases. I then looked for and noted thematic connections between these key words and phrases, which I summarised into codes. I show an example of this annotation and coding in Appendix 4. The process resulted in the development of a series
of 12 codes which I used as themes to present and discuss my findings (see Chapter 4).

I used an inductive approach where ‘you do not start with readymade categories within the main topics but allow them to emerge from the data’ (Radnor 2001 p.70). This helped to ensure that the participants’ perspectives were prioritised, rather than the data conforming to pre-determined categories. I also applied the codes iteratively, where ‘each piece of data...can inform earlier data’ (Charmaz 2005 p.517). The codes suggested by one set of data were used to re-examine other sets of data. For example, when annotating GD1, I developed ‘creativity as risk’ as a code, but later comments in GD2 suggested that trainees were addressing different types of risk including the risk to the pupils’ learning and the risk to their own assessment as trainee teachers. As a result I developed two codes: ‘the risk to pupils’ learning’ and ‘the risk to positive assessment’ and re-coded the earlier data using these two different codes. Using open coding helped to represent the broad and variant nature of the data, including unusual and atypical responses, and the iterative approach, where I merged or added codes as suggested by the data, helped ‘ensure the integrity of the coding themes’ (Wilson 2013 p.71).

While such coding is common procedure in qualitative research, there are some disadvantages. Firstly, using codes in this way can produce a rigid framing, where anomalies may be excluded and data may be interpreted only in the light of a restricted number of codes; I have tried to avoid this by the inductive and iterative nature of the coding process. Secondly, categories often overlap, and allocating data to specific categories is a highly subjective process. Where this occurred, I show what has been ascribed to which category and ascribe data sections to more than one category where the interpretation seems problematic. For example, some of the data in GD2 could be read as regarding flexibility and open-ended lessons, but could also be read as relating to the pressures to produce and then follow a detailed lesson plan in order to gain a positive assessment and I comment on this and other cases where I have allocated data to more than one category in the Findings chapter.
A third disadvantage is that disaggregating and fragmenting data by selecting and highlighting key words and key points can lose some of their contextual meaning and holistic nature. By taking relatively lengthy comments from the participants, generally their entire turn from the transcribed spoken data, or their entire comment from their written data, I hope to have reduced some of this fragmentation. Where it seems useful I quote a longer section of an interaction, preserving both the entirety of the turn and the order of the turns in the section of the discussion (see 4.4.b and 4.5.c for example) to preserve the context of the individual comments. In addition, the data (voice recordings, transcripts and written data) have been retained in their original form to allow for them to be revisited and re-categorised if necessary.

3.7 Ethical issues

During my first meeting with the trainees as a subject-specific group I explained my research intentions and advised the trainees of their options with regard to being a participant, a non-participant, to opt out at any point, or to withdraw their data, following the British Educational Research Association guidelines (BERA 2004). I discussed issues of confidentiality and anonymity, explaining that I would rename the training course for the purposes of the study, and asking each of the trainees to choose a pseudonym by which they were to be known in the research. I also explained the procedures for storing the research data (in a locked filing cabinet in my home office), and access to this material (myself only, until it was anonymised). All the trainees stated their interest in and commitment to creativity, confirmed that they were willing to participate, and signed a consent form, with safeguards clearly stated, to this effect.

While this was relatively straightforward, it is worth considering what may have been the effect of a trainee refusing to participate: would he or she have been concerned that such a refusal would make a negative impression? Was refusal not, perhaps, a realistic option in this context? Aware of the power issues and constraints on trainees, particularly in this early part of the course, I raised the issue again at the end of the course, when they had graduated, reminding them that they could withdraw their data, but none of them chose to do so. In fact, most commented that they had found the focus on creativity during the year to be a positive aspect of the training.
As a practitioner-researcher, obvious benefits accrue in terms of the privileged access to and understanding of the context but conflicts may also arise. In maintaining two roles, teacher educator and researcher, I could have been ‘caught between loyalty tugs, behavioural claims and identification dilemmas’ (Coghlan 2007 p.297). However, I experienced few such ‘tugs,’ excepting the instance during CONSTANCE’s interview described in Section 3.5.c.i above, perhaps because the research into creativity was designed to form a part of the training course itself, rather than be additional or extraneous to it; and because the aims of the creativity research were largely an expression of my own feelings about teaching and learning which, as a teacher educator, had always inevitably permeated the course.

I was also aware of my role as assessor of the trainees. As both researcher and teacher educator, part of my ethical commitment was to ensure that my research goals didn’t take precedence over the trainees’ goals, central to which was their need to pass the course successfully. Clearly ‘there is an inherent power differential between assessor and assessed’ (Doel, Sawdon and Morrison 2002 p.48) and I was concerned that a trainees’ unenthusiastic engagement in the project may cause me, consciously or unconsciously, to negatively value the trainee. To work around this, I engaged the support of my line managers to share any issues and to monitor my evaluations of trainees. As was customary, my evaluations of the trainees were moderated by my line managers, who also performed their own assessments and classroom observations of the trainees. In all cases, their views of the trainees accorded with my own. All the participants in the study passed the course, and this pass/fail judgment was based on a broad range of evidence where the trainees’ use of or attitude towards CP was not cited as a deciding or influential factor.

In fact, the research project became a seamless part of the training course, with the only the recording of some discussions and interviews marking it out from other activities of the training. The trainees didn’t appear to behave any differently when engaging in ‘research’ than when engaging in other aspects of the course. Further, the power dynamic worked in two directions: while I may have had some power over the trainees as Course Leader, their participation in
my research project also engendered a sense of gratitude from me to them, as without their participation my research would not have been possible.

In addition to having my own judgments moderated, I was also concerned that the trainees should not accrue negative evaluations from the MoS (members of staff: teachers, mentors, and other staff in the partner schools) as a result of using (or not using) CP. Implementing aspects of CP can challenge the ‘hierarchies of knowledge production and the power relations they maintain’ (Noffke and Somekh 2009 p.15) including the hierarchies between practising and trainee teachers, and between teachers and pupils. By encouraging trainees to explore CP in their classrooms, I hoped to disturb aspects of this hierarchy, without leading to trainees being negatively evaluating as a result of this. To this end, I briefed the trainees’ school-based mentors and enlisted the support of these mentors to the project. The issue of CP was discussed as an agenda item at both a management meeting of the Western SCITT, and at the meeting for school-based mentors. In both meetings, I outlined my research intentions and shared the Creativity Framework with those present, followed by a discussion. There was a consensus of approval at both meetings, with most actively declaring their support for trainees developing greater creativity in their practice. However, neither discussion lasted for more than twenty minutes, and given the limited time available, it can’t be assumed that those present had either the time or the inclination to consider the ramifications of CP, or to foresee the contradictions that might arise. However, CP was given something of a ‘seal of approval’ as an acceptable pedagogy, no matter how superficial, nor how much it differed from some schools’ typical practice.

While I didn’t feel my relationship with or assessment of the trainees was affected by their participation in the research as the study formed an integral part of the training, my relationship with some MoS in partner schools was affected. My closer attention to how trainees were inculcated into communities of practice and supported in adopting CP led to some unexpected and uncomfortable realisations about the practice of one of the partner schools. In this regard my role as researcher led to better performance of my role as teacher educator. In my capacity as a teacher educator and member of the Western SCITT management group, I shared my concerns with my line
managers, specifically my concern that trainees were not being given sufficient autonomy in the classroom to engage in teaching. This led my line managers to visit the school in question and to explore the issue further. Finding that the school was not offering a sufficiently supportive context for its SCITT trainees, regardless of their subject discipline or involvement in issues of CP, the Western SCITT temporarily withdrew its partnership from the school, pending staff changes and further training.

3.8 Validity and limitations of the study

To discuss creativity and CP is to discuss pedagogy, values and philosophy, approaches to training and to classroom teaching. As a result, this study necessarily has a broad reach. This may be considered a limitation in that at each point there are multiple issues, meanings and definitions in play. However, this seems an essential aspect of the study: creativity is a polysemic term, and can only be understood in relation to the broader discourses of the purposes and functions of education. Interpretive research, particularly where it takes an open-ended and inductive approach, allows for these meanings to be explored without reducing their fecundity or limiting their meaning.

As interpretive research does not adhere to the epistemology, methodology or methods of the positivist paradigm, it is reasonable to assume that the standards for judging the worth of such research should also differ and I discuss issues of ‘quality’ rather than using the ‘usual positivist criteria of internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity’ (Denzin and Lincoln 2005 p.24). Reason (2006) comments that:

the movement in qualitative research has been away from validity criteria that mimic or parallel those of empiricist research toward a greater variety of validity considerations that include the practical, the political, and the moral.

(Reason 2006 p.191)

In the interpretivist paradigm, ‘research outcomes are neither totally objective nor unquestionably certain’ (Crotty 1998 p.40) and terms such as ‘credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability’ (Denzin and Lincoln 2005 p.24) may be more relevant for interpretivist research. Designed as a small-scale study of a group of trainee teachers’ subjective experiences, this research does not claim the generalisability of more positivist approaches; rather it offers an
insight into a narrow and specific world and any ‘claims to validity are tentative and qualified’ (Crotty 1998 p.40).

AR assumes a level of purposeful intervention and the resultant generation of data and all of the data in this research can be seen as ‘an artefact of the research setting’ (Silverman 1993 p.208) in that they have been purposely generated for the study. In this study, the credibility and dependability of the data arises through the ‘clear and detailed descriptions of how and why data were collected’ and make ‘explicit what counts as data’ (Feldman and Weiss 2010 p.30) and clarity about the interpretive process.

Winter (2002) draws attention to the constructed nature of any research report which ‘necessarily describes a sequence of events developing through time; its form is, therefore, essentially that of a narrative’ (2002 p.143), however, to achieve credibility, ‘we need to demonstrate why our narrative(s) are more truthful than the other possible narratives’ (Feldman and Weiss 2010 p.30) or at least to make clear how the data we collect leads to the narrative that is constructed.

The social constructionist perspective that underlies this study also requires that attention be paid to how language may serve to construct particular versions of reality. Much of the data in this study has been addressed using Gee’s approach (2005) to discourse analysis, which focuses on the social and cognitive aspects of language, suggesting that language in use both reflects the wider discourses of society, and instantiates them, contributing towards their creation and re-creation. From this perspective, the discourse analysis itself contributes towards this construction of reality, rather than simply reflecting an independent reality. Validity claims for such analysis depend on transparency, where the data and the assumptions drawn from them are open to scrutiny, and on issues such as ‘convergence’ and ‘agreement’ where the meanings drawn from the data suggest an internal coherence that is likely to be supported by other analysts. However, validity in discourse analysis is ‘never once and for all’ and ‘all analyses are open to further discussion and dispute’ (Gee 2005 p.113). By maintaining the data in its original form, and by clarity about where and why
inferences are drawn from the data, I hope to have maintained a level of credibility.

In addition, the trainees were invited to view and comment on each of the transcripts of the group discussions, and of their own individual interview, to help to ensure that my interpretation of events cohered with their recollections. Such participant scrutiny supports the intention of the research project, which is to understand, from the participants’ own point of view, their experiences of CP. I have also quoted from the participants as much and as fully as possible to avoid subsuming their voices and over-privileging my own, and to avoid ‘silenc[ing] those whose lives we appropriate’ (Guba and Lincoln 2005 p.211) in order to offer my own, single truth.
Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction
In this chapter I present my initial findings. Firstly, I present an overview of the themes that I drew from the coding process. Secondly I address each theme in turn, explaining how I coded and defined each theme and presenting a discursive account of the trainees’ responses. Thirdly, I offer a brief account of what the data might indicate about each participant.

Where I quote from trainees' written responses I reproduce their punctuation and aspects of graphology such as underlining and capitalisation as in their originals. Excerpts from the transcripts have minimal punctuation, as detailed in Section 3.6.a above. I continue to use the abbreviations GD1, GD2, GD3, SD, WAM and II to identify the source of the data.

4.2 An overview of the themes in the data
I arranged the codes into three broad groups relating to my three research questions, as shown below:

Group 1: What do the trainees consider ‘creativity’ to be?
1. Creativity as inherent
2. Creativity as artistry
3. Creativity as a life-skill
4. Creativity as requiring knowledge / ability

Group 2: What are the trainees’ perspectives of classroom practices that might support creativity?
5. CP and risk to the pupils’ learning
6. CP and engaging pupils into learning
7. CP and outcomes
8. CP and learner agency

Group 3: How does the SCITT course as a whole... support or hinder their use of creative practice?
9. CP and flexibility / responsiveness
10. CP and risk to positive assessment
11. CP and the support of other teachers and mentors
In Appendix 5 I provide summary tables for each group of themes showing the relationship between the themes, the codes and the data sets.

4.3 Group One Themes: Definitions of Creativity
In this section, I group together themes which consider the nature of creativity. These definitional issues were addressed most frequently in GD1 and GD2, but were also considered in GD3, the Silent Discussion (SD) and the interviews (II).

4.3.a. Theme 1: Creativity as inherent
This theme was developed from codes relating to whether or not creativity is a universal or special capacity, and whether it is inherent or whether it can be taught / developed / occasioned. I coded comments which applied to teachers, to the trainees themselves and to pupils in this section, as some trainees tended towards global or sweeping statements about the nature of creativity in ‘everyone’ or in ‘people’ in general. Discussions around the inherent nature of creativity occur most frequently towards the beginning of the course and the topic is discussed most often by AMY, KIM, REBECCA and SAM. However, it may be seen as connected to or underlying much of the discussion around Theme 4: The relationship between knowledge, ability and creativity. It is likely that issues around pupils’ ability to be creative subsume these early discussions relating to the inherent or learned nature of creativity. This may reflect the trainees’ move from the more anticipatory and perhaps abstract stage of the early course and into their block practice. This is discussed in the following chapter.

SAM, REBECCA and AMY initially maintain a view that creativity is an inherent capacity that one either has or doesn’t have: it can’t be developed or occasioned, implying that CP may not be possible for some pupils. SAM suggests that to be creative ‘you have to be a creative person’ (GD1) and ‘you’ve got to have imagination’ (GD2). Similarly REBECCA suggests that some people lack the creative capacity:

Everyone’s got a comfort zone haven’t they, and for some people creativity is completely out of it in whatever form you give it to them… you can encourage it, but you can’t force them to do it (REBECCA GD1)
AMY applies this notion to teachers as well as pupils, seeming to reject the possibility that trainees can become more creative:

it’s not really whether the course is tailored to make us teach creatively, if you’re not creative that ain’t going to happen is it? AMY (GD2)

KIM takes up a lone stance, which she maintains throughout the course, that creativity is possible for everyone, and that given the right circumstances, ‘everyone’s capable of it aren’t they, it’s just confidence…I think it can just come out’ (GD1). This idea of creativity as something which can ‘just come out’ seems connected with an understanding of creativity as self-expression, and again, hers was a minority view:

Creativity allows room for experimentation and students can express themselves (KIM SD)

She also implies that even the less creative pupils can become more creative with the right support:

If you do something creative with them, put them into groups maybe, the not so creative ones are with someone that is really creative…if they haven’t been that creative at least they can see what others have done, it kind of encourages them to be a bit more like wow oh we could have done that (KIM GD1)

This suggests that KIM may more readily adopt CP, as she may view it as accessible and relevant to all pupils, whereas SAM, AMY and REBECCA may, initially at least, see CP as less useful or relevant for those pupils they regard as unable to be creative. SAM, AMY and REBECCA, however, move from their initial views during the course, coming to see creativity as more contextual, as discussed below.

4.3.b Theme 2: Creativity as artistry
This theme was developed from a broad grouping of codes around creativity as ‘craft,’ as ‘making,’ and as ‘art’ where art is seen as painting and drawing and so on. Conflating these strands of creativity was suggested by the trainees who appeared to link these versions of creativity through the common thread of creativity as a hands-on activity, as physically making or producing something, particularly something concrete and / or visual. This theme draws on the trainees’ understanding of their role as teachers and what it is that they are trying to achieve in the classroom.
This theme occurs early in the course, particularly in response to GD1 questions about what creativity is. From the middle of the course onwards this view of creativity as artistry does not occur. This may suggest that trainees cease to question the nature of creativity, or that they cease to connect creativity with artistry, replacing this early definition with a different understanding. I discuss these possibilities more fully in the following chapter.

Early in the course, several of the trainees see creativity as artistic and link it with craft or making activities, although the stance they take about this differs markedly. CONSTANCE, AMY and REBECCA are positive, suggesting this kind of activity is useful, while PEARL implies that this kind of creativity is not relevant to the classroom:

one teacher I worked with, she was really creative I don’t think she realised how much of her background in Art she brought in to her lessons (CONSTANCE GD1)

they dyed the paper with tea-bags (REBECCA GD1)

the kids got play-dough…you teach them so much when we’re just messing around with play-dough and drawing a picture (AMY GD1)

you can’t just go into a classroom and go let’s paint a picture (PEARL GD1)

got out some poster paint, some plasticene, it’s all very artistic (PEARL GD1)

Both AMY and PEARL, through the situated meaning of ‘play-dough / plasticene’ link such activities to the world of the young child, with the implication that they do not belong in the secondary school. While AMY implies that this leads to enjoyable but useful lessons, PEARL implies it is irrelevant, or even irresponsible to ‘play’ in the classroom. She suggests that an artistically creative teacher would ‘just go into a classroom,’ where the adverb ‘just’ implies a lack of forethought or preparation, and say ‘let’s paint a picture’ where the phrasing references young children in its simplicity and lack of specificity about what is to be painted or how. This implies that it is an activity more suitable to young children, and that a teacher who engages in such activities at the secondary school level should be viewed negatively.
TOM expresses concern over whether artistic / creative activities can be tightly enough controlled:

if you don’t keep an eye on it, it turns to messing around all lesson, making sure they’re not drawing things they shouldn’t be (TOM GD1)

He seems to suggest that creative activities may be closer to play, or to ‘off-task’ activities which can then more easily turn into ‘messing around’ than other types of lesson activity. Unlike AMY, he doesn’t see such ‘messing around’ as supporting learning. TOM and PEARL may be reluctant to use CP where they continue to see it as allied to arts and crafts activities; conversely, REBECCA and AMY see this as a positive and as part of enjoyable and useful learning.

While CONSTANCE, REBECCA and AMY seem to regard artistic creativity as a positive addition to classroom practice, the link between creativity and arts / crafts seems indicative of a negative view of creativity in the classroom for other trainees, perhaps reflecting an underlying assumption that CP is in tension with ‘real’ learning, as discussed further below.

4.3.c Theme 3: Creativity as a life-skill
This theme arose from trainee comments which saw ‘creativity’ not as the production of something tangible or artistic, as in the previous theme, but more as a mind-set or approach to life. I include comments coded with ‘problem-solving,’ ‘life-skills,’ ‘thinking-skills,’ and ‘independence.’ Comments relating more specifically to independence within lessons were included under Theme 8: CP and Learner Agency, although there is clearly some overlap. Like the previous theme, the notion of creativity as a life-skill encompasses discussions about the broader purposes of education and it is clear that trainees’ views of creativity are much influenced by their philosophy of what this broader purpose is.

Most trainees link creativity with life-skills such as problem-solving, particularly in the early and middle parts of the course. By the end of the course, this perceived ‘purpose’ of creativity is not mentioned, appearing to be replaced by a more explicit focus on pupil agency as an end in itself, rather than as a bridge to developing life-skills. I discuss this shift in the following chapter.
PEARL and KIM see the value of creativity as specifically connected to workplace success:

if they have a problem [at work] or even in life…they see that they can go round things and find different ways to do things, I think that’s massively positive (PEARL GD1)

providing students with the skills for life is so important. Growing up requires original ideas – if students can’t think for themselves they will struggle in a work environment? (KIM SD)

KIM initially conflates ‘skills for life’ with ‘original ideas’ seeming to support the importance of divergent thinking; however, she adds a rhetorical question which places it firmly within the economic discourse of success in a ‘work environment,’ suggesting a narrower conception of ‘life-skills’ where the phrase relates only to work-skills. PEARL’s comment links creativity to problem-solving and she sees this as a ‘massively positive’ aspect of creativity, in contrast to her earlier reservations about artistic creativity.

TOM, SAM and REBECCA see creativity as linked to independence and agency more broadly, and as a ‘life-skill’ rather than mainly a ‘work-skill’:

by encouraging them to think differently…you’re also teaching them life skills (TOM GD1)

TOM cites the development of agency, through critical faculties, as sufficient justification in itself, suggesting that creativity is a positive aspect of the classroom because it helps ‘students to form their own opinions and critically evaluate’ (TOM SD). SAM echoes this point, suggesting that creativity is both a means towards agency: ‘we need to ensure they can think for themselves and creative lessons are the perfect way to do this’ (SD), and that it encourages pupils’ independence: ‘in terms of a person they’re going to be more independent’ (GD2). REBECCA also supports this, suggesting that pupils need a degree of agency, of freedom to think for themselves to be creative: ‘it’s their own interpretation of it which encourages them to think outside the box, to be more creative’ (GD2). Linking creativity to agency, and through this, to life-skills seems to be regarded positively by the trainees and as an incentive to using CP.
4.3.d Theme 4: Creativity as requiring knowledge / ability
For this theme, I included all comments coded with the intelligence or ability of the pupils, top sets / bottom sets / ‘additional needs,’ and to the pupils’ levels of prior knowledge. This was one of the most prevalent themes in the data and was an issue throughout the course. PEARL, TOM and SAM referred to this theme the most frequently. The trainees’ stance towards this issue appeared to impact on their use of CP with groups of pupils who are judged to be more or less creatively able and provided a useful focus for the trainees to discuss, develop and interrogate these sometimes tacit or even concealed views about pupils, often in a more emancipatory direction.

In GD1 there was a fairly broad consensus that creativity needs a foundation of knowledge or a certain level of ability. AMY suggests that pupils considered as having additional needs might be less creative, perhaps reflecting her background as a special needs classroom assistant: ‘some children with specific learning difficulties can’t conceive like [creative ideas]’ (GD1). She later widened this to include lower ability pupils more generally, claiming that a creative approach:

would be a lot more doable with mixed ability…I could not do it with my year 8 set 4 (AMY GD2)

AMY and TOM, in particular, suggest that creativity may be an inherent capacity which only some people possess, and, further, that it requires a certain level of ability or intelligence to activate it. In GD2, TOM makes a number of comments that support AMY’s perspective, saying: ‘you couldn’t do that [the Creativity Framework] with them [lower ability pupils] at all.’ He fears that in using CP ‘you would just get a room full of wrong answers’ (GD2) implying an epistemology where the ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ answers have been predetermined.

TOM adds that pupils ‘need to have that fundamental grasp of whatever it is before they can think about something’ (GD2) implying that a foundation of knowledge, presumably delivered by the teacher, is required before pupils can even ‘think about something.’ Further comments suggest that TOM believes there needs to be a certain level of ‘intelligence’ as well as knowledge before creativity is possible: ‘I can see it working with higher ability kids but not with lower ability kids’ and:
but I think a lot of the lower ability kids I think if you were to do that you’d just throw them for a loop because a lot of them will be like right I’m looking to try and get the right answer here…so if you say to them ‘oh do we think that’s right’ and this sort of thing then they’re like ‘What? What do you mean? What? Hey?’ (TOM GD2)

TOM characterises lower ability pupils as lacking in creative thinking skills, or even as lacking in thinking skills at all, and as being disorientated (‘you’d just throw them for a loop’) by having the certainty of the ‘right answers’ removed. TOM emphasises his point by ‘voicing’ the pupils as asking the same question over and again: ‘What? What do you mean? What? Hey?’ implying they are easily confused, and positioning himself in a paternalistic stance where he is both superior to and concerned about them. With this perspective, it is unlikely that TOM will engage in CP as it is envisioned in the Creativity Framework.

PEARL and SAM use the group discussion as a forum to challenge the views expressed by TOM and AMY, offering the perspective that CP is perhaps more relevant with ‘lower ability’ pupils. The relevance of CP, was, however, seen as helping such pupils develop ‘life-skills,’ implying that such skills come more ‘naturally’ to more ‘able’ pupils:

surely it’s more beneficial for the lower abilities to ask them what they think and to give them that confidence (PEARL GD2)

getting them to have a voice that they don’t probably normally have because they’re not academic (SAM GD2)

While PEARL seems to suggest that lower ability pupils lack confidence, SAM seems to think that lower ability pupils are disenfranchised: PEARL locates the issue within the pupils, SAM locates it within a context that prevents such pupils from having a voice, where ‘a voice’ is equated with power and influence.

SAM argues strongly for the point that CP is useful for lower ability pupils:

who are we to assume students of lower ability are incapable of being creative?! If anything, we should be encouraging them to learn in creative environments as they may learn better in a new context that is different to the typical lessons they perhaps don’t learn well in, if we are to judge on ability. (SAM SD)

She is later joined by TOM and AMY in this perspective, both of whom alter their initial stance that CP is not suitable for lower ability pupils. TOM offers a
perspective which contradicts his earlier views, suggesting that he has changed his views substantially:

in my experience, the ‘less able’ students are better at more active, unusual activities because they struggle to operate in a classic ‘academic’ way. (TOM SD)

AMY modifies her earlier views, suggesting that careful teaching can lead even lower ability pupils towards creativity:

these pupils (esp. those with additional needs) need structure. I know it’s generalising but often low ability pupils don’t have the confidence in themselves to be creative. (AMY SD)

Having attempted such creativity with such pupils [low ability] I have become aware of their NEED (sadly low ability often = difficult background) for structure and instruction but the necessity to take them from it gently eg would you like to do x or y today? is enough to get them excited. (AMY SD)

AMY suggests that lower ability pupils may lack confidence rather than creative ability, and further that this confidence and creativity can be occasioned, even in these pupils, by appropriate teaching:

their self-esteem isn’t, it’s lower, they know they’re set 4 and they think they need help (AMY GD2)

By GD3, TOM, SAM, AMY, ARABELLA and KIM all seem to agree that the perceived ability or knowledge level of the students should not be a barrier to creativity: ‘I don’t think it comes down to ability’ (ARABELLA GD3). Further, both SAM and TOM imply that traditional classroom approaches, the ‘classic academic’ approach (TOM SD) and the ‘typical lessons’ (SAM SD), may not benefit certain groups of pupils, perhaps viewing creativity as a situated activity that can be supported or suppressed, rather than as an attribute solely of the pupils.

The experience of TOM, SAM and AMY seems to suggest that a more contextual view of creativity may be an incentive to using CP, or alternatively, that using CP leads to a more contextual view of creativity. I discuss this further in the following chapter.

In contrast to these views, PEARL, even at the end of the course, seems to see transmission teaching as an essential precursor to CP, suggesting that
creativity requires a foundation of knowledge which should be gained through more didactic teaching approaches:

we did ten traditional style lessons...they hated...the didactic lessons...the last six lessons were a creative project based on what we’d been doing...they had...to use it all themselves and play with it (PEARL II)

they got to play with it themselves but they knew what they had to do (PEARL II)

She links creativity to ‘play’ and suggests that ‘traditional style lessons’ are required for students to gain prior knowledge, even if they ‘hate’ it, so they know what they have to do. PEARL seems to have maintained her reservations about adopting CP, perhaps seeing it as an addition to traditional methods rather than a replacement of these.

4.4 Group Two Themes: Perspectives of classroom practice

In this section, I address the second broad group of themes which relate to the trainees’ perspectives of classroom practice. The trainees see a range of risks and benefits with using CP in the classroom. Some of these stem from their understanding of creativity itself and some of these relate to how they conceptualise CP and how this intersects with their own experiences as developing practitioners. The risks and benefits were most explicitly addressed in the GD2 when the Creativity Framework was introduced, but trainees also reflected on the issues in the other discussions, in the SD and in the interviews.

4.4.a Theme 5: CP and the risk to pupils learning

A recurrent issue for the trainees is the risk inherent in CP and this sense of risk seemed to permeate a range of issues. While I initially coded all of these with the single term ‘risk’, it became clear that the trainees were discussing a range of perceived risks including the risk to pupils’ learning and the risk to themselves in a highly scrutinised environment. I recoded the data to distinguish between these themes.

For Theme 5, I drew from codes relating to ‘passing exams’ or ‘achieving targets’ and to ‘teaching the prescribed materials.’ An underlying issue seemed to be that creativity is viewed as in opposition to ‘real learning’ with the concern that CP might prevent or displace ‘real learning,’ and I included comments coded with ‘real learning’ within this theme. Some trainees saw the risk as
related to connections between creativity and the idea of ‘fun’ which is opposed to ‘learning,’ and there is a degree of overlap or interconnectedness between this and the following theme ‘CP and engaging pupils.’ In addition, I chose to further sub-divide the theme of the risk to pupils’ learning into the broader issue of the risk to ‘real learning’ and passing exams and so on, and a narrower theme more specifically concerned with planning and the risk to meeting the prescribed Learning Outcomes, which is considered under Theme 7.

The sense of the risk to learning manifested throughout the course, with all the trainees except KIM seeming to feel this risk, and TOM and PEARL expressing most concerns on this topic.

CONSTANCE implies creativity is in tension with the proper business of schools, which is seen as passing exams:

> you’ve got GCSEs coming up haven’t you and you will have to sit down and do an essay or something, sometimes you have quiet lessons where you have to say we are going to sit down and do something because you have to get used to it or they miss out, otherwise you’re not really helping them…you can’t do one long fun activity (CONSTANCE GD1)

Here, ‘fun’ is opposed to preparation for exams, which involves ‘quiet lessons,’ where the pupils will ‘sit down’ and ‘do an essay or something,’ implying that creativity involves being more social and active while ‘real learning’ is something that happens individually, even perhaps passively. CONSTANCE’s orientation suggests approval of such ‘quiet’ activities in her use of a tag question to generate agreement from the group: ‘you’ve got GCSEs coming up haven’t you’ and in the strong modality she uses in the phrase ‘you will have to.’ Creativity, defined as ‘one long fun activity,’ is seen as detracting from this exam preparation, and leading to irresponsible behaviour as a teacher where ‘you’re not really helping them.’

AMY also suggests that CP can pose a risk to the ‘core business’ of the school, and as such, it can be ‘dangerous’ although she is, however, positive about its potential:

> I agree that it [CP] can be potentially dangerous (outside of the ideological box) from the POV of a school as it is a business. This business (sadly) is based quite predominantly on results, passing exams. However, creativity does not just mean letting them do what they want
anyway and will help them to pass their exams ultimately as creativity goes hand-in-hand with independence, teaching them skills for revision for independent learning = awesome grades etc (AMY SD)

While AMY expresses her own attitudes with the parenthesis of ‘(sadly)’ suggesting that although she accepts the school is a business, she doesn’t like it, she also seeks to validate CP by placing it within the discourse of economic success, and suggesting that CP will enhance what the market values: the exam results of the pupils. AMY also argues for acceptance of the idea that learning can be fun:

with regard to creativity...she said they don’t always have to be having fun...they should just be writing, they should just be learning...so I’m for god’s sake they can be one and the same (AMY GD3)

Her point of view is uncommon, as several other trainees suggest that when creativity is conflated with ‘fun’ it is necessarily in opposition to learning. AMY suggests that pupils can engage in real learning even when they are having fun, suggesting that she views creativity as an acceptable vehicle for learning. CONSTANCE however, sees creativity as a distraction from learning, and SHARON is concerned that creativity should be used only ‘as long as it’s relevant’ (GD1).

PEARL says that creative activity:

has to be rooted in something relevant then you’re being creative with that solid material and making that apply or more interesting (PEARL GD1)

She suggests that ‘real learning’ is ‘solid’ and thus perhaps more real than creative approaches, which may be perceived as lightweight or floating, as they need to be ‘rooted’ or tied down somehow. The opposition of the solid and the insubstantial implies that creativity is not perhaps in itself very ‘real’ compared to ‘real’ learning. PEARL also identifies a risk in creativity leading teachers to become unfocussed:

even though I was being creative with the schemes and stuff, [my mentor] was still monitoring and making sure I was doing all the right stuff and I know now that when I do go off and do my creative let’s go and hug a tree stuff there will be a point to it, because if you don’t have that instilled in you then you’ll just end up playing and you won’t be doing anything properly (PEARL II)
She devalues her use of creativity by suggesting it is part of her ‘let’s go and hug a tree stuff’ associating it with the broader discourses of ‘New Age-ism’ and emotional practices not rooted in science or practicality. This is continued in the opposition set up between the ideas of ‘creativity’ and ‘the right stuff,’ which positions creativity on the side of the ‘wrong’ stuff. There is a similar opposition set up between ‘playing’ and ‘doing things properly,’ which again positions CP as ‘not work’ and as doing things ‘improperly’ or wrongly, suggesting PEARL sees a divide between what is ‘right’ and ‘proper’ learning and what is creative and playful. In another comment, PEARL suggests that CP can be useful to disguise learning, to ‘sneak the learning in…like a ninja!’ (SD), suggesting that she sees ‘real learning’ as separate to CP, where one can be used to conceal the other. The interviews and the SD seem to have captured these divergent views, which weren’t expressed in the GDs, perhaps due to peer group pressures and group voice.

SAM sees the risk to pupils as externally imposed and she feels under pressure from the class teacher to avoid risk and to follow the prescribed path:

I’ve got a year 9 class who I keep being reminded all of them need to get a level 7 Sam, all of them need to get a level 7, so then like how can you take those chances? (SAM GD2)

it’s a risk isn’t it [that pupils might not achieve their predicted levels] (SAM GD2)

While she sees the risk being that the pupils would fail to meet pre-specified learning outcomes, she does not seem to accept the focus on outcomes as necessarily valid. Her repetitive voicing of the teacher (‘all of them need to get a level 7 Sam, all of them need to get a level 7’) suggests she is positioning herself in opposition to the teacher, perhaps as someone who does not have the same exclusive focus on ‘Level 7’ as the only valid outcome.

4.4.b Theme 6: CP and engaging pupils
The potential of creative approaches to engage pupils into learning was a theme throughout the course. For this theme, I included codes relating to ‘fun,’ ‘engagement,’ ‘enjoyment’ and ‘hidden / smuggled learning.’ There are some connections to the second theme, ‘creativity as artistry,’ although in that earlier theme I included codes relating to the nature of creativity itself, rather than to its
potential to engage pupils. There are also clear links to other themes in this section, particularly where creativity, as fun, is then placed in opposition to ‘real learning.’ In this theme, however, I included codes relating to whether trainees’ felt the pupils had engaged with the learning, rather than codes relating to trainees’ perceptions of whether and what pupils had learned, although inevitably there is some overlap.

At the beginning of the course, most trainees expected creativity to lead to greater engagement, although with some reservations about whether ‘engagement’ was actually ‘fun’ and therefore not ‘real learning.’ In the final GD, where trainees were asked to share lessons or schemes of work which they felt had used CP, the majority mentioned the increased level of pupil engagement as a positive result of using CP.

In GD1 there was a general consensus about creativity leading to greater pupil engagement and most viewed this positively:

she used a game…it brings it to life as opposed to just sitting down and writing a story (CONSTANCE GD1)

CONSTANCE suggests that ‘sitting down and writing’ is passive and inactive, even though it entails ‘writing a story’ which is often felt to be a creative act in itself. However, in the same discussion CONSTANCE also expressed her reservations that engagement was the result of fun, and that fun was not the proper business of schools or teachers, as discussed in relation to Theme 5 above.

SHARON views creative approaches as ‘the fun way to do it’ (GD1), and both she and KIM are enthusiastic about the potential of creative approaches to disguise learning:

they don’t even know they’re learning something (KIM GD1)

you go home and you’ve had a fun lesson and you realise you’ve actually learned something as well (SHARON GD1)

As discussed above, PEARL suggests that CP can be useful to disguise learning, to ‘sneak the learning in…like a ninja!’ (PEARL SD).
AMY goes further, suggesting writing and physically less active pursuits actually hinder learning:

you cannot have thirty kids in a room for a hundred minutes writing…if you didn’t have any creativity, or anything remotely stimulating…it just would not work (AMY GD1)

However, alongside such views, and as discussed in the previous section, CONSTANCE, PEARL and, in the early part of the course, TOM also suggest that ‘fun’ is in opposition to ‘learning,’ and may even pose risks to pupils’ learning.

TOM and REBECCA also have concerns with whether more creative approaches would result in some pupils choosing not to engage in the learning:

if you’ve got kids that don’t want to learn they’re just going to see it as an opportunity to doss, let someone else do the work (REBECCA GD2)

you’ll just get three or four people who’ll really contribute and the rest will just sort of sit back and let it wash over them (TOM GD2)

Towards the end of the course, TOM still sees some risks to learning in CP but these are largely explained by contextual factors rather than by the creativity in the practice:

[I] did it first with the top set and it was the most brilliant lesson…then did it that afternoon with the bottom set and it was like oh what we doing this it’s rubbish (TOM GD3)

While TOM’s comment seems to indicate that the ability level of pupils is an issue, as the discussion continues he attributes the difficulties to contextual factors such as the timing of the lesson during the school day, as shown in the following extract which preserves the full turns and interaction of the participants. This reinforces that data should not be overly fragmented by the coding and categorising process, and should be read in context as far as possible:

TOM: the top set was middle of the day, the bottom set was last lesson

ARABELLA: yeah and mine was the last lesson when they didn’t want to do it, I don’t think it comes down to ability, because there was some in there working really well but it just got ruined because of these

TOM: the same in mine, there was one group that got on really well with it, strangely enough it was a group of boys, which
I really wasn’t expecting them to, but they really cracked on, got really engaged, and then there were three or four girls just sat there like ‘I’m not doing it’

These comments suggest that TOM is moving away from his initial view, expressed quite frequently earlier in the course, that lower ability pupils are not able to be creative, and he attributes risk, where it occurs, to contextual factors, supporting the idea that creativity is a situated activity.

By the end of the course most trainees feel that CP leads to greater engagement and that this engagement is conducive to, rather that working against, learning. Several trainees comment that in lessons which used aspects of CP, the pupils ‘loved it’ (REBECCA II), ‘they were completely alive and engaged’ (SAM GD3) and ‘they absolutely love it’ (AMY GD3). I discuss these shifts more fully in the following chapter.

4.4.c Theme 7: CP and outcomes

For this theme, I drew from codes relating specifically to trainees’ reflections on planning, to Learning Outcomes (LOs), whether LOs can be oral or written, whether they can be process or product, and whether they should be predetermined or flexible and open-ended. The issue of outcomes overlaps with, or can even be seen as a sub-section of Theme 5: The risk to pupil’s learning, as lack of learning is often characterised as a failure to meet the predetermined outcomes. However, given the focus of the ITE course, and of the trainees’ themselves, on the issue of LOs, I gathered these comments together under a separate heading.

The issue of outcomes was not mentioned at the start of the course, perhaps because trainees had little experience of working with LOs. The theme came to prominence in the middle of the course. In GD2 it was addressed with some anxiety: at this point, trainees were fully engaged in planning and teaching lessons and with the ITE course requirements for them to have defined and often measurable LOs for every lesson. CP, however, is more likely to lead to a range of outcomes, including those that are unanticipated and difficult to measure. CP also emphasises the process of learning as much as, if not more than, the product or outcome, and places importance on the social or group aspects of learning and on oral as well as written work, all of which may place it
in tension with the ITE course’s focus on predetermined, defined and measurable LOs. The issue arose again in GD3 but by then most of the trainees seemed to be more comfortable with the idea of open-ended lessons. Throughout the course, PEARL, TOM and REBECCA commented most frequently on this topic, but most of the trainees, except SHARON addressed the issue at some point.

TOM has initial concerns about his pupils’ ability to follow more open-ended approaches:

I was like off you go and they were just completely at sea (TOM GD2)

The metaphor of being at sea implies a state of confusion or disorder. To continue his metaphor, TOM suggests LOs are the landmarks towards which the pupils will sail; without these, the pupils are directionless and in danger of becoming lost. He also raises concerns about the type of outcome produced in a lesson:

if I came out of a lesson and we’d just talked and they didn’t have something written in their books or produced something then I’d [feel like I’d wasted time] (TOM GD2)

they wouldn’t get anything out of it (TOM GD2)

He seems to feel that written outcomes are of higher value than oral / mental outcomes; or that permanent outcomes (those which can be seen by others, recorded and preserved, such as writing in an exercise book) are needed to ‘prove’ that sufficient work has taken place during a lesson.

In contrast to TOM’s notion of pupils being all at sea, KIM promotes the importance of ‘creating an environment where it’s OK for them to get it wrong’ (KIM GD2). While she doesn’t suggest that more open-ended LOs are required, she does imply that the process of learning, rather than reaching an outcome and ‘getting it right’ may be more important.

Despite REBECCA’s understanding of the education system as ‘very exam-driven…whether we like it or not’ (GD2) she doesn’t see this as necessarily precluding the use of CP:
Creative lessons are often explicitly focussed and by allowing pupils the freedom to think for themselves we are equipping them with exam skills and more! (REBECCA SD)

By suggesting that creative lessons are also ‘explicitly focussed’ she may be trying to reconcile her desire for creativity with an understanding of the requirements of the ITE course and the assessment-driven nature of many schools, hoping to justify creativity within an exam-focussed context.

SAM and AMY support the use of wider, non-written outcomes, even though this causes conflict with their mentors. SAM comments that while quiet, individual writing work tends to be equated with learning, such an equation is not necessarily valid:

she thinks if they’re just sat writing then they’re learning…but half of them didn’t know what they were doing, half of them were bored senseless, because they’re quiet she assumes they’re learning (SAM GD3)

AMY also comments that writing is conflated with learning, which is in itself placed in opposition to fun, and she too questions this view:

with regard to creativity… she said ‘they don’t always have to be having fun…they should just be writing, they should just be learning’…so I’m for god’s sake they can be one and the same’ (AMY GD3)

SAM also reports an instance of a lesson she felt was successful, where the outcomes were entirely oral:

we talked about all the different things it could mean and talked about how they could be our point…and discussing what they’d thought…a proper class discussion…it was really open and quite a creative lesson, everyone just throwing in their ideas…they all said at the end they felt much more confident (SAM GD3)

The phrase ‘everyone just throwing in their ideas’ implies that SAM was not structuring or controlling the talk, and that the pupils had some control over the timing, content and direction of the talk. Likewise, by the end of the course, TOM has a more positive view of oral and non-written outcomes, seeming to accept, and even embrace the notion that pupils can learn even if they don’t ‘have something written in their books’:

I sort of said you need to do something via print or if your group are really good team-workers you can get up and do some sort of drama thing according to what you recognise your strengths as (TOM GD3)
This contrasts with his earlier experience where pupils were ‘completely at sea’ (TOM GD2). Towards the end of the course SAM, TOM and KIM report positively on lessons which they felt had been creative and successful precisely because they didn’t have specific LOs:

it was quite free and they could do anything they wanted but they had to incorporate a bit of mime and some of their characterisation stuff (KIM GD3)

we can do some role-play…that’s all I gave them…they were deciding on their own…they were completely alive and engaged (SAM GD3)

they had to decide on who was going to be group leader…then I literally gave them thirty minutes as a timer, it was like that’s all I’m giving you… just do whatever you think (TOM GD3)

CONSTANCE is also positive about open-ended lessons:

as long as pupils feel it’s OK to have an opinion and their response is neither ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ then open-ended lessons can be liberating and often produce unexpected results (CONSTANCE SD)

REBECCA’s comment may be more ambiguous:

Whilst to an untrained eye pupils being creative can seems noisy and unstructured, the session, if being run by an effective teacher, is often very structured with pupils making their own way to an end (REBECCA SD)

She seems to imply that creativity is actually both ‘structured’ and ‘run’ by a teacher. While she may simply be suggesting that there are constraints as well as liberations, and that noise shouldn’t equate to a lack of learning, she may also be implying that rather than being open-ended with significant pupil agency, creative lessons are in fact just livelier versions of traditional lessons.

4.4.d Theme 8: CP and learner agency

I drew this theme from codes relating to trainees’ comments on pupil agency, to pupil independence, to pupil decision-making and choice, and pupils’ ownership of aspects of the lesson or learning, and ownership of the space of the classroom. Here, trainees focussed on issues around their relationship to pupils, their structuring of lessons, and the learning they expected to take place. This theme links to issues of pupil engagement, with several trainees linking ownership and engagement, and to issues around dialogic teaching and learning. It also connects to Theme 3: Creativity as a life-skill, but here I focus
specifically on trainees’ comments about pupils’ stance within lessons, rather than on a more general approach to life.

The issue of pupil agency was one of the most frequently addressed themes. It was prevalent throughout the course although it was discussed most frequently in GD2 and in the SD, perhaps as a response to issues raised by the Creativity Framework. It also occurred in the writing and analysing metaphors activity, abbreviated as ‘WAM.’ PEARL’s metaphors of herself as a teacher, which provided some interesting insight into her view of her relationship to pupils. SAM, TOM and REBECCA spoke most frequently on this topic, with PEARL and KIM also offering a number of comments. Overall, there was a general consensus that developing pupil agency was a positive outcome of using CP, with SAM supporting this view most strongly.

In response to the Creativity Framework, most trainees were positive about the potential of developing learner agency, seeing this as a positive outcome of CP. Agency was seen as fostered through activities where pupils can exhibit choice and make decisions and where they play an active role in their own learning:

surely that process of figuring it out is more important than watching the video (PEARL GD2)

it has to be their own curriculum, relevant and interesting to them so they can take ownership of their own learning (TOM GD2)

you could give them this and this and this and they could choose (KIM GD2)

they were deciding on their own (SAM GD3)

they had to decide…just do whatever you think (TOM GD3)

a lot of finding their own ways to things (REBECCA II)

the children were independent…they were allowed to manage it themselves (SAM II)

Both SAM and ARABELLA imply that highly structured activities can position pupils as passive, reducing pupil agency, and thus limiting learning:

yes it needs an element of structure but [pupils] should be encouraged to interpret the task etc and take control of it (ARABELLA SD)
Structures and scaffolding can help but too much leads to students with no independence - we need to ensure they can think for themselves and creative lessons are the perfect way to do this (SAM SD)

Passing some control back to the learner is advocated by both ARABELLA above where she says the pupils need to ‘take control’ of the lesson, and by SAM who says that:

students deserve the right to engaging lessons that allow them to develop skills and take control of lessons and learning – to have a purpose in the classroom rather than merely turning up and existing (SAM SD)

This approach sees the pupil as a ‘co-participant’ in their learning rather than as a passive recipient of the teacher’s knowledge, suggesting some trainees have moved from a view of teaching which references the transmission model towards one which is based more on constructivist approaches.

ARABELLA speaks about her difficulties with a pupil who, she feels, has been prevented from developing sufficient agency:

I’ve got one who’s literally been spoon-fed…he has in terms of creativity, none, because he’s always been told and I’m forcing him to think for himself and it’s coming on but it’s just been sucked out of him (ARABELLA GD2)

The metaphor of ‘spoon-feeding’ was used quite widely by trainees to refer to a teaching approach where pupils have little room for independent thought:

I hate it that they’re so spoon-fed like with the year 9 again, you have to basically sit down and go right this is what you need to do this, this and this, and that’s no way to get them to think (TOM GD2)

the kids having no ability to think outside the box and I hate it that they’re so spoon-fed (TOM GD2)

if they’ve not been taught, like if we spoon-feed them, and go write down this, do this do this, yes they’re succeeding and they meet whatever success criteria but then you put them somewhere else and they can’t do it (PEARL GD2)

I don’t think that you’re going to get anywhere further by sitting there and spoon-feeding them (PEARL GD2)

The image suggests the pupils are like babies in their inability to feed themselves, and that ‘knowledge’ is broken down in to small, easily digestible amounts, with the teacher controlling its delivery. Using this phrase positions the trainees negatively towards such teaching approaches, suggesting that they
support approaches where pupils are more active learners. This implies that ARABELLA, TOM and PEARL see the pupils’ ability, or not, to be creative as at least partly situated and habitual. Where pupils are not given the opportunity to achieve agency, they cannot be creative, locating the problem within the context rather than within the pupils themselves. It suggests that although TOM initially had concerns about whether creativity is possible with lower ability pupils, it may be that he sees the problem not as residing within the pupils themselves, but within the approaches to teaching they have thus far encountered.

Several trainees appear to see physical movement as a reflection of, or a way to enable or support, the pupils’ intellectually more active, less passive role in the classroom:

with year 8 I was allowed a lot more freedom, we did lots of drama with them and a lot of finding their own ways to things like we did a whole treasure hunt lesson, out on the field (REBECCA II)

part of it could be like creative and they’re a bit more active (CONSTANCE GD1)

instead of just sitting down reading a poem, saying this is the poem she’d chop it up into bits, she’d have all the class moving around, looking at one another…they were working and moving, just moving from one table to the other (CONSTANCE GD1)

Part of it could be creative and they’re a bit more active and then like bits of reading and writing and then back to, up and down the whole way (SAM GD1)

it was almost like she was trying to be creative too, and I don’t know if she was doing that because of me, but she had quite a lot of movement in it, and when I first went in January she didn’t have any movement (SAM II)

When pupils are physically active they are to some degree the agents of their own learning. This seems to be what CONSTANCE implies in her description of the pupils moving from table to table to reconstruct a poem, where they were ‘moving around’ and ‘looking at each other’ and in REBECCA’s comment that in active lessons the pupils do ‘a lot of finding their own ways to things.’ REBECCA also makes the point that while English is often associated with individual writing work, CP may make learning a social and interactive activity:

it’s practical isn’t it…everyone thinks English is just sit down, be quiet…it doesn’t have to be like that (REBECCA GD1)
REBECCA and ARABELLA also address the issue of classroom talk. REBECCA suggests that greater pupil agency gives pupils greater control over the talk in a lesson:

they’ve owned that conversation in a way, it’s their ownership of it that matters, rather than doing a lesson you’ve planned to the letter (REBECCA GD2)

ARABELLA recognises the controlling effect that teacher talk can have in a lesson, suggesting that developing pupil agency is an alternative to monologic and controlling teacher talk ‘rather than talking at them and kind of governing the lesson’ (GD2).

Some trainees connected pupil agency to their sense of teacher self and TOM presents himself as a teacher who is not concerned with transmission so much as with supporting pupils in the construction of their own knowledge, quite different to his earlier concerns that, in creative teaching, ‘you would just get a room full of wrong answers’ (GD2):

When I teach I try to find ways to get students to form their own opinions and critically evaluate what is being taught to them (TOM SD)

PEARL’s metaphors of herself also refer to issues of pupil agency. She writes two metaphors which can be read as showing different approaches to teaching: the first reflecting a more traditional view with the teacher as leader, or didact, and the second perhaps showing the teacher as facilitator:

I am a Pied Piper with the potential to lead the rats to safety and success but one who is perhaps slightly tired of the whole thing. I am a bumble bee loaded with pollen knowledge to spread about the place, helping what is already there to grow. (PEARL WAM)

The figure of the Pied Piper can be seen as showing the teacher occupying the traditional role at the forefront of the class, leading the pupils, controlling the direction and the end point, while the pupils merely follow, with very limited agency. This contrasts to KIM’s view of herself as ‘changing direction’ to adapt to the unexpected. In PEARL’s metaphor, the teacher has all the control, while the pupils have very little. It may also be significant that the pupils are characterised as the ‘rats’ rather than the children of the town who are led away by the Pied Piper later in the traditional story. This further emphasises the power differential and not only the lack of agency for the rats / pupils, but also the lack of potential or right to any such agency. PEARL appears to imagine
herself in the traditional transmission model, although she also indicates uncertainty or disillusionment with this approach being ‘slightly tired of the whole thing.’

By presenting a second metaphor PEARL may be showing conflicting views of what her role means to her, and possibly either a sense of ongoing change, or a difficulty in reconciling two approaches to teaching. It may also be that PEARL is quickly aware of what her first metaphor reveals, and seeks to rectify or ameliorate this with a second more ‘acceptable’ metaphor, conforming to the perceived norms of the group, perhaps with superficial acquiescence to constructivist approaches designed to show herself as a ‘good learner.’ The second metaphor appears to suggest this more constructivist view of teaching and learning, where the teacher collects the pollen from pupils and redistributes it, thus allowing fertilisation to take place. This implies that the teacher is the conduit, helping pupils to share ideas, rather than the source of the knowledge which is to be delivered to pupils. However, on closer reading, it can be seen that PEARL emphasises her own role: she is loaded with ‘pollen knowledge’ which she will spread, she is active, while the pupils are waiting passively, and there is no mention that the pollen originates with the pupils. Both these metaphors suggest that PEARL retains a view of teaching which is largely at odds with CP and which doesn’t support the development of greater pupil agency. While metaphors cannot be seen as revealing more ‘truth’ than other forms of data collection, they add weight to her other comments (see Themes 4 and 7, for example), in suggesting that she is more comfortable with a transmission approach to teaching.

4.5 Group Three Themes: The SCITT course
In this section I discuss the third broad grouping of themes where trainees consider various issues around how the broader contexts of the course impact on their use of CP, including both the demands of the SCITT course and of the partnership schools. This area was a key focus of GD2 and GD3 and the interviews.

4.5.a Theme 9: CP and flexibility / responsiveness
In this theme, I included comments coded with ‘teacher flexibility,’ ‘responsiveness to the pupils,’ and ‘adhering to / changing lesson plans.’ This
clearly connects to the previous theme and issues around pupil agency given that without teacher flexibility, pupil agency is less likely to be possible. However, I separated the two themes to reflect the emphasis on the effect on pupils in Theme 8: CP and learner agency, and the emphasis on the effect on the trainees themselves in this theme. Further, ideas of flexibility and planning overlapped with issues around the risk to positive assessment: part of the assessment on the ITE course includes the requirement to produce and teach to rigidly planned lessons with accurate projected timings. Trainees’ comments about flexibility may thus also be read as a complaint against this onerous requirement rather than as support for flexibility per se. As a result of this overlap, I decided that where trainees focussed more on the effect of flexibility, or the lack of it, on their teaching and the pupils, I would code it as Theme 9: CP and flexibility and responsiveness, and where trainees referred to the effect of their flexibility and responsiveness on other MoS and on their assessment, I would code it as Theme 10: CP and the risk to positive assessment. In some cases, I have attributed comments to both themes, as indicated in the discussion below. Such overlaps and interconnectedness point up the difficulty of dividing holistic data into separate themes in this way, especially data that are drawn from lengthy and free-flowing discussions rather than from, for example, a series of discrete questions.

The theme of how far they, as trainee teachers, can or should be flexible and responsive in their practice came to prominence in the middle of the course, as a result, perhaps, of the introduction of the Creativity Framework and the notion of increasing pupil agency and, at the same time, increasing pressure to plan lessons in anticipation of block practice. PEARL and KIM spoke most frequently on this point, partly as a result of the clash of ideas about flexibility, responsiveness and assessment, as discussed more fully in the following section. While in GD2 trainees had concerns about planning and changing plans to respond to pupils, by GD3, several trainees commented on how their attitude to planning and adherence to plans had changed during the course, with most favouring more responsive approaches and open-ended plans.

REBECCA, TOM, SAM and KIM all seemed to feel that responsiveness and flexibility are positive and important aspects of CP:
what I was used to doing at my first placement was going with what the pupils wanted, going where they led me (REBECCA GD2)

the lesson plans that we have to do make us into very prescriptive teachers which then suffocates our creativity (REBECCA GD2)

I could go in there with just the beginnings of an idea and develop it, but I feel I have to jump through those hoops (TOM GD2)

I’d love to just drop my lesson plan (SAM GD2)

it’s good to be flexible and not just bypass something… but when they’re discussing about something then that’s [i.e. deviate from your lesson plan] what you should do I think, who cares what you’d planned (KIM GD2)

REBECCA’s comment about ‘going where the pupils led me’ provides an interesting contrast to PEARL’s metaphor, discussed above, where PEARL characterises herself as the Pied Piper leading the pupils; in contrast REBECCA follows the pupils, taking a more responsive stance. TOM’s attitude is shown in his metaphor which characterises the lesson planning process as ‘jumping through hoops,’ bringing to mind a performing animal engaged in a difficult but ultimately pointless display of skill. KIM likewise shows her disregard for the over-emphasis on following plans in her dismissive rhetorical question of ‘who cares what you’d planned?’

Similar to REBECCA following the pupils, in her metaphor KIM describes herself as ‘meandering’ and ‘changing direction’ suggesting she is likely to be flexible and responsive to the pupils and the context:

[metaphor:] I am a river gathering things along the way I meander changing direction taking the rough with the smooth (KIM WAM)

[comment:] my metaphor shows the unpredictability of teaching. At this stage of my training I was gathering lots of information and skills, reflecting on my practice and changing direction to improve certain areas…like a river flowing over rocks and then changing direction. You have positive and negative times and the river symbolises this (KIM WAM)

KIM’s metaphor seems to suggest that being flexible, responding to the unexpected and changing direction as a result is natural, even pleasurable. This is in contrast to CONSTANCE, whose perception of change seems overlaid with guilt and regret (see below).
KIM is clear that she will adjust her timings to support her pupils:

your timing is if you realise they’re not getting the topic, giving them a bit longer, so they get it, better than if they haven’t got it, that’s good timing (KIM GD2)

REBECCA and TOM recognise the pressure to conform to plans:

I often deviate from lesson plans if I feel the way the students are leading it is beneficial to them – however, some mentors don’t like this (REBECCA SD)

I understand the need for lesson plans during our training year but I look forward to the day I can go into a lesson and ‘wing it’ successfully. I believe the students pro-actively and independently learning is far more important than keeping to timings. (TOM SD)

However, REBECCA says that she continues to ‘deviate’ even when she knows it may be frowned upon, suggesting she is willing to risk the criticism of MoS with whom she works in order to do what she sees as beneficial to the students, suggesting that she prioritises the benefit to the pupils above the risk to positive assessment. As such, this comment could also be considered in the following theme and it provides an interesting contrast to PEARL who seems unwilling to pursue any course which might lead to a negative assessment, as discussed in the following section. TOM ‘projects,’ envisaging his future teacher self as one who will have the freedom to be responsive to pupils, justifying this by suggesting such approaches privilege learning rather than keeping to planning.

PEARL also supports the notion of flexibility:

Creativity should not just be the teachers’ definition but should allow students to explore the topic or LO in a way which suits them / their preferences. The teacher must adapt to the student, not vice-versa (PEARL SD)

However, this flexibility is within a context where there is a defined topic or LO, perhaps implying that pupils’ freedom will be in the route they take to the LO, rather than in determining the outcome itself. This implies a more limited view of pupil responsiveness where it is confined within the pre-existing framework of the topic or LO that is set by the teacher.

CONSTANCE is alone in her seemingly self-imposed desire to follow her planning, saying:
I will change my lesson as I go along if I feel it is appropriate – but always feel guilty that I have deviated and not kept to timings (CONSTANCE SD)

While most of the trainees see the need to follow projected timings and planning as an externally imposed requirement that constrains their flexibility, CONSTANCE seems to feel this as an internal or internalised pressure. Later comments suggest that planning offers a form of support and reassurance for CONSTANCE and she recounts how would have felt in the early to mid-point of the course if she had been asked to teach without the opportunity to plan and prepare:

I would have just folded, ran from the room screaming and crying I expect (CONSTANCE GD3)

The extreme reaction that CONSTANCE envisaged may well be an exaggeration, but clearly reflects a lack of confidence in dealing with unanticipated situations. She feels reliant on a plan to the extent that she may literally or figuratively collapse or ‘fold’ without it. This suggests that it is within the plan itself that CONSTANCE sees her control and efficacy as a teacher residing. Her earlier comment suggests that a clear plan also offers the reassurance that she is teaching correctly or appropriately: the negative connotations of ‘deviates’ suggest that moving away from her plan is akin to moving away from what she sees as appropriate teaching. With this reliance on planning, and the implication that adherence to planning is a key aspect of teaching well, CONSTANCE is unlikely to readily engage in CP.

4.5.b Theme 10: CP and the risk to positive assessment
For this theme, I included codes relating to the trainees’ comments and reflections on issues around scrutiny, observations, feedback, assessments, the value judgments of other MoS and the ITE staff, and comments referring to pressures on trainees to adopt specific teaching approaches in order to gain positive assessments. I separated these from codes relating to Theme 9: CP and flexibility / responsiveness as discussed in the previous section. I also separated these assessment issues from comments relating to other aspects of the trainees’ relationships with MoS which are discussed in the following section under Theme 11: CP and the support of other teachers and mentors, and from Theme 12: CP and agency and identity, despite some clear overlaps, as discussed below.
The pressure of assessment was not mentioned in GD1 but came to prominence in the middle of the course and remained an issue to the end. It was addressed frequently in GD2 and in the interviews where several trainees discussed their relationship with MoS at their practice school. All the trainees passed the course and CONSTANCE and TOM were the only two whose ‘passing’ was ever in doubt (although this was unrelated to issues of creativity) yet this is not reflected by any increase in the quantity of references to this theme from CONSTANCE or TOM. In fact PEARL, who gained positive assessments at every stage of the course, seemed to be the most concerned about this issue. KIM also commented frequently on this topic but this may be a result of her questioning and contradicting PEARL’s views rather than expressing her own concerns or interest in the topic.

PEARL and TOM agreed that the pressure of assessment affected how they plan and teach their lessons:

- it’s like walking on a tightrope and however much you want to step off and go a different way you literally can’t because you know that people will kick off (PEARL GD2)
- you’re like you must stick to your lesson plan, you’re getting checked like this (TOM GD2)

Both feel that this pressure works towards more transmission teaching approaches, given that lessons based on CP may be harder to predict and plan. PEARL’s metaphor also suggests that she feels she has no choice or agency over the direction she takes: she can’t change direction as any ‘stepping off’ the line is dangerous and liable to lead to criticism and real conflict with MoS ‘kicking off,’ a phrase more often associated with physical fights than discussions about approaches to teaching.

PEARL and KIM take up opposing stances on the issue of flexibility during GD2, as shown in the following extract which preserves their full turns and interaction:

KIM: but if you did that lesson and you did change it I don’t think whoever is watching you is going to be like oh no they haven’t done

PEARL: well they didn’t at my first placement but now they do
ARABELLA: I change mine

PEARL: I take massive issue with this bit KIM because there have been instances

KIM: things do go wrong in class

PEARL: where

KIM: you can’t be perfect

PEARL: I’ve been marked down or I’ve had massive criticism thrown at me because I have deviated from my timings

As well as a discussion about flexibility, this section could be read as a discussion about the pressures of assessment. KIM seems fairly relaxed about being assessed, suggesting that she has some faith in her assessors to recognise the purpose behind changes to the plan, and also accepting that teaching is not always predictable: ‘things go wrong in class’ and ‘you can’t be perfect.’ PEARL seems to feel quite differently. She twice uses the adjective ‘massive,’ suggesting that she feels under a great deal of pressure to adhere to planning and timings, and perhaps in fact to ‘be perfect;’ that KIM interrupts PEARL twice, and that PEARL addresses her comment directly to KIM by name suggests a personal conflict between KIM’s more relaxed approach to changing direction and PEARL’s more assessment-focussed approach.

PEARL, perhaps more than other trainees, felt the pressure of assessment and explains in her interview how she ‘works to’ some teachers, consciously adjusting her style and approach in the classroom to suit them or to gain their approval:

there are other teachers which you do have to work to you know it’s like Uni where you have to write your essays for your professor or you won’t get anything for it (PEARL II)

She makes similar points in GD3, saying that she felt the course was like ‘a year-long interview’ and that everything she says and does ‘will get round’ to prospective employers and that she will comply to the norms of the school because ‘I need a job…you weigh it up and think you know what I’ll just put up with it.’
The pressure PEARL feels is in contrast to KIM’s more ‘meandering’ approach (WAM) and KIM’s decision to proceed with CP despite the risks and the potential for criticism:

they’re really noisy like they are in group work, and I’m thinking is it bad? I did look round thinking it’s not chaos, they are all talking about this but it’s really noisy…I remember saying to him [Deputy Headteacher] I hope I didn’t like disturb you…he went no no, it sounds like they were having real fun (KIM II)

I have had times when I’ve thought oh my god it’s out of control but… and because I’m a trainee and I was on my own I thought they’d assume oh no it’s all going wrong but it wasn’t, it was fine (KIM II)

She sees the risk as being regarded as an incompetent teacher due to the pupils being ‘noisy’ or appearing ‘out of control’ and wonders if she will be seen as a failing trainee because of this. In fact, she reports receiving support and praise, even if it is in terms of the pupils ‘having real fun’ rather than learning.

In GD2, both SAM and REBECCA link issues of identity and assessment, and the following comments could also be considered under Theme 12: CP and agency and identity. However, because of the explicit references to assessment, I consider them in this section. SAM and REBECCA report feeling pressure to adopt a specific persona related to transmission teaching and authoritarian control, rather than one which reflects CP:

I’m with this teacher the whole time who, I’m with them all the time, I feel I’m becoming her (SAM GD2)

you have to mirror the actions of the teacher because they’re the one observing you (REBECCA GD2)

Similar to PEARL’s decision to ‘work to’ the teacher, above, REBECCA’s comment suggests that she actively chooses to adopt this persona in order to gain a positive assessment. Her use of the second person (‘you’) suggests some distance from and objectivity about the process, implying that it is a conscious decision she has made. SAM, however, uses the first person (‘I’) and suggests that she is subject to an influence she finds hard to resist. Later SAM recalls how she managed this situation:

I said ‘I’m trying to be this serious person’ and she said ‘no you can’t pretend to be somebody you’re not, you’ll just find it really hard’ so then I
just decided...I’m not going to copy her and if I don’t get good feedback, I don’t get good feedback...so yeah I didn’t (SAM II)

SAM resists the pressure to adopt a specific persona despite perceived threats to her assessment. She seems to associate the ‘serious’ persona with traditional or transmission approaches to teaching, which are highly regarded by her practice school, while CP perhaps necessitates a different persona. SAM comments on this further and also suggests that it was the support of others which gave her the confidence to reject the imposed persona:

it was just like her idea and my idea which was completely different and that’s what affected how well I did and I was letting myself be judged entirely on her... and then [Course Leader S] came in and gave me really good results really good feedback, so did [MoS L] and I was like OK, I need to stop thinking about it from [Mentor E’s perspective] I need to think about it in the wider point of view (SAM II)

‘Course Leader S’ is a representative of the training course while ‘MoS L’ is from the practice school; this suggests that a practice school may support different approaches to teaching and different versions of accepted teacher identities, and that the training course also moves beyond transmission teaching as the only appropriate stance. It might also suggest the necessity of support for trainees, particularly if they are to enact personas which are different from those expected by some MoS in their practice schools. This support may well come in the form of positive or encouraging observation feedback and assessments, as they did for SAM.

By the end of the course, SAM reports a positive experience of being unexpectedly praised by the same mentor she had earlier felt obliged to ‘copy’ for using creative approaches:

she said it was an excellent lesson because the children were independent and I was the facilitator and I allowed them to use their own creativity and their own ideas, I just gave them a general objective and they were allowed to manage it themselves, she really liked that which surprised me because I wasn’t sure what she’d think (SAM II)

SAM reports using a more open-ended LO and allows the pupils a degree of agency which she believes is not typical of the school or the teacher, yet the lesson is praised as ‘excellent’ and as excellent because of the pupils’ increased agency, rather than despite it. Her earlier fears about not getting
‘good feedback’ because she refused to ‘copy’ this mentor’s approach proved to be unfounded.

4.5.c Theme 11: CP and the support of other teachers and mentors
For this theme, I included comments relating to the creativity of other MoS / ITE staff and how MoS / ITE staff supported or hindered the trainees’ moves towards CP (excluding assessment-related comments, which were considered in a separate section, above). The comments in this theme largely focused on how far the trainees’ report that their pedagogy, as influenced by CP, is accepted or supported by the partner schools. I excluded more generalised comments concerning relationships between trainees and MoS at the partner schools in order to retain a focus on creativity and Creative Practice.

Most trainees began the course with largely positive views of teachers, expecting them to offer support and inspiration for creative teaching. By mid-course this view had changed markedly, with several trainees regarding MoS much more negatively, a perspective which persisted among some trainees throughout the rest of the course.

In GD1, several trainees raised examples of teachers whom they admired, suggesting it was the creativity of these teachers which made them memorable or inspirational:

the best teachers were the ones who made it a bit different, made it more interesting...the worst teachers were the ones who’d just sit there, like read at you...it was horrible (TOM GD1)

I had one who was great...she played it [a song a boy had requested] at the beginning of every lesson (REBECCA GD1)

one teacher I worked with, she was really creative I don’t think she realised how much of her background in Art she brought in to her lessons...she’d have all the class moving around, looking at one another, she wouldn’t tell them how it went or anything like that, they put it all back together, actually engaged them, they were working and moving...from one table to the other (CONSTANCE GD1)

The trainees here cite responsiveness to the class (rather than reading ‘at you’), respecting the interests of pupils (playing the song), and encouraging pupils to take some ownership of the task (‘she wouldn’t tell them...they put it all back together’) as well as their use of movement, and the involvement of music and
art as admirable factors. In addition, AMY believes that practising teachers will be a good source of creative ideas:

our creativity’ll grow like immediately anyway from our observations… just steal their ideas (AMY GD1)

By mid-course there were more instances where the trainees narrate accounts of MoS operating as barriers to their use of CP. Some examples of this include:

some teachers… just freak out completely and go oh my god they’re all doing different things, what can I do? (REBECCA GD2)

the teacher said to me, that was really good, I didn’t think they’d be able to do it, I was like what do you mean, she was, well the language was really hard and it was set two I was thinking well yeah they didn’t understand every word but they figured it out (PEARL GD2)

I was explicitly told don’t do anything creative, they can’t work in groups, don’t do anything creative with them, don’t do anything, just get them to copy off the board (AMY GD2)

REBECCA suggests that some teachers find the open-endedness of CP, and perhaps their own concomitant lack of control over the activities (‘what can I do?’) as difficult to deal with, saying the teacher will ‘freak out completely’ implying an unnecessary and extreme over-reaction. PEARL voices the teacher as underestimating the class, as she ‘didn’t think they’d be able to do it’ while voicing herself as superior to the teacher and willing to try challenging tasks (‘I was like what do you mean?’ and ‘well, yeah’). The teacher then has to praise PEARL and accept that PEARL knew best in this situation. AMY voices the teacher in her narrative as uninspiring and unwilling to allow the pupils to do anything worthwhile, her repeated exhortations of ‘don’t do anything’ culminating in ‘just get them to copy off the board.’ In voicing the teacher in this way, AMY expresses her own opposition to such practices, and her own lack of respect for this teacher.

In these cases the trainees, as narrators, position themselves positively in relation to MoS, who are negatively positioned and who can be seen as barriers to the trainees’ development of CP. Such ‘stories’ convey feelings of being under pressure, but also, often, the trainees’ resistance to how they are positioned. Such storytelling in itself can be seen as a way of performing their identity as one who is in opposition to the views and values of the MoS, invoking an identity of power, of superiority and even of righteousness.
PEARL and AMY reflect on the reasons for some teachers’ rejection of CP. PEARL suggests that it is other teachers’ ‘insecurity’ (GD3) which makes them reluctant to support CP, which implies that they feel more secure with traditional or transmission approaches. Whether this is because traditional approaches are more familiar or because the teacher retains more agency and control with these approaches is not clear. AMY says that ‘they [other teachers] see it [CP] as an attack on the fact that they aren’t the same’ (GD3) suggesting that difference is read as a criticism of more established methods.

SAM, however, finds that even though she has quite a different approach, her mentor still supports her:

so there were loads of really amazing things about her, she wasn’t being horrible or anything, we’re just very different (SAM II)

she is very different to me but she has got quite a lovely personality and obviously she’d quite caring to spend all that time with me and check I was OK but it was just like her idea and my idea which was completely different (SAM II)

Likewise KIM feels well-supported in both her placements too. She was able to use CP and found MoS open to supporting her ideas and keen to let her experiment:

I think some of the teachers said be careful with the groupings if you’re going to do something like that so they’ve given me advice on it but they’ve said yeah no try it, they’ve always said try it, if it goes wrong it goes wrong which is helpful…but I might have got somebody who said no don’t do that it’s going to go crazy (KIM II)

4.5.d Theme 12: CP and the trainees’ agency and identity
Agency and identity were originally two separate themes. However, on further reading, it became clear that many of the trainee comments about their identity were not related to their use of CP. I discounted these comments, as, while interesting in themselves, they had little direct relation to this study’s focus on creativity. Trainees’ identity issues, where they were related to creativity, almost all had a strong sub-theme of agency. The trainees’ sense of their own agency seemed closely linked to issues of identity and central to their self-conceptions both as creative practitioners and, more broadly, as teachers. Therefore, I combined the two categories into a single theme of CP, identity and
agency, including comments coded with ‘identity,’ ‘agency,’ ‘teacher persona,’ ‘control,’ ‘feeling like a trainee / teacher’ and ‘positioning as a trainee / teacher.’ I also included items coded as ‘improvisations’ under this theme rather than under Theme 9: Flexibility and responsiveness, as what the trainees were describing seemed less about moving away from planning and more about agency, identity, having the power and right to improvise and ‘feeling like a teacher.’

Early in the course, issues of identity were not specifically linked to either creativity or to agency. By mid-course, the theme became more prevalent with some trainees reporting feeling pressure on their identity as a result of their use of CP and the responses of MoS to this: SAM and REBECCA’s experiences of this are described in the previous section. Issues of agency and identity were also central to almost all of the trainees’ metaphors. In addition, in the interviews SAM, ARABELLA and REBECCA reflected at length on issues of identity and agency in difficult teaching practices. In GD3, most trainees connected identity, agency and creativity, and reflected with some satisfaction on their development as teachers.

TOM expressed concerns about CP reducing the control of the teacher, an unwelcome prospect mid-course, when ‘you’re still trying to establish that sort of perhaps a bit of an authority in the class’ (TOM GD2). REBECCA added that ‘you crave control, don’t you’ (REBECCA GD2), both of them perhaps seeing CP working against their desire to develop an authoritative teacher persona.

In his metaphor, however, TOM presents himself as ‘the flint from which I wish to draw sparks’ (WAM) and in his analysis he comments that he is ‘someone who wishes to inspire others’ (WAM). A spark, and the fire it lights, is often linked with ideas of creativity and inspiration, as TOM suggests in his interpretation. It also suggests a collaborative process, with both flint and striker needed for the spark to occur. In terms of classroom practice, TOM may see himself as central to the pupils’ creativity, or that it is in the interactions between him and the pupils where creativity is occasioned. The metaphor can be read as supportive of a constructivist approach towards teaching.
Issues of agency, and the lack of it, are prominent in most of the metaphors, written mid-course. SAM described herself as ‘a pebble lost in a pounding ocean’ and commented that she ‘was feeling lost…something tiny being overwhelmed by something massive…running hard and not getting anywhere.’ REBECCA’s metaphor characterises teaching as ‘a rollercoaster; with twists and turns at every angle, some exhilarating, some terrifying’ again appearing to reflect a lack of agency: once you are on the rollercoaster you have very little control over what happens. A metaphor provided by AMY can also be read in terms of a lack of agency: ‘I am an escaped balloon; full of air, floating in the sky one minute plummeting to the ground the next’ suggesting she has no volition and is at the mercy of other forces.

PEARL’s metaphors, in contrast, reflected a strong sense of agency as she led the rats or pollinated the flowers. REBECCA, SAM and AMY all, however, reported adopting CP to a greater extent than PEARL. This may have contributed to this mid-course sense of a loss of control, and to the discomfort with their role that their metaphors seem to reveal. KIM, who began the course with a commitment to CP, and for whom work on CP seemed an affirmation of her values rather than a challenge to them, appeared not to experience this sense of lesser agency, at least in terms of the metaphor she presents: ‘I am a river gathering things along the way, I meander changing direction taking the rough with the smooth.’ While she may change direction, she implies that such change is within her volition, rather than ‘plummeting’ (AMY WAM) or being ‘pounded’ (SAM WAM) by the sea.

These ‘deliberate metaphors’ were constructed ‘to order’ but the trainees’ spontaneous metaphors offer a similar picture of concern with agency and control. For PEARL, ‘being a teacher’ meant being able to plan her own schemes of learning, and being treated as an equal member of the community by other staff members:

from Easter I didn’t feel like a trainee in the department at all…I just wasn’t treated as one, I was asked…for opinions on schemes of work…working with the department as opposed to scuttling around underneath them (PEARL II)

PEARL’s sense of her own development is clear in her implied metaphor of herself as initially ‘scuttling.’ suggesting an insect or some other lesser life-form,
'underneath' the department then working 'with' the department. This implies a hierarchical shift where she has moved from an inferior position to one of equality, signalled in having her opinion sought and valued.

CONSTANCE uses a similar metaphor, seeing herself as a 'mouse' and finds it difficult to relate to other teachers as an equal, perhaps being uncomfortable taking on a more central position in the CoP:

I was a bit of a mouse before and felt frightened to approach people, people like [teacher V] who've been teachers for ever, I'm still in awe of still and then having to do, having to talk to him about anything I always feel oh am I saying the wrong word (CONSTANCE II)

Characterising herself as a ‘mouse’ suggests she feels small, timid and unimportant, and nervousness and self-doubt are conveyed through the vocalising of self-questioning. That she ‘still’ feels like this, even at the end of the course suggests she was unable to make the same shift as PEARL and see herself as an equal member of the community.

The trainees’ status as trainees seemed to affect their ability to fully inhabit the role of teacher. When this status was masked from others, and when others positioned them as equals, they seemed more able to occupy the role of teacher. SAM describes an instance where her status as a trainee is concealed from the pupils by a code that the class teacher employs:

she would never interrupt, ever, while I was teaching, and it would always be like she wasn’t even there, she would be like invisible at the back of the room, which was really good, and she always used to say, if you’re panicking at all, pick up the red pen and I'll know you need me to get up (SAM II)

SAM reports this very positively, feeling that it allowed her to be seen as a teacher by the pupils while still offering the safety net of support.

In contrast, REBECCA and ARABELLA experienced a class teacher seemingly actively undermining their agency and thus their opportunity to use CP:

[teacher R] was big problem in getting up and butting in…it was embarrassing because it undermined you completely (REBECCA II)

she wouldn’t sit at the back, she’d always sit at her desk so to get to the computer, you couldn’t do…which also undermined you really (REBECCA II)
one of my classes, I wasn’t given proper ownership of it…she was using me as her TA [teaching assistant]…so I did speak out but nothing was done about it (ARABELLA GD3)

I could be half way through questioning the class and she’d be like ‘excuse me miss do you mind if I interrupt again, 8T this is what we need to be focussing on’ and she would change the path of the lesson or do her own activity (ARABELLA II)

ARABELLA sees the class teacher as reluctant to give up her control or to cede her own central position within the CoP: ‘she did it because she wanted to be the one in control in the classroom’ (II). She describes how this reduction in agency impacted on her identity as a teacher:

she made me go from being a really confident teacher to being a nervous wreck (ARABELLA II)

For REBECCA, being undermined in the classroom was mirrored by behaviour outside the classroom which made her feel excluded from the teacher community:

[MoS] didn’t speak to you, in the staffroom on the first day I just sat there, in the office, and nobody, and you try and join in the conversation you just got looked at as if to say ‘why should you have a say, you don’t know us, you don’t’ and department meetings you were just ignored basically (REBECCA II)

REBECCA can be seen as taking up a positional identity as a central member, by trying to ‘join in the conversation’ and thus making a claim to be regarded as someone who is entitled to speak and be listened to. However, she has these claims refuted when other members deny her the right to participate: ‘why should you have a say, you don’t know us.’

In GD3 the trainees reflected on their movement from trainee to teacher. Several reported that it was in the moments where they exhibited or achieved a degree of agency that they felt like a ‘real’ teacher. Enacting duties associated with being a teacher was important, such as ‘the first time I did a display board - that made me feel like a real teacher’ (PEARL GD3), but more so where they were occupying the central role in the CoP, rather than that of a bystander or assistant:

I was like wow I’ve actually done everything (TOM GD3)

and parents evenings…she said ‘over to you’ (KIM GD3)
I was on my own all the time…knowing someone isn’t checking me how long it takes to put the objective up…made me feel a bit more like a normal teacher (SAM GD3)

In addition, several trainees reported key moments in their development as teachers as times where they were able to improvise and respond effectively to the unexpected:

if everything fell to pot…I’d just make something up on the spot (SAM GD3)

the whiteboard wouldn’t work…the server was down…I completely didn’t know what to do, I was like ‘right OK I want you to get into fours and we can do some role play’ (SAM GD3)

He said the lesson’s all yours…if [that] was in the first term I would have just folded, ran from the room screaming and crying I expect, but at that point…I was ‘right, OK, what am I going to do with them?’ (CONSTANCE GD3)

she just came in and said ‘are you alright to do today?’…so I was like ‘oh my god, I’ve got a whole hour with them and I haven’t planned anything’…but the work that they came out with was amazing…they were so engaged in what they were doing (KIM GD3)

This suggests that trainees feel they can achieve agency in specific situations by their improvised responses, and that it is in these moments of improvisation that they feel they fully inhabit the role of teacher.

However, achieving a central position doesn’t mean that it will be maintained. TOM felt that a degree of agency he had achieved in other situations was reduced again at a parents’ evening:

it actually made me feel more like a trainee again…she just sort of did most of the talking and I just sat there, a bit like I did in the first term…I felt a bit like ‘oh I am still a trainee aren’t I?’ rather than having my own little table and everything…I want my own table (TOM GD3)

In this case, the table seems to symbolise his identity and agency: TOM’s plea for his own table is essentially a plea to have his progress from trainee to teacher recognised, and his status in the CoP acknowledged.

4.6 An overview of the participants’ experience of CP
In this section, I draw the data together by participant rather than by theme, and briefly summarise each participant’s views of creativity, of CP and perceptions of the SCITT course.
4.6.a AMY
AMY began the course with a view of creativity as an inherent and an artistic capacity, for both pupils and teachers, which cannot be occasioned or developed. She also suggested that lower ability children may be less able to be creative.

By mid-way through the course, she saw creativity as connected to agency, through the idea of ‘independence’ and believed that this kind of creativity, unlike artistic creativity, can be developed. Rather than being less available for lower ability pupils, she suggested that this might be of particular value to lower ability children. She also argued strongly for the potential of creativity to enhance pupils’ ‘market value. Unusually, she saw no conflict between creativity and ‘real learning’ instead viewing creativity as a vehicle for learning: ‘for god’s sake they can be one and the same’ (GD3). She saw CP as an antidote to what she saw as traditional, uninspiring and demotivating teaching. This placed AMY in opposition to several of the staff with whom she worked.

By the end of the course, AMY suggested that her lessons using CP were successful both for her as a teacher and for the pupils themselves who ‘absolutely love it’ (GD3).

4.6.b ARABELLA
ARABELLA was fairly reserved early in the course, and contributed little to GD1.

By mid-way through the course, ARABELLA linked creativity to agency, and suggested that both are essential for learning. She saw creativity as a product of the teaching strategy or of other contextual factors, rather than as connected to the pupil’s ability or to any inherent capacity. In her first teaching practice, she reported using a responsive and dialogic approach, building the tenets of CP into her teaching.

The latter part of the course for ARABELLA was dominated by a difficult second teaching practice where she didn’t feel she had the agency to develop as a teacher or to engage in CP. Despite the circumstances, she maintained a commitment to CP and to developing pupil agency.
4.6.c CONSTANCE
CONSTANCE began the course with a notion of creativity as artistic, as active learning and as ‘fun.’ She saw creativity as in opposition to learning, and perhaps as a ‘dereliction of duty’ on the part of the teacher who should be focussing on traditional teaching and exam preparation.

By mid-course, CONSTANCE supported the idea of more open-ended lessons, and by the end of the course, despite her ongoing difficulties in assuming the role of teacher, she felt reasonably confident that she could engage pupils in ways that supported their agency.

4.6.d KIM
KIM alone began the course expressing a view that every pupil has the potential to be creative, and that creativity can be developed and enhanced by appropriate teaching.

She maintained this stance throughout the course, placing her in opposition to some of the other trainees. She reported adopting aspects of CP in both of her placements, even where she anticipated receiving criticism for doing so. In fact, she commented that she was praised for her approach.

By the end of the course, KIM continued to support CP, pupil agency and open-ended lessons, and reflected positively on lessons where she felt able to put this into practice.

4.6.e PEARL
At the start of the course, PEARL suggested that creativity was allied to play and had little place in the secondary classroom. She maintained this view throughout the course, suggesting at various points that creativity is ‘hug a tree stuff’ (II) and an addition to, or even a distraction from ‘real’ learning.

PEARL’s comments suggest that she was reluctant to engage in aspects of CP, feeling that this might jeopardise her chances of receiving positive assessments and this issue of assessment occupied PEARL perhaps more than the other trainees.
By the end of the course, PEARL maintained a view of transmission teaching as her preferred approach.

**4.6.f REBECCA**

REBECCA began the course with a view of creativity as inherent and as related to artistry and to engaging lessons. She modified this view as the course progressed to include a view of creativity as related to pupil agency. Her comments suggest that supporting this agency became important to her teaching approach.

A difficult second practice caused REBECCA to reflect at length on her own loss of agency as a teacher and to see this as related to her ability to engage in CP.

By the end of the course, REBECCA supported aspects of CP as a teaching approach, regarding it as both desirable and possible even within what she saw as a ‘very exam-driven’ (GD2) education system. However, her comments suggested that she retained a focus on outcomes and objectives which is likely to mitigate against the wholesale adoption of CP.

**4.6.g SAM**

SAM initially expressed the view that creativity is inherent and cannot be developed. By mid-course, however, she saw creativity as a situated activity that can be supported or suppressed, rather than as an individual and inherent attribute. She saw CP as connected to pupil agency, and as an effective vehicle for learning, particularly for pupils who have not achieved under traditional approaches. She maintained this view throughout the rest of the course.

Mid-course, SAM felt pressured to adopt a transmission teacher stance, and she worked to resist this and develop her own teacher identity.

Towards the end of the course, SAM believed that her mentor, who had initially pressured SAM towards a transmission approach and identity, had begun to adopt aspects of CP. SAM also reported receiving unexpected praise from her mentor for her use of CP in lessons.
4.6.h SHARON
SHARON began the course seeing creativity as connected to pupil engagement, and as ‘fun’ but with concerns that it might also be a distraction from learning and not always relevant in the classroom. SHARON left the course after the first term, citing her discomfort in the role of teacher as a key reason.

4.6.i TOM
At the start of the course, TOM expressed some reservations about creativity, seeing it as allied with play and leading to off-task behaviour. He initially believed that low ability pupils lacked the capacity to be creative. He expressed concerns about control in the classroom and saw transmission teaching as useful in affording him this control.

Later in the course, he reported that during his second teaching practice he began to use aspects of CP with all his classes, including those he previously regarded as having too little ability to be creative. Further, he argued that CP may be most useful with these lower ability classes who have not been well-served by traditional teaching approaches. His comments suggested that control ceased to be so much of a concern and that he found enjoyment in lessons where the pupils exhibited significant agency.
Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I discuss my findings in relation to my research questions and to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. I comment firstly on what the data suggests in terms of the trainees’ understanding of ‘creativity.’ Secondly I discuss the trainees’ reflections on their use of approaches in the classroom which seemed to foster creativity. Finally I address the trainees’ perceptions of how the SCITT course as a whole supported or hindered their use of CP.

5.2 What do the trainees consider creativity to be?

My first research question: ‘What do the trainees consider creativity to be?’ generated wide discussion, as recounted in the Group One themes in the previous chapter. Here, I consider these definitional issues in relation to the common wider social discourses of creativity as discussed in Chapter Two, and then I consider the issue of creativity and ability.

5.2.a Definitions and discourses of creativity: the arts discourse.

In GD1, creativity was located within the discourse of the expressive arts (Theme 2), with several trainees seeing this as a positive but implying that arts-based creativity was more suited to the world of the young child. PEARL, for example, reportedly limited her adoption of CP throughout the training course and sought a position where her creativity, described as ‘playing’ and ‘hug a tree stuff’ was restrained by what she saw as the demands of the curriculum: ‘all the right stuff’ which has ‘a point to it’ (PEARL II). PEARL’s conception of creativity, framed by the discourse of the expressive arts, or ‘artiness’ (McWilliam and Dawson 2008 pgs.636-637), appeared to be viewed as less valid as an approach because of this, and so was used sparingly within her practice. Relating creativity to this broader discourse appeared to make it difficult for PEARL to justify the value of creativity within her practice and thus seemed to act as a barrier to her use of CP.

Jeffrey and Craft’s notion of ‘teaching creatively’ (2004) seemed to be connected to the discourse of the expressive arts. At the start of the year, several trainees viewed creativity in the classroom as ‘teaching creatively’ using ‘imaginative approaches to make learning interesting and effective’ (Jeffrey and
Craft 2004 p.79), citing fun, games and movement as key aspects. Such approaches can be seen as methods which privilege, even if partially, unintentionally or unconsciously, pupil agency. Pupils may have greater control over ‘the ways in which…[they]…respond to the situation’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 pgs.20-21), if not an influence over the context itself.

However, reconciling even this more limited version of pupil agency with transmission teaching and its ‘logical, carefully planned movements through topics’ (Davis 2004 p.78) proved problematic, seeming to pose risks to learning, where learning is seen as the ‘pursuit of pre-established ends, abstracted from concrete situations’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.967-968). As a result, for some trainees, this expressive arts version of creativity was positioned in opposition to ‘real learning’ and thus seen as irrelevant, or even as leading to ‘messing about’ (TOM GD1). ‘Real learning’ was discussed in terms of the delivery of the curriculum and preparation for exams, with trainees commenting that if ‘you've got GCSEs coming up...you can’t do one long fun activity’ (CONSTANCE GD1). PEARL, for example, maintained a distinction between creativity and ‘proper’ learning (II), and structured her lessons to reflect this, focussing on transmission teaching prior to creative activities, teaching ‘ten traditional style lessons’ before allowing the pupils to ‘use it all themselves and play with it’ (PEARL II). This is consistent with NACCCE’s (1999) view that creativity requires prior knowledge and the view held by Ofsted who suggest that pupils require ‘regular structured teaching’ to provide ‘a firm base for more innovative approaches’ (Ofsted 2010 p.18). Creativity is located as separate from learning, as an additional approach rather than as a vehicle for learning in itself.

This may reflect the colonisation of education by the marketplace, as discussed by Troman et al (2007) and Hargreaves (2000), and the culture of performativity. From this perspective, viewing creativity as part of the expressive arts discourse, as several trainees did at the start of the course, relegates it to a peripheral role of ‘making pretty things’ (Loveless 2009 p.30) where it is seen as irrelevant to the real business of education which is concerned with meeting the needs of the ‘assessment regimes’ and ‘accountability systems’ (Troman et al 2007 p.550). By the mid-point of the course, it is likely that trainees had
become immersed in these systems, and so took on a more functional view of creativity as a life-skill, as discussed in the following section. In her insistence on ‘traditional lessons’ PEARL might be choosing to accommodate the demands of schools operating within these regimes of accountability and assessment (Troman et al 2007 p.550) rather than adopting CP.

5.2.b Definitions and discourses of creativity: the economic discourse.
For several trainees, there was a shift from connecting creativity to the discourse of the arts (Theme 2) to locating it within the discourses of agency and life-skills and economic innovation and growth (Theme 3). These latter discourses were generally conflated by the trainees who saw agency as a life-skill, and life-skills as skills for life only in so far as they aided success in the workplace. This conception of life-skills seems limited, as it assumes that work and the economic imperative are the entirety of life, supporting the view of creativity as ‘a form of capital’ (McWilliam and Dawson 2008 p.635) used to negotiate success in the workplace: ‘if students can’t think for themselves they will struggle in a work environment’ (KIM). However, by shifting the concept of creativity from the discourse of the expressive arts into the discourse of agency and life-skills and, via this, into the discourse of economic success, it seems that trainees found it easier to justify the place of creativity in the classroom.

Given that the trainees are training within the broader context of moves towards greater centralised control over education and ‘the traditionalistic, narrow and vocational approach to education adopted by various governments’ (Maisuria 2005 p.148), it may be expected that most trainees seemed to support the overall purpose of education as preparation for the workforce, prioritising a ‘functional view of education’ (Maisuria 2005 p.144) with the economic discourse dominating conceptions of creativity. Where creativity remained rooted within the discourse of the arts, it was devalued as having little worth within a functional view of education.

While most of the trainees framed creativity within the economic discourse, rather than this acting as a barrier to the adoption of CP, it appeared to serve as a way for several of the trainees to justify, to themselves and others, their focus on developing pupil agency and engaging in emancipatory activities, particularly
where such practices have no other widely accepted social discourse available to refer to and use to justify such practices. Within their own ‘small d discourses’ (specific and local instances of speech) trainees both invoked and subverted the broader ‘capital D discourse’ (Gee 2005) of economic success to support a more democratic and agentic version of education: ‘by encouraging them to think differently… you’re also teaching them life skills’ (TOM GD1) and ‘we need to ensure they can think for themselves and creative lessons are the perfect way to do this’ (SAM SD). Linking creativity to agency (as described in Theme 8), and through this, to life-skills and the economic imperative seemed to be an incentive and justification for using CP.

Although the Western SCITT course operates as an institution within the broader framework of moves towards the agenda of ‘accountability and standards’ (Coles 2000 p.59), some trainees subverted this agenda and remade it in a manner that supported contextual creativity. This suggests that a focus on contextual creativity may seed or support the development of educational practices which work in opposition to the broader societal moves in education, and can perhaps in themselves be seen as instances of creativity, where the trainees have the agency to partially re-envisage the broader structures: ‘human actors do not merely repeat past routines; they are also the inventors of new possibilities for thought and action’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.983-984).

For the trainees, these issues became less prevalent as the course progressed. It is possible that as they moved from the initial theory and observation part of the course and into the block practices, their discussions moved from the more abstracted (‘what is creativity?’) into the more practical (‘how can I develop creativity in this specific classroom context?’). Questions around the nature and purpose of creativity became absorbed into the more pressing issue, for this group of trainees, of whether all pupils have the capacity to be or become creative. I discuss this in the following section.

5.2.c Creativity and ability
My first research question asked what the trainees’ definitions of creativity were, and I continue to address this question by considering the trainees’ views of the relationship between ability and creativity (Theme 4) and their views of creativity as inherent or attainable (Theme 1). This relationship between knowledge,
ability and creativity was one of the most frequently addressed themes in the data and appeared to play a pivotal role in some trainees’ adoption of CP in the classroom and, indeed, to be central to some trainees’ views of pupils and their capabilities in the wider sense. Moving away from an understanding of creativity as inherent and fixed and towards a view of it as contextually occasioned seemed to offer the trainees more potential for engaging in CP and for engaging with pupils more democratically. This suggests that understandings of creativity are not separate or additional to other aspects of pedagogy and practice, but deeply interconnected to the trainees’ broader educational beliefs, philosophies and practices.

The trainees generally regarded creativity as ‘little c’ (Craft 2001 p.46) or ‘democratic’ (NACCCE 1999 p.29) rather than big c or H-creativity (Boden 1990 p.2). There were few references to ideas of special talent, extraordinary ability or genius in relation to creativity. While the adoption of a ‘little c’ perspective implies a view of creativity as democratic and available to all, in practice there were issues with this throughout the course, relating largely to the question of whether pupils described as ‘low ability’ or as having ‘additional needs’ were able to be creative, or whether there was a threshold of ‘relevant knowledge and skills’ (NACCCE 1999 p.29), of ‘prior knowledge’ (Craft 2001 p.49) that pupils needed to have acquired before they could be or become creative. TOM, for example, initially felt that CP was not an option for some students, saying that ‘they need to have that fundamental grasp of whatever it is before they can think about something’ and believed that CP was likely to be effective with ‘higher ability kids but not with lower ability kids’ (TOM GD2). This suggests that TOM initially adhered to the ‘threshold hypothesis’ (Torrance 1974), where a certain level of ‘intelligence’ is required before creativity is possible, and that TOM believed pupils also need to have ‘relevant knowledge and skills’ (NACCCE 1999 p.29) prior to engaging in CP.

Along with AMY and SAM, TOM moved away from this initial perspective, rejecting both the correlation between intelligence and creativity, and the need for a ‘threshold’ of knowledge as a precursor to creativity. Instead, these trainees adopted a more situated view of creativity which encouraged them to pay attention to ‘the conditions and details of the immediate context of behavior’
(Sosa and Gero 2003 p.26), according creativity to contextual issues such as the timing of the lesson during the school day.

KIM, who held this more contextual view from the start of the course, appeared to exhibit least difficulty with engaging in CP. Her view that all pupils can be creative, and that the less creative can become more creative when supported by an appropriate context, seemed to enable her to readily adopt CP, suggesting that a conceptualisation of creativity as at least partly contextual is more conducive to CP.

Several trainees also began to view some traditional lesson practices as disenfranchising some pupils, who are then seen as ‘failing’ in the school system (Klein 2001). The over-structuring of learning (including ‘spoon-feeding’ approaches), the concomitant lack of opportunities for ownership and control, and the use of setting, were cited as practices which were detrimental to certain pupils, reducing their self-confidence and their ability to develop a sense of agency. This supports Klein’s view that it may be the ‘power/knowledge relationships in classroom interactions’ (2001 p.267) rather than qualities inherent within pupils themselves which leads to success and failure.

Viewing creativity as, like agency itself, something which is ‘occasioned’ rather than possessed, and as ‘something that people can achieve’ and only ‘in transaction with a particular situation’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.19) allowed the trainees both to see creativity as available to all, and to see the occurrence, or lack of it, as ‘always… in transaction with environments or contexts’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.16). It moved trainees away from pathologising individual pupils or groups of pupils and raised awareness of the trainees’ own role in practices which maintain the context, and an awareness that restructuring the context may ensure more equitable outcomes which do not ‘perpetuate social differences and hierarchies’ (Navarro 2006 p.15). As such, it seems that interrogating connections between creativity and knowledge or ability, both in discussions and in their practice, had a broader effect on the trainees, causing them to rethink their initial perspectives of certain groups of pupils and to develop greater self-awareness of their role in contexts which can support or
undermine pupils’ agency, leading to an approach to teaching which is more democratic and emancipatory.

It may be that addressing broader issues via the concept of creativity made these more abstracted, tacit, unexamined or unconscious assumptions more concrete and thus more available for discussion and exploration. Here, and elsewhere in this study, I began to see the topic of creativity as something of a lightning rod which could draw down and focus these tacit assumptions and unspoken beliefs about the broader philosophical and pedagogical issues of who can or should be educated, how, and to what end.

5.3 What are the trainees’ perspectives of classroom practices that appear to support creativity?

My second research question asked ‘What are the trainees’ perspectives of classroom practices that might support creativity? In this section, I draw on the findings relating to the second group of themes to discuss trainees’ reports of the aspects of CP they used, and the risks and benefits to the pupils they anticipated and experienced in doing so. Firstly I discuss the Creativity Framework in general, secondly I address those aspects of it, namely dialogic teaching and developing pupil agency, with which the trainees reported engaging most fully, and thirdly I consider the risks they experienced in such approaches.

5.3.a The Creativity Framework

The Creativity Framework proposes a model of learning which may be seen as at odds with the schema arising from the trainees ‘accumulation of past learning’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.14) which is, according to Sugrue, likely to produce a tendency towards ‘teaching as transmission’ (1997 p.217). Certainly, some trainees’ initial reactions to the Framework were negative, with TOM suggesting that ‘you couldn’t do this at all’ (GD2) and AMY thinking ‘you can’t really apply that at secondary [rather than in primary school],' but later saying ‘I do like the rest of it though... I think that’s really important’ (AMY GD2). The framework was presented during GD2 and engendered a lengthy discussion, allowing time for issues to be raised and initial responses to be challenged and develop. Such challenges, both by the introduction of approaches which may not fit neatly with trainees’ expectations, and through a lengthy group
discussion, also tend to position the trainees as agentic, recognising that individuals do not simply follow accumulated schemas, but actively and ‘selectively recognize, locate and implement such schemas in their ongoing and situated transactions’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.975). Following this with a Silent Discussion eight weeks later allowed for some points to be re-examined after the experience of the first block practice, encouraging both inter- and intra-dialogicity, with trainees interrogating both their own prior views and the responses of others.

This research generally supported the use of the Creativity Framework as an intervention to foster more constructivist approaches to teaching, finding that Jeffrey and Craft’s view of ‘teaching for creativity,’ with its focus on developing pupil agency and ‘passing back control to the learner’ (2004 p.81), and the concept of ‘liberating constraints’ (Davis et al 2004) were useful models for trainees seeking to develop CP in the classroom. Trainees’ reflections suggested that working towards CP engaged them in seeking to develop or support pupil agency, and several trainees reported moving towards more collaborative approaches to teaching and learning, where they felt that both they and the pupils operated with greater agency and creativity.

Mid-course, such approaches seemed imbued with a sense of risk and danger, as discussed below, but by the end of the course, developing pupil agency appeared to be integral to the lessons of which the trainees were most proud and which they reported enjoying the most: the ‘brilliant’ lessons’ (TOM GD3) where pupils ‘were completely alive and engaged’ (SAM GD3) and where the pupils ‘absolutely love[d] it’ (AMY GD3). The trainees did not suggest that these were merely ‘brilliant’ creative lessons, but that they were ‘brilliant’ lessons per se. This suggests that these trainees saw CP not just as an option for developing additional, separate or ‘special’ creative lessons, but as the basis for good lessons more broadly. Rather than seeing creativity as additional to good teaching, they seem to regard it as good teaching. This was not the experience of all the trainees, however, and PEARL maintained a distinction between ‘traditional… didactic’ (II) lessons and creative lessons, which she characterised as ‘play’ and viewed as an addition to and perhaps a reward for engaging in the didactic lessons.
5.3.b CP, dialogic teaching and learner agency

The aspect of the Creativity Framework which trainees reportedly explored most fully in their practice was the emphasis on developing pupil agency, achieving this particularly through dialogic teaching and open-ended activities. In this section, I draw largely on the findings presented in Theme 6: CP and pupil engagement, Theme 7: CP and Outcomes and Theme 8: CP and learner agency.

Enacting aspects of the Creativity Framework required trainees to experience and perhaps adopt schemas likely to be in tension with those they had initially held and in conflict with the current UK education system as a whole (see Maisuria 2005, Troman et al 2007), and more specifically with the training given on the Western SCITT, where lessons are required to have narrowly defined and clearly observable learning outcomes.

Dialogic approaches position learners as active and agentic which precludes linear, transmission approaches, as the genuine involvement of others draws in the unpredictable and the unknown. Several trainees reported focussing on developing pupil agency within lessons through their use of talk where, ‘rather than talking at them and kind of governing the lesson’ (ARABELLA GD2) it became important that the pupils, rather than the teacher, should have ‘owned that conversation’ (REBECCA GD2). This reflects the view that while monologic talk ‘focuses power on the teacher’ (Lyle 2008 p.225), reducing the power or agency of the pupils, dialogic talk can ‘challenge the asymmetrical power relations constructed by monologic practices’ (Lyle 2008 p.225). Such power relations and the dominance of the teacher may be at least partially instantiated by the amount of control the teacher has over the speech and interactions of the pupils.

The focus on oral and dialogic work supports a model of learning as social and interactional rather than individualistic. KIM and SAM described using lesson structures which encouraged more rather than fewer social interactions. SAM described a lesson where unscripted group talk was at the forefront as ‘really
open... everyone just throwing in their ideas’ (GD3). In transmission teaching, silence is sometimes the objective and pupils are both physically and metaphorically silenced as an instantiation of the teacher’s dominance and control. This association between silence and control was addressed by KIM who reported engaging in activities where the pupils interacted and were ‘really noisy,’ despite the danger that others may judge her class as ‘out of control’ (KIM II). Other trainees initially associated silence with learning, seen in CONSTANCE’s early view that ‘real’ work equated to ‘quiet lessons’ where you ‘sit down’ and ‘do an essay or something’ (GD1), and this association was a powerful disincentive for some trainees’ exploration of CP. Other trainees challenged this view as the course progressed, with SAM suggesting a classroom teacher is mistaken in thinking that ‘because they’re quiet she assumes they’re learning’ (GD3) and AMY’s insistence that engagement/fun and learning ‘can be one and the same’ (GD3).

While dialogic talk doesn’t guarantee learning any more than transmission teaching approaches, it may provide a context where learning is more likely to take place in that pupils can co-construct knowledge rather than being subject to, and expected to absorb, the teacher’s knowledge.

Dialogic approaches also tended to shift attention to the process of learning rather than the product, moving away from the pursuit of the teacher’s predetermined goals. This caused tension for some trainees, as exampled by TOM, who was initially afraid that too much creativity would result in ‘a room full of wrong answers’ (GD2) and felt that learning had only taken place if pupils had ‘something written in their books’ (GD2). His concern was that in dialogic work there may be no visible outcome, or even visible evidence of participation, and pupils ‘will just sort of sit back and let it wash over them’ (TOM GD2), supporting Maisuria’s view that in the current educational climate ‘the process of learning’ is seen as ‘less valuable than the outcome of pupils’ work’ (2005 p.144, italics in original). However, during the course, he moved away from this concern with visible outcomes, beginning to see learning as a more complex and ongoing phenomenon, which was not always evidenced in writing.
Enhancing learner agency was also achieved by moving away from narrow LOs, which tend to close down the gaps and spaces wherein pupils can engage in the ‘projectivity’ and ‘hypothesising’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 pgs.984-989) necessary for creativity. Several trainees emphasised how they set up lessons to allow for a ‘balance between freedom and restraint’ where there was sufficient direction to ‘orient students’ actions’ but also ‘sufficient openness’ (Davis et al 2004 p.87) for pupil choice and control. ARABELLA commented that she organised her lessons with ‘an element of structure but [within this, pupils] should be encouraged to interpret the task etc and take control of it’ (SD) and CONSTANCE commented favourably on ‘open-ended lessons [which] can be liberating and often produce unexpected results’ (SD). In these lessons, the trainees’ comments imply that they steered away from prescribed LOs, and pupils were ‘deciding on their own’ (SAM GD3), able to ‘just do whatever you think’ (TOM GD3), to work on ‘anything you want’ (CONSTANCE GD3). Rather than reneging on their responsibility as teachers, these trainees appear to have reconceptualised their role as teachers and the pupils’ role as learners, moving to a situation where both power and agency are more equally distributed between teacher and pupils and where learning is not always pre-determined by the teacher but can, at times, be co-constructed with the pupils making decisions about not only how they will reach the Learning Outcomes, but what these Outcomes should be.

In addition, the comments of TOM and SAM suggest that they moved from a teaching approach which centred on what is known to one which privileges what might be, both in terms of Possibility Thinking (Cremin et al 2006) and in terms of ‘broadening what is knowable, beable, doable’ and divergence from ‘a pre-existent truth’ (Davis 2004 p.184), feeling that pupils should critique and question existing knowledge: ‘to form their own opinions and critically evaluate what is being taught to them’ (TOM GD3), and to ‘question what is taught to them’ (SAM SD).

Dialogic approaches appeared to provide a way of re-envisioning relationships between pupils and teachers and to enhance learner agency, by positioning pupils as valued participants; the use of open-ended approaches similarly positions pupils as agentic by providing them with the space in which to develop
their own ideas rather than pursuing the teacher’s goals. This suggests that some trainees moved towards a more ‘collaborative approach’ (Jeffrey and Craft 2004) and rather than only having control over ‘the ways in which…[they]…respond to the situation’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 pgs.20-21), pupils can also influence the context itself or ‘the conditions that shape…[their]…opportunities for action’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.8) as they take ‘control of lessons’ (SAM SD) and have ‘ownership of their own learning’ (TOM GD2).

5.3.c CP and the risk to pupils’ learning
In this section, I discuss findings presented in Theme 5: CP and the risk to pupils’ learning and Theme 7: CP and outcomes.

While a sense of risk or danger was a frequent theme throughout the training course, permeating aspects of the trainees’ development of a teacher persona and their assessment on the course, it was in relation to the pupils’ learning that the sense of risk seemed to be greatest and it is likely that the introduction of the Creativity Framework exacerbated this sense of risk. It is also possible that the broader context also enhanced this sense of risk: as a school-based ITE course, the Western SCITT course may be less able to resist the negative influences of the competency model of teacher education with its ‘outcomes focussed agenda’ which ‘seeks to manage and control’ (Wood 2009 p.47) what it means to teach and be a teacher (see Browne and Reid 2012, Stanfield and Cremin 2013). Emphasising a constructivist approach within this broader framework may have contributed to the sense of risk in CP which was felt by some trainees.

SAM expressed this sense of risk very clearly when she describes how she was dissuaded from trying creative or constructivist approaches with a high-achieving group: ‘I keep being reminded all of them need to get a level 7 Sam… so then like how can you take those chances?’ (GD2). For this class, the teacher was clearly focussing on achieving very specific outcomes, defined by the Level 7 descriptors for Reading and Writing in the UK National Curriculum for English (DfEE 1999a) which minutely describe the range of acceptable outcomes. Creative approaches may have enabled pupils to achieve these outcomes; equally, pupils may have achieved other outcomes not detailed in
the Level descriptors. By focussing on meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum, the teacher is meeting her statutory duty to the pupils; she is also ensuring that convergence onto pre-existing knowledge is at the heart of classroom activity. Emphasising a process-led approach without specific outcomes in mind is in conflict with training to teach in a system of schooling where meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum is the key socially accepted definition of an outcome which is of value.

The view of creativity supported by NACCCE, with its focus on ‘producing outcomes’ (1999 p.29), and which is supported by the Western SCITT course’s emphasis on meeting narrow prescribed LOs, may limit creativity. SAM wasn’t alone in reporting an experience of being dissuaded from CP, and several trainees commented that their models of learning, as influenced by the Creativity Framework, were in conflict with those of the MoS with whom they worked. AMY claimed that established teachers saw the use of CP ‘as an attack on the fact that they aren’t the same’ (GD3) consistent with Brookfield’s view that a teacher who is ‘experimenting with different approaches’ especially where these approaches are ‘trying to realize democratic values’ can be seen as ‘an affront to those who have settled for the illusion of control and predictability’ (1995 p.236). In general, where this conflict occurred, the issue seemed to be with established teachers following a transmission model of learning focussed on control, on reduced opportunities for learner agency and on meeting pre-specified outcomes while the trainees were trying to adopt a more constructivist model, where the pupils had a greater degree of agency and where there was a more open approach to outcomes.

This tension between creativity (which may lead to unexpected outcomes, or at least is unlikely to lead to predetermined outcomes) and learning (which was characterised as the movement towards pre-specified outcomes by some trainees and the staff with whom they worked) was unresolved for several of the trainees. Despite their focus on, and positivity about, developing learner agency as part of creativity, for some trainees there was a persistent belief that creativity was not ‘real learning,’ perhaps because it didn’t enable pupils to reach pre-specified outcomes.
Trainees managed the conflict and tension arising from the different models in different ways. Some trainees, such as KIM, AMY and SAM reported that they adopted CP and were prepared for negative responses and to argue their case with MoS. Others seemed to hold two or more contradictory beliefs (such as PEARL viewing herself both as Pied Pier and bumble bee) reflecting Jackson’s view of the self as a site of disunity and conflict (2001) or to move between different teacher roles as the context seemed to dictate, as REBECCA did, reporting that she used different approaches with different classes where with one class she was ‘very linear, very strict’ yet with another she had ‘a lot more freedom… a lot of finding their own ways to things’ (II).

5.4 How does the SCITT course as a whole… support or hinder the trainees’ use of CP?

My final question considered how far the broader SCITT training context supported or hindered the trainees’ use of CP. I have addressed this to some extent in the previous section on trainee perspectives of classroom practice, considering the conflict between the constructivist approach promoted by the Creativity Framework, and the competency model of training and the outcomes-focussed approach of the Western SCITT. In this section I continue to address the question, drawing largely on the third group of themes and considering three particular issues suggested by the data: the tension between CP and the Western SCITT course over issues of planning and flexibility; the possible impacts of the tensions between CP and the demands of the training contexts on trainee identity; how the implementation of CP relates to trainee agency within the communities of practice of the partner schools.

5.4.a. The Western SCITT, CP, planning and flexibility

In this section I draw on the findings presented in Theme 8: CP and Learner agency, Theme 9: CP and Flexibility and Theme 10: CP and the risk to positive assessment. The data here indicated that one specific area of conflict between the model of learning inherent within the Creativity Framework and the model of learning supported by the Western SCITT was the course requirement that, in order to meet the competencies, trainees must produce and teach to detailed lesson plans with accurate projected timings, as opposed to the Creativity Framework’s emphasis on flexibility and responsiveness.
While trainees were generally very positive about pacing and structuring their lessons around the interests and engagement of the pupils rather than from the pre-decided lesson plan, they recognised a tension between ‘effective’ planning, as judged by the Western SCITT course and some MoS, and the need for a more fluid approach which can anticipate and respond to each stage of the learning. While the Western SCITT and its partnership schools emphasise ‘content and objectives’ (Atkinson and Claxton 2000 p.6) it is both difficult and perhaps risky for trainees to ‘focus on how a lesson will develop under real-life conditions’ (Atkinson and Claxton 2000 p.6). TOM, for example, feels he has the ability to develop a lesson responsively but instead has to ‘jump through those hoops’ (GD2) of lesson planning. REBECCA suggests that the emphasis on rigid planning makes teaching ‘like walking on a tightrope’ (GD2) and CONSTANCE feels ‘guilty’ if she ‘deviates’ from her plan (SD).

This seems at first to lend support to Halliwell’s concern that in school-based training, more so than other forms of teacher education, trainees find it difficult to develop the ‘responsive inventiveness’ (1993 p.71) necessary for contextual creativity, being too busy with the practice of teaching to reflect on it and develop their skills. In this study, however, participants ascribed their difficulty not to the amount of time spent in the classroom but specifically to the pressure to rigorously plan that time, which is not consistent with Halliwell’s expectations. It does, however, raise other concerns: the pressure to plan to narrow pre-specified objectives is actively maintained by the Western SCITT and its partner schools, where this ability is very highly regarded and is one of the essential requirements for passing the course. This suggests that if CP is to become more widely used by trainees then the Western SCITT and its partner schools may have to reconsider their approach to planning.

While the Western SCITT and its partner schools appear to support what Maisuria calls ‘the dogmatic insistence by the system’ on having pupils conform ‘to what is categorised as acceptable work according to standards criteria’ (2005 p.143, italics in original), it is difficult for trainees to use or justify other approaches. Asking trainees to adopt a different approach, which does not reify the National Curriculum level descriptors, and which does not aim to converge onto this pre-given set of knowledge, is likely to produce tension within trainees
and conflict with MoS. Given that the outcomes-led approach dominates not just the wider educational climate in which the trainees operate, but the specific climate of teacher training (see ten Dam and Blom 2006, or Browne and Reid 2012, for example), and within that, the Western SCITT, there may be ethical concerns with an intervention that may lead to an understanding of pedagogy in conflict with that of the partnership schools, and the Western SCITT itself.

However, encouraging trainees to explore alternative approaches, which necessitates that they navigate between the schema underlying the Creativity Framework and that supported by the Western SCITT, may be important not only in providing a counterbalance to outcomes-led models, but also in providing an environment conducive to fostering the trainees’ own agency. Engaging with alternative schemas may facilitate the process where trainees can ‘challenge, reconsider and reformulate their schemas’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.14), encouraging the shift from ‘habitual schematic responses’ towards ‘imaginative, projective responses’ where trainees can ‘engage with the present situation in an agentic way’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.16).

5.4.b The training context, CP and identity

If learning to teach is ‘a continuous, situated, knowledge-and-identity process’ where it is likely that most trainees ‘experience fundamental identity conflicts’ (Olsen 2010 p.7 and p.10) during training, it is probable that the participants in this study experienced more pronounced identity issues than usual, given the mismatch between CP and the SCITT course requirements, and between CP and the broader context of the SCITT model of teacher training and education generally. Certainly, the data indicated that participants in this study experienced the course as a process of identity change as much as a process of knowledge acquisition. In this section I address this issue of identity, drawing from Theme 8: CP and learner agency, Theme 9: CP and flexibility, Theme 11: the support of other teachers and Theme 12: agency and identity. I divide this discussion into two sub-sections: identity, control and the teacher persona; and resisting identity pressures.

5.4.b.i Identity, control and the teacher persona

The change in teacher-pupil relationship engendered by a move towards CP carried a sense of risk or danger for some trainees. CP was initially seen as
‘potentially threatening’ in posing risks to the trainee’s control by challenging ‘the power-relationships of the classroom’ (Lyle 2008 p.230), particularly at a time when some trainees reported they actually ‘crave control’ (REBECCA GD2) and are ‘trying to establish...a bit of an authority in the class’ (TOM GD2). The trainees’ metaphors of themselves, developed mid-way through the course, showed a preoccupation with these issues of control and agency. As Kovecses (2002) suggests, in metaphors an abstract idea, (such as teaching, being a teacher) is described in terms of something more concrete (a rollercoaster, a flint and spark). This provides an insight into the trainees’ ‘tacit knowledge’ of what it means to be a teacher which underlies the trainees’ more ‘formal, explicit knowledge’ (Davis 2004 pgs.132-133) of pedagogies and practices. PEARL offers metaphors of herself which reflect a defined sense of agency and control as both the Pied Piper and as a bumble bee, while other trainees’ metaphors seem to imply a lesser sense of agency: REBECCA feels that ‘teaching is a rollercoaster,’ SAM says she is ‘a pebble lost in a pounding ocean,’ and AMY characterises herself as a balloon, ‘floating’ and ‘plummeting.’

If the ‘agentic dimension lies in the ways in which we have control over the ways in which we respond to the situation’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.19-20), these metaphors appear to show the trainees experiencing a lack of control and agency. This lack of control is also evident in some of the trainees ‘spontaneous’ metaphors where PEARL characterised herself as ‘scuttling around underneath the department’ (II) and CONSTANCE referred to herself as ‘a bit of a mouse’ (II).

This may relate to the early stages of the trainees’ adoption of CP, their shedding of a transmission approach, and the uncertainty that this entails while coming to terms with a teacher role that is not about dominance and control, not about ‘causing or compelling learners to learn specific things in specific ways’ but ‘facilitating,’ ‘guiding’ or ‘enabling’ (Davis 2004 p.133) rather than ‘instructing’ or ‘informing’ (Davis 2004 p.78).

PEARL’s more defined sense of agency may be as a result of her continued attachment to transmission teaching, with its low levels of pupil agency and the ‘epistemological dominance’ of the teacher (Lyle 2008 p.225) which appeared to remain her default model, lending some support to Sugrue’s view that ‘teaching
as transmission’ tends to be the view developed from trainees’ biography prior to beginning teaching (1997 p.217). PEARL recognised that transmission teaching was not necessarily popular, saying that the pupils ‘hated’ her ‘didactic lessons’ but that she felt it was essential to have these in order to give the pupils knowledge, and for the pupils to be able to show this knowledge, to ‘prove to me that they could use [various literary techniques]’ (II). With transmission teaching as the default position, PEARL’s accounts of her teaching suggest that she tended to incorporate limited aspects of CP into a broadly transmission approach.

The pair of metaphors PEARL presented about how she felt as a teacher may indicate that she is trying to accept aspects of CP (in the bumble bee metaphor) but finding these in opposition to her identity as a transmission teacher (the Pied Piper), showing ‘confusion, and uncertainty’ (Olsen 2010 p.10) arising from conflicting ‘virtual schema’ (Sewell 1992). It is possible that the process of writing metaphors provided a space for PEARL and the other trainees to distance themselves from ‘their agentic orientations’ and so ‘make such orientations the object of reflection and imagination’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.21), and subject to ‘hypothesizing’ and ‘projectivity’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 pgs.984 and 988).

PEARL’s identity as a transmission teacher may relate to her individual history as having already established a classroom persona during a period working as a TEFL teacher, perhaps lending support to the views of Bullough (1997), Sugrue (1997), Olsen (2010), and Raffo and Hall (2006) who emphasise the strength and influence of the trainees’ biography. However, it may also be due to PEARL’s desire to be perceived as a ‘good learner’ (Singh and Richards 2006 p.151) and her continued focus on gaining positive assessments. Rather than being governed by issues of biography, and ‘deeply embedded ways of viewing the world’ (Olsen 2010 p.7), PEARL may be making conscious decisions about the teaching style which will gain her most approval from the wider CoP. If this is the case then PEARL can be seen as actively and consciously invoking an identity in order to gain acceptance, supporting Beijaard et al’s view (2004) that her identity is something that she ‘used’ rather than ‘had’ in order to present herself successfully.
Although Sugrue suggests that trainees' biography is most likely to generate a view of 'teaching as transmission' (1997 p.217), not all of the trainees began the course with the view of transmission teaching as an orienting schema. TOM, for instance, seemed to suggest in his early comments that he supported a constructivist approach, seeing ‘the worst teachers’ as ‘the ones who’d just sit there, like read at you… it was horrible’ (GD1). His identity development can be characterised by ‘identity conflicts’ as he worked to ‘reconcile long-held expectations with current teaching realities’ (Olsen 2010 p.10), seeking to maintain a constructivist perspective in transmission-orientated classrooms. As such, he was initially unsupportive of the idea of CP (‘you couldn’t do that with them at all’ GD2), finding such approaches in conflict with his experience in the classroom thus far. The group discussions appeared to provide a forum for TOM to hypothesise by airing his ‘anxieties, hopes, fears and aspirations’ and perhaps to ‘attempt to reconfigure received schemas by generating alternative possible responses to the problematic situations’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.984). Implementing the relatively concrete strategies offered in the Creativity Framework may have offered TOM a practical pathway to ‘live’ an identity as a constructivist teacher. It may be by enacting constructivist-based teaching and learning that the virtual schemas get supported or rebuilt: ‘formal, explicit knowledge is abstracted from physical bodily sensations that occur as one moves through the world’ (Davis 2004 p.133). This suggests that, while identity work (Olsen 2010) such as writing metaphors, is important, teacher educators can also usefully focus on helping to shape the trainees’ practical experiences to support the development or maintenance of teaching identities, accepting that: ‘each and every action contributes to knowing, and each and every knowing orients action’ (Davis 2004 p.133).

In addition, rather than focussing on the effect of trainees’ early experiences of schooling and ‘the accumulation of past learning’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.14), it may be more useful to consider why trainees may be invoking specific identities. PEARL’s insistence on presenting herself as a good learner and as a transmission teacher may reflect the values of her context, and her skill at ‘performing’ herself to ‘accommodate’ her audience (Lewis et al 2007 p.xvi). Rather than viewing PEARL’s identity as a problem, it is the context which so
values transmission teachers which may need to be addressed. Seeking to manage less desirable teacher identities disregards the trainees’ agency and the contextual nature of identity, which, like agency and creativity itself, is likely to be occasioned and achieved in transaction with specific temporal contexts. While such identities may become sedimented over time, the role of the ITE course and those working with trainees may be to provide contexts which are conducive to the development of a range of teacher identities, including, and perhaps especially, the development of constructivist teacher identities, rather than pathologising individual trainees for deploying a teacher identity considered as undesirable. This may be especially the case for SCITT courses which have been criticised as offering a ‘limited and normative model of training’ Browne and Reid (2012 p.507) and adapting courses to ensure that a range of identities and approaches to practice are supported may be required.

5.4.b.ii Resisting identity pressures
Despite the pressures on them, several trainees worked to establish a teacher identity and persona in opposition to the demands of the contexts, and SAM provides an interesting example of this, discussed below. In addition, several of the trainees sought mechanisms to counter contextual demands by narrating and re-telling events in ways that helped them to establish identities that perhaps conflicted with the demands of the context, or sought to reconcile conflicting sets of demands.

SAM provides an example of a trainee who is subject to pressures of context, but who resists these pressures and is self-reflexive about her teacher identity. Mid-way through the course, SAM reported experiencing a sense of subsumation, supporting ten Dam and Blom’s fear that SCITT courses, in particular, can lead to trainees becoming ‘completely taken over’ (2006 p.657) by a specific school, and Perez-Gomez’s point that entering the micro-culture of the classroom can lead to ‘the reproduction of dominant forms of teaching behaviour and styles’ (2003 p.126), with SAM saying ‘I’m with this teacher the whole time… I feel I’m becoming her’ (GD2). With the enhanced role of the school in SCITT courses, these ‘dominant forms’ (Perez-Gomez 2003 p.126) may have greater influence. However, ten Dam and Blom and Perez-Gomez pay too little attention to the power of the trainee to manage their own identity: SAM took a conscious decision to ‘invoke’ a different identity, one with which
she was more comfortable, and one which ‘resisted’ the constraints of the scene she had entered (Lewis et al 2007 p.xvi), saying ‘I just decided… I’m not going to copy her…I’m not going to be like her’ (SAM II). This may reflect SAM’s agency and her power to subject her own ‘agentic orientations to imaginative recomposition and critical judgement,’ a process which enables her to loosen herself from ‘past patterns of interaction and reframe their relationships to existing constraints’ (Emirbayer and Mische p.1010). However, SAM’s self-reflexivity was also the result of social interactions, both with her mentor and with other members of the training programme who gave her ‘really good results, really good feedback’ (SAM II) supporting her in resisting the constraints of the situation. This aided SAM to alter her ‘own structuring relationships to the contexts of action’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.17), and may be part of the context that ‘makes it possible for people to engage with the present situation in an agentic way’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.16). This suggests that an awareness of the trainees’ capacity for agency doesn’t absolve course leaders and others from providing trainees with the support that is needed to be able to occasion their agency, and that this may be especially the case in a SCITT context where the influence of the school may be stronger given that trainees spend increased time in schools compared to HEI-based training models.

Most trainees sought to emphasise their identity and their difference from established teachers by narrating stories about their experiences using the mechanisms of ‘voicing’ and ‘ventriloquation’ (Wortham 2001 p.40, p.68). In narrating stories, trainees had the opportunity to re-position themselves as powerful, supporting Beijaard et al’s view that ‘The way they explain and justify things in relation to other people and contexts expresses, as it were, their professional identity’ (2004 p.123). While trainees may not have had the opportunity or the power to ‘perform themselves’ to ‘resist’ the audience at the time, in retelling the event, they voiced others and ventriloquated in response to these voices, invoking identities of opposition, superiority and strength. In Holland et al’s terms (1998), the trainees were authoring, or re-authoring, themselves to develop an identity that was agentic and powerful, even when retelling events and situations where they may have had little power. Such retellings, and self-authoring can also be seen as a way of ‘generating alternative possible responses to the problematic situations they confront’ (Emirbayer and
Mische 1998 p.984), allowing the trainees to exhibit agency by ‘remaking their relationships to existing constraints’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.1010). This supports the view of Group Discussions as ‘enabling structures’ which can support and empower the participants (Elliott 2000 p.211).

5.4.c The partner schools: trainee agency in communities of practice
School-based training, even more than HEI-based training, requires trainees to become accepted members of the specific communities of practice of the partner schools, a process which appeared to prove problematic for some trainees in this study. I draw from Theme 11: CP and the support of other teachers and mentors and Theme 12: CP, agency and identity, to consider how the support trainees received from MoS impacted on their agency, identity and use of CP. Firstly I discuss how trainees felt they were positioned in classrooms and how this impacted on their ability to improvise; secondly I address trainees’ experience of classrooms as contested spaces; thirdly I discuss how trainees reportedly adapted to classrooms as pre-existing contexts; and finally, I offer a brief summary of these issues.

5.4.c.i Positioning and improvisations
The issue of scrutiny and chaperoning by MoS was central to several trainees’ experience of when and how far they felt able to occupy the central role in the classroom and ‘be’ the teacher. The trainees accepted that a degree of scrutiny and control was inevitable in the early stages of the course when they were peripheral members of the community but some felt that when this scrutiny extended beyond these early stages, it worked to continue positioning them at the periphery, preventing them from feeling entitled to adopt the identity of a central member of the CoP. PEARL said it made her ‘feel like a trainee with some of my classes… being scrutinised beyond what I thought was a necessary level at that stage’ (GD3) and CONSTANCE felt she was unable to ‘be’ the teacher while she was chaperoned: ‘the teachers that stayed with me the whole time just made me feel like I wasn’t a teacher’ (GD3).

In the case of CONSTANCE, however, this may have been a legitimate response to her reluctance to inhabit the central position. Describing herself as ‘a bit of a mouse,’ and saying that ‘I always feel oh am I saying the wrong word’ (II), suggests she was not presenting herself as an ‘entitled’ person who can
‘speak… in ways appropriate to the situation and to… [her]… position within it’ (Holland et al 1998 p.132). This may reflect Lave’s view that ‘developing an identity as a member of a community of practice and becoming knowledgeable skilful are part of the same process’ (1991 p.66) and ten Dam’s assertion that individuals need ‘to see themselves as members’ (2006 p.650). However, if one is prevented from accessing the necessary material and cultural resources, it can be difficult to see oneself as a full member; conversely, if one is provided with full access, one must actively take up and enact a central position in order to be recognised by others as a full member. CONSTANCE appeared to enact a subordinate and outsider’s identity where she was ‘frightened to approach people,’ and in ‘awe’ (II), positioning herself as perhaps not even a legitimate peripheral member of the community. Holland et al describe how ‘late learners’ have different ‘experiences of power’ which may lead to a ‘sense of inferior propriety or right to act, which their late access signals’ (1998 p.136); as a trainee who had gained her initial degree some twenty years later in life than the other participants, CONSTANCE may have been enacting this sedimented identity. This suggests that late learners who regard themselves in this way may need more support to take on this central identity. However, and perhaps counter-intuitively, this support should not necessarily be in the form of additional or continued chaperoning in the classroom as this may have the effect of limiting the trainees’ access to the central role. There were moments in the latter part of the course where CONSTANCE reported being forced to enact the central role, ‘He said the lesson’s all yours… I was ‘right, OK, what am I going to do with them?’ (GD3). This occurred when the class teacher left her alone, effectively vacating the central position, which she then felt she was able to occupy with a sense of success and achievement. While this doesn’t suggest that trainees should simply be abandoned, it may suggest that there comes a point where too much support / scrutiny / chaperoning in the classroom can have an inhibiting and negative effect.

SAM had a different experience and reported how her peripheral status was ‘masked’ from the pupils: the class teacher was ‘invisible’ at the back of the room, she ‘would never interrupt’ and she developed a code by which SAM could call on her for help, without losing status in front of the pupils: ‘if you’re panicking at all pick up the red pen and I’ll know you need me’ (II). This seemed
to allow SAM to gain social capital by enacting a position as a central member, even perhaps before she had developed the skills to claim the right to this position. Without these arrangements to mask the trainees’ status, as in SAM’s case, remaining in the room seemed to prevent the trainees from occupying the central position in the CoP, perhaps because the teacher has not vacated it, or handed it over to the trainee. In these cases, the presence of an established teacher, beyond an initial point in the course, seemed to act as a constraint on the trainees’ ability to occupy or perform a central role.

Holland et al suggest that ‘agency lies in the improvisations that people create in response to particular situations’ (1998 p.280), reflecting the view of Biesta and Tedder that agency ‘lies in the ways in which we have control over the ways in which we respond to the situation’ (2006 p.21). Improvisations require both a degree of flexibility, implying as they do a response to an unplanned event, and that the trainees have the power or agency to take such unplanned actions within the context. Such ‘improvisations can become the basis for a reformed subjectivity’ (Holland et al 1998 p.18), and several of the trainees cited such improvisations as times when they felt they had become ‘proper’ teachers, occupying a central position in the CoP: SAM felt able to ‘just make something up on the spot’ (GD3), CONSTANCE took control ‘He said the lesson’s all yours… I was ‘right, OK, what am I going to do with them?’ (GD3) and KIM dealt with the unexpected: ‘I was like oh my god, I’ve got a whole hour with them and I haven’t planned anything… but the work that they came out with was amazing’ (GD3). These were also seen as times when the trainees felt they had been able to engage in CP, encouraging the pupils’ creativity too. By improvising, trainees were often working without detailed lesson plans and without specific endpoints in mind: ‘I haven’t planned anything’ (KIM GD3), and therefore were perhaps more able to focus on the process of learning rather than urging the pupils towards a predetermined outcome. In these unscripted improvised lessons, the trainees developed a greater sense of their own agency and of themselves as creative practitioners fully occupying the role of teacher. Conversely, it was when trainees were prevented from developing this sense of agency, and prevented from being able to improvise, that they felt their ability to teach, or be a teacher, was reduced.
5.4.c.ii Positioning in contested spaces

The trainees’ moves from a peripheral to a central position, from novice to ‘mastery’ (Lave and Wenger 1991) were largely experienced as an increase in agency, shown in TOM’s comment that ‘wow I’ve actually done everything’ (GD3) referring to a series of lessons where he had complete ownership, and KIM’s experience of leading the discussions at parents’ evenings where the class teacher said ‘over to you’ (GD3), supporting KIM’s status as able to speak on behalf of the school.

However, such movement trajectories were rarely smooth and in some cases the classroom teacher appeared to explicitly challenge the trainee’s right to occupy the central position. Such challenges can be played out through positioning and access to resources where ‘resources are media of power’ (Sewell 1992 p.9) and ‘in some cases the achievement of agency requires more effort from the individual than in other cases, something which is connected to the availability of resources’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.19). ARABELLA and REBECCA in particular felt that, despite significant individual effort, they were restricted in their access to a range of cultural and material resources, and thus unable to take up a central position in the CoP. ARABELLA found that the class teacher would ‘interrupt’ and ‘change the path of the lesson or do her own activity’ (II), thus taking control of the ‘cultural resources’ of the lesson, implying that only she, the class teacher, had the knowledge and understanding to know what the pupils really ‘need,’ leaving ARABELLA undermined and in a peripheral position.

For REBECCA the space and amenities of the classroom became an arena of conflict where teacher and trainee struggled for power and control. She reported that the class teacher would ‘always sit at her desk so to get to the computer, you couldn’t do’ (II). In preventing REBECCA from accessing the computer, the teacher appears to have been claiming her own ownership and dominance of the space and the amenities, and denying the REBECCA’s claim to the right to use these, preventing her from being able to operate as a central member of the CoP. This reflects a view of communities of practice as ‘intensely contested spaces’ full of ‘conflict and disjuncture’ (Lewis et al 2007 p.xv) where power
issues can be played out through such seemingly minor issues as a teacher’s choice of seat.

Given that ‘agency is not something people can have,’ rather it is ‘something that people can achieve’ and only ‘in transaction with a particular situation’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.19), both REBECCA and ARABELLA felt unable to achieve significant agency within these particular situations. In addition, REBECCA reported that the class teacher demonstrated this reduced agency to the pupils themselves, which ‘was embarrassing because it undermined you completely’ (REBECCA I). REBECCA’s sense of embarrassment or shame could be seen as arising from her ‘making claims to being entitled’ (Holland et al 1998 p.132) to occupy the central position, only to have her claims publicly denied, implying she had made false claims, or claimed that to which she was not entitled. REBECCA was also positioned as a peripheral member or even as an outsider by being denied access to the social resources of the community, enduring social exclusion where MoS wouldn’t speak or listen to her. Holland et al describe how such ‘acts of inclusion / exclusion’ (1998 p.134) maintain social hierarchies and positioning. They also serve to reinforce the link between knowledge and identity (Olsen 2010): REBECCA’s claims to having knowledge, and therefore having an identity as a knowledgeable ‘insider’ person, were denied when others would not acknowledge her contributions to departmental meetings.

In limiting trainees’ access to the resources belonging to central members, established teachers may be trying to maintain their own central position, or even bolster it by publically refuting the claims of trainees as having the right to occupy it, where ‘hierarchies of knowledge production’ maintain ‘power relations’ (Noffke and Somekh 2009 p.15). In REBECCA and ARABELLA’s case, the teacher can be seen as trying to maintain herself as the key locus of knowledge production in the classroom, and thus maintain or even increase her sense of power and control at the expense of the trainee, who is prevented from being able to occupy the role of teacher. This can be seen as analogous to the situation of the trainee and the pupils, where trainees experienced risk and uncertainty when giving up their claim to ‘epistemological dominance’ (Lyle 2008 p.225), moving towards a position whereby agency was more equally
distributed and each pupil was a ‘co-participant’ (Jeffrey and Craft 2004 p.82) in a collaborative venture. Here, instead of the trainees positioning themselves as dominant and omniscient against the pupils, the classroom teacher is positioning herself in this role against the trainees. This may be because the teacher is operating from a transmission model of teaching and learning where it is common to position learners, in this case the trainees, as powerless and passive receivers of knowledge rather than seeing them as an agentic and capable ‘co-participants’ (Jeffrey and Craft 2004 p.82) who can not only occupy the role of teacher, but perhaps even occupy it in a new and different manner. This suggests that adopting a more constructivist stance may be important for those working alongside trainee teachers, if the trainees are to be able to develop an identity as a central member of the CoP.

TOM’s access to resources also reflected how he was positioned, and his comment that ‘I want my own table’ (GD3) at a parents’ evening can be read as a plea to have his agency and status recognised. The sense of agency he had previously developed was reduced and he was repositioned as a peripheral member, making him ‘feel more like a trainee again… I just sat there a bit like I did in the first term, rather than having my own little table and everything’ (TOM GD3). Rather than envisaging a unidirectional movement trajectory from a peripheral to central position, entry into a CoP may be by engagement in a series of discrete events, during which one may be able to exhibit varying degrees of agency and gain, or lose, status, supporting Biesta and Tedder’s view that agency ‘fluctuates’ and that an ‘individual can be agentic in one situation but not in another’ (2006 p.19).

Both REBECCA and ARABELLA engaged in CP and reported successfully occupying central positions in one of their communities of practice and yet not in another. Whilst agency can fluctuate, the sedimented effects can be long lasting and ARABELLA felt changed by her experience: ‘she made me go from being a really confident teacher to being a nervous wreck’ (II). The negative effects of such experiences are likely to impact on how ARABELLA approaches future situations, and how far she is confident in adopting a central position or in making a claim to be regarded as a central member. In this case, ensuring she is given the opportunity to enact in a central position in future communities of
practice appears essential. For other trainees, different approaches may be needed. Sedimentation, where, over time, ‘social positions become dispositions’ (Holland et al p.136), may explain CONSTANCE’s continued reluctance to adopt a central position, or PEARL’s adherence to transmission teaching, suggesting that, as claimed by Bullough (1997), Sugrue (1997), Knowles (1992), and Kletchermans (1992), for example, for some trainees, history and biography do dominate, and that, as Olsen (2010) implies, identity work as well as experiential work may be required.

5.4.c.iii Adapting to the context
Adopting aspects of CP may have exacerbated the difficulties trainees encountered in trying to move towards a more central role in the CoP. By encouraging greater agency in the pupils, the trainees may be seen, or see themselves, as failing to sufficiently enact the role of teacher if the teacher is seen as a dominant and controlling presence (Edwards and Blake 2007). This risk is particularly relevant in the training year, when the trainees’ status as teachers is not yet assured. KIM, for example, felt conscious that as a trainee she would be seen as inadequately occupying the role of teacher, because she had insufficient control, saying ‘because I’m a trainee… I thought they’d assume oh no it’s all going wrong’ (II). She was also very aware of how others in the school would regard her: ‘I remember saying to him [the Deputy Head Teacher] I hope I didn’t like disturb you’ (II). While Perez-Gomez (2000 p.126) suggests that school practice leads to the ‘the reproduction of dominant forms’ KIM shows how this is, in fact, more complex. She is aware of the dominant forms, including the requirement that classes appear quiet and orderly, but she nevertheless introduces aspects of CP which leads to ‘really noisy’ (II) work. Although she fears that she will be judged negatively by MoS because of the mismatch between schemas of learning, she still pursues her aim of CP and she actually receives encouragement and praise. This was in contrast to REBECCA’s experience, who found that ‘some teachers… just freak out completely’ (GD2), reflecting unresolved ideological differences in approaches to teaching and learning (Rogers and Fuller 2007). In both cases, however, trainees felt able to explore aspects of CP, and to teach in ways which were not necessarily in line with ‘the normal rules of the game already approved by tradition’ (Perez-Gomez 2000 p.126). This suggests that trainees are less controlled by the norms of the schools than some research literature suggests.
(Hagger and McIntyre 2006; Perez-Gomez 2000). Rather than having ‘to adapt to the normal rules of the game’ if ‘they wish to be accepted’ (Perez-Gomez 2000 p.126), these trainees pursued divergent courses, and even, at times, reportedly received support from the school in doing so.

This also suggests that schools may be more fluid and multiple in their view of what is appropriate practice than Hagger and McIntyre (2006), Perez-Gomez (2000) and others imply; referring to ‘the school’ implies a single entity with a single set of norms, concealing the complex mix of varied and shifting views and values that may actually exist within a school.

Contextual understandings of creativity suggest that ‘both actor and environment are affected by the engagement’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.18), and ‘persons and practices reproduce, and transform each other’ (Lave 1991 p.68). Entering a CoP may not simply be a matter of enculturation but also a process by which the communities themselves are changed (Edwards and Blake 2007). The entry of the new member and the authoring and improvisations he or she can bring to the situation impact on the context and SAM described how she felt she had influenced her mentor where ‘it was almost like she was trying to be creative too… I’m sure that was a direct result of me’ (II). By engaging in the context in an agentic way, and perhaps also by engaging with it in new and unusual ways arising from the Creativity Framework, SAM felt she had not only changed herself, but also influenced and changed her context of action, including the actors who form a part of this context.

5.4.c.iv Summary: trainee agency in communities of practice
This research suggests that practice schools are varied, contested, contradictory and fluid communities of practice and entry into such communities is rarely straightforward, often following a disordered and unpredictable route. On occasions, the entry of new members can be actively hindered, and training courses need to have some protocols in place to deal with situations like those reported by ARABELLA and REBECCA, which were not beneficial to their progress. Most participants in this study reported more positive experiences, and it appears that it is largely where trainees are supported in moving towards a central and agentic position that they are able to fully enact the role of
teacher, and ‘engage with the… situation in an agentic way’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.16). Sosa and Gero argue that it is common to ‘over-emphasize dispositional factors about the actor and under-emphasize situated factors’ (2003 p.26) with relation to creativity, and this may also be the case in relation to a trainee’s ability to successfully occupy the role of teacher. While some aspects of the context, such as close supervision and chaperoning, initially lessened the risk to trainees, when continued they impeded the trainees’ progress towards agency, and, certainly by the end of the course, it was often in situations of relatively high risk that the trainees felt able to improvise and feel like ‘real’ teachers. Like the pupils, the trainees seemed to flourish in contexts where established teachers were ‘passing back control to the [trainee as] learner’ (Jeffrey and Craft 2004 p.81). The research also found that practice schools may be more cooperative than the literature suggests in supporting, and even adopting, new forms of practice which may be in conflict with the broader contexts of education.
Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I initially review my research design and its limitations. I then offer a summary of my findings, firstly relating to perspectives of creativity in the classroom, and secondly in relation to creativity and teacher education. Finally I make some recommendations for teacher educators and for further research.

6.2 The research design and its limitations

My research focussed on trainee teachers’ experiences of engaging in Creative Practice during a school-based teacher education course, seeking to gain insight into their understanding of creativity, their perspectives of approaches which might occasion creativity in classroom, and how the SCITT course as a whole, including the practice of the partner schools and the broader context of the SCITT model of training, supported or hindered their use of CP. The research was located within the context of a school-based ITE course, and I considered the implications of this context on the trainees’ use of CP. In the process I developed a view of creativity as contextual, drawing from Biesta and Tedder’s (2006) work on agency, and I developed a Creativity Framework, which encapsulated aspects of this thinking around CP and contextual creativity.

The scope of the research design can be seen as both overly broad and yet also very narrow. The theoretical understanding of creativity as contextual required a broad approach which could view the context as a whole and the broad scope of this study also arose from the open-ended nature of the research questions. While this was necessary for allowing for the trainees’ varied and changing views to be represented, and for the research to be at least in part co-constructed with the participants, it meant that the study raised as many questions as it answered and was led in unexpected and multiple directions. While I focussed on creativity, issues of pupil ability and of teacher identity and formation emerged as fundamental, and the research could have been framed with these issues, as much as with creativity, at the forefront.
Its narrowness arose from my focus on one ‘class’ of actors within each context: the trainees. Without also exploring the experiences of the pupils and of members of staff working with the trainees, only a partial picture was presented. Finding some way to evaluate any increase in pupil creativity or change in pupil or teacher attitudes towards creativity would be of great interest. While it was outside the scope of this study, given the limitations of time and word count, in section 6.4.b I suggest that this, along with other lines of enquiry, may be useful areas for future research.

Despite these concerns, and the limitations discussed in 3.8 above, the research design was relatively effective in allowing me to explore my research questions. It provided the ‘full, rich understanding’ of a very specific context (Willis 2007 p.240) that I sought, allowing for the nuances of the varied and changing nature of the trainees’ complex beliefs and perceptions of creativity and creative practice to be explored and revealed, although my findings are, typically of interpretive work, ‘neither totally objective nor unquestionably certain’ and any ‘claims to validity are tentative and qualified’ (Crotty 1998 p.40).

I used Action Research as a methodology, allowing for a close study of a single cohort of trainees, useful for capturing the detail and depth of subjective experience, and for a contextual approach, coherent with the conception of creativity itself as situated and context-bound. While this approach has limitations, particularly in the transferability of the findings to other contexts, using an ‘average case’ may help shed light upon aspects of a ‘commonplace situation’ (Yin 2009 p.48), and some ‘shared persistent dilemmas’ and ‘common realities’ (Britzman 2003 p.6) that trainees encounter. As such, this research might point to common experiences, especially of training within the SCITT context, and indicate that some situations may better support trainees to move towards CP than others. While ‘such descriptive work is necessary’ as it ‘can reveal patterns’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.19), these patterns cannot be viewed as templates for future action, as individuals are always in transaction with specific temporal contexts.

This research used a range of data generation and collection methods, in themselves part of the ‘action’ of Action Research, to better capture something
of the broad and varied experiences of the trainees, and to present and privilege their voices.

The Creativity Framework, despite some concerns with both the concept and the content (see 3.5.a.ii above), proved a useful starting point to bridge theory and practice and seemed to support some trainees in moving towards and justifying the development of creativity in their practice. The manner of the Framework’s introduction appeared to be central to its usefulness in that the Group Discussion allowed the trainees to develop an agentic response, where they could interrogate and challenge aspects both of the Framework and of their own and other’s responses to it. In future, it may be useful to further develop trainee agency by encouraging them to construct or reconstruct their own ‘Creativity Frameworks’ rather than simply responding to what is presented: several of the trainees focussed on developing pupil agency and dialogic teaching, and they could have redeveloped the Creativity Framework to reflect this emphasis.

Group Discussions were a key aspect of this research, being both interventions, which shaped and developed the trainees’ ideas, following the constructivist understanding of learning as an active process where meanings are constructed during and because of social interactions, and data-gathering events.

The discussions provided a useful forum for the trainees to engage with theory, both in an anticipatory way and in revisiting theory in the light of practice, reviewing, re-thinking and rebuilding their earlier perspectives. In addition, the trainees were able to challenge each other’s assumptions such as the view that ‘lower ability’ pupils could not be creative, or that assessors are critical of trainees who do not adhere to projected timings in lessons. That it is trainees challenging each other lends a certain credence: it is not the course leader ‘policing’ the approved stance (Klein 2001), but other trainees speaking from their own analogous experiences.

In addition, the Group Discussions gave trainees an opportunity to author, or re-author themselves (Holland et al 1998), developing an identity that was agentic
and powerful, even when retelling events and situations where they may have had little power, thereby ‘remaking their relationships to existing constraints’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.1010).

The Individual Interviews and the Silent Discussion seemed to allow for divergent views to be more freely expressed than in the Group Discussions such as PEARL’s attachment to transmission teaching, which was masked in the Group Discussions. This may be because trainees could express ideas without the immediate challenge or question likely in a Group Discussion.

The Silent Discussion was an innovative research tool which also demonstrated aspects of CP. It encouraged a more equitable response where even participants such as ARABELLA, who was quite reserved in other arenas, made frequent comments. It allowed for a useful iteration and interrogation of responses to the Creativity Framework where trainees could interact and *intra*-act, reviewing and re-examining their own and others’ earlier views, providing a forum for trainees to re-examine responses to and understandings of theory in the light of experience and practice. Like the Interviews, it also seemed to support the expression of divergent views.

While the use of metaphor has been contested as research tool, within this research writing metaphors acted not as a ‘royal road to ultimate knowledge’ (Guba and Lincoln 2005 p.205) but as an opportunity for trainees to express ‘unarticulated teaching identities’ (Sugrue 1997 p.218) and, in expressing them, to take an agentic stance towards them, distancing themselves from their ‘orientations’ by making them the ‘object of reflection and imagination’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.21). As an exercise, this may have helped the trainees to become more ‘aware of this holistic identity process they are undergoing’ (Olsen 2010 p.8), but it might have been more useful if trainees had been asked not just to comment on their metaphors, but to comment on them specifically from the perspective of what the metaphors showed about their virtual schemas of teaching and learning, and to revisit the process more frequently during the course.
In addition to the deliberate metaphors were the many ‘spontaneous’ metaphors offered by trainees during discussions and interviews, such as TOM’s sense of ‘jumping through hoops,’ REBECCA’s feeling of ‘walking on a tightrope,’ PEARL’s view of creativity as ‘let’s go hug a tree stuff’ and constance’s self-conception as a ‘mouse.’ Following Wilson, it seems that ‘some teachers used metaphor when they described strong feelings about their teaching,’ and paying attention to these metaphors ‘allows researchers the opportunity to explore the beliefs and perceived realities of participants’ settings and lives… regarding their identity’ (2013 p.79). This suggests that both deliberate and spontaneous metaphors can be a source of rich data for analysis, particularly in relation to identity issues which may otherwise remain unarticulated.

The data was analysed using aspects of discourse analysis, drawing from Gee’s (2005) work. This process highlighted the potential of actors, the trainees in this instance, not only to invoke but to subvert the broader ‘capital D discourse’ (Gee 2005), in this case using the discourse of economic success, more generally linked with functionalist views of education, to support an agentic and creative version of education, reinforcing the view that ‘human actors do not merely repeat past routines; they are also the inventors of new possibilities for thought and action’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.983-984).

Overall, however, the methodology and methods raised some ethical concerns, particularly in encouraging trainees to engage in a mode of teaching which may not cohere with the values of the training course or its partner schools. Where these conflicting approaches to teaching are not sufficiently explored or explicitly discussed between trainees, teachers and the SCITT staff, trainees can be undermined, and the schools perhaps wrongly seen as unsupportive of the values of teacher education. While I had included mentors in discussions about CP and shared the Creativity Framework with them, it may be that the ramifications of the Framework were not sufficiently explored, and that some teachers either offered superficial acquiescence or felt that aspects of Framework could be used within a largely transmission model of teaching. While wanting to avoid the ‘deficit model’ of schools that permeates much research on school partnerships with training institutions (Perez-Gomez 2000,
for example), it seems likely that fuller discussions with the Western SCITT and its partner schools are needed to help resolve such issues.

In addition to these general issues, likely to arise when promoting constructivist approaches within a competency model of training, this research uncovered specific instances where trainees, notably REBECCA and ARABELLA, were not supported in their development and were actively prevented from occupying the teacher role. These concerns were brought to the attention of the management group of the Western SCITT, which temporarily withdrew its partnership from the school in question.

6.3 Summary of findings and contribution

In addition to the insight into my own practice, this study may have wider significance to the field of teacher education: firstly, the location of this study within the SCITT context allows for a focus on the impact of this context on trainee teachers; secondly the development of the perspective of contextual creativity may be of use to trainees and teacher educators; thirdly, the methods which allowed for capturing the rich and complex nature of trainees engagement with creativity during their training year may be of interest to others researching issues of creativity. I address each of these areas in turn in the following sections.

6.3.a Creativity, the SCITT context and teacher education

Given the continuing growth of the SCITT model of teacher education with ‘Teaching Schools’, ‘Schools Direct,’ ‘Teach First’ and the GTP becoming a form of SCITT, the SCITT model of teacher education is becoming more prevalent, and yet it is still a less fully researched area, particularly in comparison to HEI-based courses. Locating this research within the context of the SCITT model and exploring the effects of the SCITT context on aspects of trainee teachers’ education seems important at this time.

Initial responses to ongoing policy changes that promote the SCITT model have been largely negative seeing it as instrumental in ‘the gradual shift away from teacher education as an academic study to one of preparation for a skill or craft-
based occupation’ (Browne and Reid 2012 p.498). SCITTs operate within a policy context that requires significantly more time is spent in schools and in classrooms than in HEI-based courses. This promotes classroom practice as the key learning of the training course at the expense, some argue, of academic input (Goodson 1997, Davies and Ferguson 1998, Browne and Reid 2012, Stanfield and Cremin 2013), with concomitant concerns that the reduced academic input means that the effects of the competency model may be more pronounced in school-based training. In the light of such concerns about the possible effects of SCITTs on trainees and on the profession as a whole this research has offered some insights into how far this SCITT has in fact promoted a ‘limited and normative model of training’ (Browne and Reid 2012 p.507), and provides some initial indications of the particular challenges and supports the SCITT training model offers to trainees moving towards creativity in their practice.

The ‘limited and normative model of training’ anticipated by Browne and Reid (2012 p.507) among others, was most evident in two particular areas in this study: issues around lesson structure and planning, and issues around the induction of trainees into the CoP of the school.

With regard to lesson structure and planning, the introduction of constructivist approaches to teaching and The Creativity Framework appeared to conflict with the training given on the Western SCITT, where lessons are required to have narrowly defined and clearly observable learning outcomes, outcomes which are ‘categorised as acceptable work according to standards criteria’ (Maisuria 2005 p.143, italics in original), and where lessons are rigidly pre-planned to move pupils towards these predetermined outcomes. This suggests the Western SCITT supports a model of learning which reflects the competency model and is ‘about convergence onto a pre-existent truth’ rather than the model of the Creativity Framework which is ‘about divergence – about broadening what is knowable, beable, doable’ (Davis 2004 p.184). If the Western SCITT is to support moves towards greater creativity, it may need to reassess its insistence on pre-planning towards specific and measurable outcomes.
However, by engaging trainees with models of learning that do not cohere with those proposed by their partner schools or on other parts of the training, the process whereby trainees ‘challenge, reconsider and reformulate their schemas’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.14) may be facilitated. It may be in the ‘gaps and spaces’ formed by these contradictions and tensions between the competency model promoted by the SCITT and the approach to teaching and Learning promoted by the Creativity Framework that trainees’ agency and creativity is most likely to be occasioned. This suggests that it may be necessary for SCITTs to offer models of training that do indeed move beyond the ‘limited and normative’ (Browne and Reid 2012 p.507) if trainees are to develop their own agency and engage in Creative Practice.

While there seems to be an irreconcilable conflict between the aims of contextual creativity and the realities of training in the SCITT context, and some trainees experienced conflict and tension as a result, several of the trainees found ways to accommodate CP within the requirements of the training course and one suggested that her use of CP had influenced the partner school to adopt aspects of this too. Mid-course, several trainees appeared to move through a period where they experienced an enhanced sense of risk and danger in adopting CP; by the end of the course, however, most viewed lessons which were built around the precepts of CP as the ‘brilliant lessons’ (TOM GD3) where pupils ‘were completely alive and engaged’ (SAM GD3) and where the pupils ‘absolutely love[d] it’ (AMY GD3). This suggests that approaches to teaching and learning which move beyond the ‘limited and normative’ (Browne and Reid 2012 p.507) are possible within the SCITT context, but that trainees may require additional support during the ‘early adoption’ stages of CP, although the sense of risk and danger dissipates with time as trainees benefit from the greater engagement of more agentic pupils.

In addition the enhanced role of the school in SCITTs necessitates greater attention to the experiences of trainees in these schools. Following Lave and Wenger (1991), Davis (2004) and others in viewing schools, and within these, classrooms, as communities of practice allows for the trainees’ experience to be better theorised but also requires that we ask ‘What are the characteristics of
communities of practice that make broad accessibility to the whole steadily available to newcomers?’ (Lave 1991 p.81).

While ten Dam and Blom suggest that SCITTs are more effective at trying ‘to bridge theory and practice’ (2006 p.657) than HEI-led courses, recognising that learning is situated and ‘should be understood as increasing participation in communities of practice’ (2006 p.657), this is only likely to occur where trainees are indeed effectively inducted in to these communities. In this research, induction into the CoP of the school appeared to be a barrier to several trainees’ use of CP. Some trainees reported experiencing restricted access to social, cultural and material resources, and thus felt they were prevented from taking up a central position in the CoP and enacting the role of the teacher. While these were a minority, few trainees experienced a smooth movement trajectory from peripheral to central position, suggesting entry into a CoP may be by engagement in a series of disordered and discrete events, during which one may be able to exhibit varying degrees of agency and gain, or lose, status and social capital. The challenge for teacher education and for partnership schools, particularly those engaged in a SCITT context where the school is the key CoP for the trainee, is to provide contexts which are conducive to trainees exhibiting increasing amounts of agency, even in potentially high-risk ‘improvisations’ (Holland et al 1998), and so developing the capital, or the sedimented responses, to potentially engage in the next event or context in a yet more agentic and creative way. It was in the instances of ‘improvisation’ that several of the trainees reported feeling that they most fully inhabited the role of teacher, and that their own and the pupils’ agency and creativity was most fully occasioned.

Within the SCITT context, trainees still have significant agency and are able to author themselves (Holland et al 1998) to perform and invoke identities (Butler 2006, Lewis et al 2007) and to influence their context (Davis 2004, Edwards and Blake 2007). It is clear, however, that this process may be enhanced by appropriate support, and course leaders and mentors may need to provide the tacit permission and reassurance for trainees to loosen themselves from ‘past patterns of interaction and reframe their relationships to existing constraints’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.1010).
Providing this support is an essential aspect of the training course and in this research, trainees were supported in exploring new approaches and identities, including those in apparent or initial conflict with the expectations of the partner schools, by the Group Discussions, where trainees could re-author themselves as agentic; by the Creativity Framework and the ‘permission’ this provided for exploring different forms of practice; by the mentors’ official sanctioning of the Creativity Framework at staff meetings; by classroom visits and observations where trainees were encouraged to pursue approaches that may be in tension with customary or existing practice; and by several school staff who supported trainees in engaging in CP. Taking a view of learning as situated suggests that school-based courses offer the potential for ‘deep learning’ in ‘meaningful contexts’ (Raffo and Hall 2006 p.55) but this is only likely to be the case where both the SCITT course and the partner schools offer such supports to the trainees in developing their agency and creativity.

In addition, aspects of the research process itself supported trainees in bridging theory and practice: the Framework reduced theory to its actionable aspects supporting trainees to enact it in the classroom while the Group Discussions allowed trainees to reflect on theory and connect it with their practice, and to re-author themselves. Further, the iterative nature of the Group Discussions and the Silent Discussion allowed trainees to build their perspectives of theoretical approaches, and then to revisit and rebuild these in the light of practice. Providing opportunities for trainees to engage with a range of theory and practice, and to bridge this by what Hagger and McIntyre (2006) term ‘practical theorizing,’ building theory from and in the light of practice is essential, but it may also be worth coining the term ‘theoretical practice’ where anticipating and exploring possible practice, the ‘hypothesizing’ and ‘projectivity’ described by Emirbayer and Mische (1998 pgs.984 and 988), in which the trainees engaged during the Group Discussions formed another essential means of bridging theory and practice.

While the movement between lecture room and school was certainly an area of difficulty there was little evidence of the partner schools consistently acting as barriers to CP as described by Perez-Gomez (2000), Raffo and Hall (2006) or Hagger and McIntyre (2006), for example. The picture was more complex, with
several schools accepting or even adopting CP, others permitting it, and some schools reluctant to allow trainees to engage in CP, finding it too far removed from their customary practice. Even within individual schools, trainees reported a range of support or lack of it for their use of CP, suggesting that schools may hold a diverse range of views and values which shift and change over time and between classes, classrooms and teachers. Viewing ‘the school’ as singular entity is misleading and masks the complex and multiple range of approaches that exist and which the trainee may encounter within a single institution.

6.3.b Creativity and agency
In this research I developed the perspective that teaching for creativity is within the constructivist tradition and should be seen contextually. Using Emirbayer and Mische’s (1998) and Biesta and Tedder’s (2006) understanding of agency as an approach to theorise creativity, and further, making the case for creativity to be regarded as largely dependent on agency and as situated and contextual, shifts attention to the context of learning at every level – including the trainees’ relationship with pupils in the classroom, the mentor or teacher’s relationship with the trainee in the school, and the teacher educator’s relationship with the trainee in the lecture room. In each context, control should be passed back to the learner (Jeffrey and Craft 2004 p.81) if the learner is to operate with agency and so have the potential to be creative and to engage fully in learning as it is understood by the constructivist tradition. Creativity is most likely to arise in the ‘gaps and spaces’ where learners - both trainees and pupils - have genuine agency, where endpoints are not predetermined, where knowledge can be divergent as well as convergent, and where learners are co-participants in the construction of knowledge. In terms of the trainees development as teachers, taking a contextual approach to creativity required that trainees see creativity as situated, as transactional and as ‘occasioned’ (Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.19) in relation to specific contexts, rather than as individual and inherent. In this study, such a shift tended to move trainees away from pathologising and excluding individual pupils and groups of pupils as uncreative, and instead shifted their focus to the context and to their own role in shaping this context.
In the classroom, Jeffrey and Craft’s view of ‘teaching for creativity,’ with its focus on pupil agency and ‘passing back control to the learner’ (Jeffrey and Craft 2004 p.81) was a useful approach for trainees aiming to achieve contextual creativity, although it could be supplemented and extended by incorporating Possibility Thinking (Cremin et al 2006, and Chappell et al 2008) and ‘dialogic teaching’ (Alexander 2008, Lyle 2008). These aspects seemed to be closely interdependent, webbing around a focus on occasioning pupil agency. In contrast, the view of creativity supported by NACCCE, with its focus on ‘producing outcomes of value’ (1999 p.29), and that of Ofsted (2010), appeared to be restrictive of and limiting to creativity.

In the lecture room, contextual creativity suggests a deep-rooted shift in relationships between teacher educators and trainees is required if trainees are to engage in Creative Practice. The trainees in the lecture room as much as the pupils in the classroom need to be positioned so they can achieve and exhibit increasing amounts of agency during their training.

6.3.c Trainees’ voices and capturing perspectives on creativity

This study indicated that using a range of qualitative research methods to explore trainees’ views, perspectives and experiences at different stages of the course and in different ways was essential to capture the varied and changing nature of trainees’ perspectives on creativity. Further, using a range of methods, including those which are individual, those which are group-based and social, those which use speech as the primary method of communication and those which rely on writing was effective in exploring different aspects of the trainees’ experiences and in allowing for the subtleties and nuances of their views to be revealed. I also suggest that using innovative and iterative research methods such as the Silent Discussion and metaphor writing and analysis can be useful to encourage intra-action as well as inter-action, where trainees can re-examine and reflect on their own and others’ previous perspectives and understandings. In addition, these methods moved beyond speech as the primary medium, capturing ideas and thoughts which might otherwise go unspoken. In all, this suggests that a broad methodology with multiple points and methods of engagement and reengagement is useful if a fuller understanding of the
trainees’ complex and changing perspectives and understandings is to be attempted.

6.4 Recommendations

6.4.a For teacher educators

Teacher educators working in a SCITT context may benefit from awareness of the specific challenges and opportunities of this particular model of teacher education, specifically the effects on trainees of spending greater amounts of time in schools, and the possible enhancement of the negative impacts of the competency model on this form of teacher education with the resulting ‘limited and normative model of training’ (Browne and Reid 2012 p.507) that this may engender. Within these challenges lie opportunities for more effectively bridging the theory / practice divide, for enhancing trainee agency and creativity, and for developing constructivist approaches to teacher education.

Contextual creativity suggests a change to teacher education where teacher educators move away from a focus on the trainees’ past experiences, away from the provision and policing of correct knowledge (Klein 2001), and towards a focus on how the context that is provided and maintained may occasion specific responses. Viewing trainees as able to invoke identities, to ‘perform’ themselves to ‘accommodate’ their audience (Lewis et al 2007 p.xvi) suggests that where these identities are considered unhelpful, the context that occasions them should be addressed, rather than pathologising the trainee. If trainees are to engage in CP, it will be necessary for them to operate in contexts which provide them with opportunities to exhibit their agency and creativity.

Specifically, this may require that training courses promote, and demonstrate in their own practice, models of learning where CP rather than transmission teaching is associated with ‘real learning.’ It further suggests that the model of classroom practice promoted by training courses doesn’t close down possibilities for creativity through rigid planning towards narrow and predetermined Learning Outcomes. This may require a change to some customary practice by SCITTs, and that SCITTs also effectively promote this approach to learning to their partner schools and the staff within them.
From a personal, professional perspective, this research has cemented my adherence to a model of contextual creativity that supports enhanced agency for learners in all contexts. This has led me to reconsider the content and the method of delivery of the SCITT course and to consciously adapt these in the light of my findings. Further, it has led me to interrogate relationships with the partner schools and to take a more active role in supporting trainees’ movement towards the central position in the CoP and in advocating for the trainees’ adoption of CP and for the trainees to have sufficient opportunities for improvisations.

6.4.b For further research

This research has explored some aspects of trainees’ beliefs about and perceptions of creativity and Creative Practice within a SCITT context. It has formulated some tentative answers to the following questions:

What is it... that engages people mainly in habitual schematic responses? What is it that makes it possible for people to engage in imaginative, projective responses? And what makes it possible for people to engage with the present situation in an agentic way?

(Biesta and Tedder 2006 p.16)

However, much further work is needed to continue this exploration and to consider how far the issues explored here are specific to the SCITT context and how far they may apply to other models of teacher education.

While this study has necessarily taken a broad approach, in future research it may be useful to focus on some of the issues identified here more narrowly to explore how they impact on trainees and their movements towards contextual creativity, such as their ongoing understanding of the relationship(s) between creativity and learning, or issues relating to creativity and teacher identity. It may also be useful to investigate how far each of the individual aspects of the Creativity Framework contributes to the whole, whether some aspects are more useful than others, and whether they can, in fact, be disaggregated, or if, as suggested here, they form a whole that describes an inter-connected and webbed series of behaviours, all of which are required for developing contextual creativity.
In addition, it may be useful to apply the Creativity Framework in a context beyond that for which it was initially developed, and explore whether it is useful as an intervention beyond the SCITT context, in HEI-based training, for example, always with the caveat that while the Framework may be regarded as a ‘trigger’ for developing constructivist approaches to creativity, it can’t be seen as ‘causing or compelling learners to learn specific things in specific ways’ (Davis 2004 p.133).

It may also be worthwhile to follow trainees into year 1, and beyond, of their teaching career to explore their ongoing relationship with contextual creativity, and to move beyond the focus on the trainees themselves and explore the experiences and perspectives of the pupils and the partnership school teachers regarding Creative Practice.
Appendices

Appendix 1: The background of the Creativity Framework

The three headings of Standing Back, Profiling Learner Agency and Providing Time and Space are drawn directly from Cremin et al’s 2008 paper which identified these three aspects as ‘features of pedagogical practice which fostered possibility thinking’ (p.113). I added the heading ‘Planning’ to give this aspect more prominence.

Planning

If creativity is more likely to arise where pupils have agency, and where they can use this agency to engage in imagining ‘alternative possibilities’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 p.963), lesson plans need to be flexible and responsive, rather than scripted and rigid. While Cremin et al discuss planning in their case studies of how teachers profile learner agency, where ‘the teacher … planned each term’s learning intentions based on the children’s identified questions’ (2006 p.114), they see planning as a subsidiary aspect of profiling learner agency. In the Creativity Framework however, planning is given more attention as it is in the planning stage that many of the conflicts between CP and traditional approaches to teaching come most sharply into focus; in addition, the context of this research is that of a training course where planning has a very high profile. The trainees tend, and are encouraged by the Western SCITT course and its partnership schools, to plan to very narrow and specific learning objectives, where, it can be argued, ‘independent thinking and elaborate innovations’ may not be encouraged ‘because the curriculum and standards criteria do not recognise unorthodox creative expressionism’ (Maisuria 2005 p.143). Further, the initial Group Discussion suggested some of the participants perceived CP as allied with ‘play’ ‘freedom’ and even ‘messing around.’ The iterative and responsive nature of this research meant that I could address these early perspectives here, by giving planning for creativity more prominence, allowing for discussion of whether, and how far it is possible to plan for creativity.

The Planning section of the framework begins with the point: ‘Incorporate alternatives into planning – perhaps a branching model, rather than a linear
model.' Davis (2004) suggests that the linear plan, developed without reference to specific groups of learners, embodies the transmission model of teaching. CP, however, demands a more situated understanding where 'lessons' cannot be divorced from context. While this suggests, at its extreme, that planning per se may be redundant, in the Framework a more moderate stance is taken, which may allow for greater responsiveness to the context without directly contradicting the ITE course's requirement for plans, or removing the trainee's sense of security in having a plan. Such branching plans may also allow the pupils' greater agency, which arises where they have 'control over the ways in which...[they]...respond to the situation' (Biesta and Tedder 2006 pgs.20-21), able to shape the direction of the lesson, rather than respond to a prescribed script. This also reflects the work of Atkinson and Claxton (2000) who discuss the importance of being able to 'adapt the preconceived plan in the light of the changing context' (p.6). The Creativity Framework, however, suggests that the plans themselves should have alternatives incorporated from the start.

Similarly, the second point, drawing from Cremin et al’s comment that a ‘highly focused reflective posture/action allowed unintended as well as intended learning outcomes to be noticed and celebrated’ (2006 p.115), may encourage the trainees to think about whether pupils had learned even if they hadn’t met the specified objective. This allows for a more constructivist view of learning and teaching, where the outcome isn’t predetermined but occurs as a result of the interactions in the lesson.

The third point draws on dialogic approaches (Alexander 2001, Lyle 2008) and encourages trainees to see oral work as of equal status to written work. Although this aspect has been little addressed in work on dialogic teaching, it is likely that oral work can be seen as ‘process’ work, while written work is often allied with ‘outcomes’ in that it is more readily assessed and measured. Focusing on oral work may shift the balance of the lesson towards process rather than outcome, useful where in a culture of performativity where the overemphasis on outcomes can be reductive and constraining (Maisuria 2005 p.144). Further, emphasising oral outcomes supports the pupils' voice in lessons, rather than the monologic classroom described by Lyle (2008 p.225.)
The idea of co-constructing the curriculum with the pupils arises from the constructivist approaches to learning and the fourth point was adapted from Cremin et al’s work: ‘it was considered important that the children were involved in jointly determining the direction of their work’ (2006 p.114), although Cremin et al see this as an activity under the heading of ‘profile learner agency’ while I have chosen to put this in the ‘Planning’ section to highlight the need to consider this prior to the lesson. The bullet point emphasises that CP is not about teaching creatively, and entertaining the pupils (see section 2.3.a) but about building on the pupils’ knowledge and interests and shaping the lesson in response to these. Such co-construction is a precursor to the pupils constructing their own knowledge and understanding in the lessons, and positions them as more agentic learners with some control over the conditions of their learning.

The next point in this section again draws from Cremin et al’s work, where pupil choice is central to pupil agency: ‘children were offered open access to a wide range of learning resources and broad choices over what and how to engage’ (2006 p.115). It also draws from the work of Davis, Sumara and Luce-Kapler (2000) on ‘liberating constraints’ where ‘there is a balance between freedom and restraint’ (p.87) allowing for ‘enough organization to orient students’ actions’ but with ‘sufficient openness to allow for the varieties of experience, ability and interest’ (Davis, Sumara and Luce-Kapler 2000 p.87) Specifically, Cremin et al commented that:

> The teachers set up a range of individual, pair and small group collaborative opportunities that sought to help the young learners develop their independence and make their own decisions
> (Cremin et al 2006 p.115)

This is more likely to happen if trainees address it in the planning stage. Promoting pupil choice positions pupils to have greater agency, and with more agency comes the possibility for creativity to arise.

The fifth point in the planning stage was drawn directly from Cremin et al’s (2006) work on possibility thinking where the use of broad possibility questions is key to generating ‘what if’ thinking. By placing this in the planning section I hope to encourage trainees to generate such broad possibility questions as
both the starting point and the framework for their lessons, rather than using such questions within a very linear and pre-defined plan, where they would be less effective.

**Standing back**
The overall intention behind this section is to support the shift of emphasis from teacher to pupil, and to move from a focus on what the teacher is doing, thinking, saying to what the pupils are doing, thinking, saying. This change in focus is likely to impact on the balance of power in the lesson, reducing the ‘the epistemological dominance of the teacher’ (Lyle 2008 p.225) and allowing pupils to be positioned as more powerful, more agentic and thus as having more potential for creativity. Unless the teacher ‘stands back’ it may be difficult for spaces to emerge where pupil agency can be supported.

As part of ‘standing back,’ Cremin et al identified the following as important: ‘stopping and observing, and listening and noticing the nature of the learner’s engagement’ (2006 p.113). ‘Stoppping’ seems to imply that the teacher halts their own self-directed flow of activity, and instead attends to the flow of activity from the pupil(s). The need to ‘listen’ and ‘acknowledge their [the pupils’] thinking’ (Cremin et al’s 2006 p.113) is central to dialogic teaching, and to the idea of co-constructing, rather than ‘delivering’ knowledge, and may also lead to the recognition of unintended outcomes.

The next point ‘Support pupils by being attentive and available’ is also drawn from Cremin et al’s work, although they discuss it in terms of ‘remaining focused on the learners’ (2006 p.114). Here I rephrased it to emphasise that ‘standing back’ is not akin to disregarding the pupils but is a form of active pupil support.

The final bullet point is also from Cremin et al (2006) who suggest that the act of standing back can encourage teachers to ‘reflect deeply about learners’ ideas’ (2006 p.114) rather than, although this is only implied, being too concerned with transmitting their own ideas to pupils.

**Profiling Learner Agency**
If agency is central to creativity, then profiling learner agency becomes a key aspect of working towards CP. I include ten points under this heading to show a
range of approaches to enhancing pupil agency in the classroom. The majority of the points were again drawn directly from Cremin et al’s work (2006). The first two points were taken from: ‘the children could initiate their own activities or make their own choices within a loosely framed activity’ (p.114) which also reflects the work of Davis, Sumara and Luce-Kapler on ‘liberating constraints’ (2000 p.87). I broadened the meaning of the third point: Cremin et al (2006) say that the children could ‘try out possibilities as they experimented with the resources to hand’ implying that this applied largely or only to ‘hands on’ or ‘making’ activities. Reducing this to ‘pupils can try out possibilities’ allows for it to have a broader scope, to be applied to concepts and ideas as well as to working with physical objects, and thus to be more easily applied to the context of this research with trainees in secondary English classrooms.

‘Pupils’ ideas are taken seriously’ is drawn from work on dialogic teaching. Lyle (2008), for example, comments that teachers need to ‘value pupils’ knowledge and make it a resource for learning’ (p.231). This reflects the earlier point about listening and acknowledging pupils’ thinking, but takes it further, making possible a more constructivist learning situation, where pupils’ current thinking is the starting point for development. ‘Taking pupils’ ideas seriously,’ the ‘speculative stance’ (from Cremin et al p.114: ‘her speculative stance indicated a genuine interest in the children’s ideas’) and ‘answering a question with a question’ are included to encourage trainees to consider their role in the classroom and to move away from the pressure to be the all-knowing expert, developing the idea that the teacher’s role should move beyond ‘epistemological dominance’ (Lyle 2008 p.225) and the ‘provision and policing’ of correct knowledge (Klein 2001 p.260) and should instead focus on encouraging pupils to think and explore ideas, thus supporting pupil agency. In addition, paying such attention to pupils’ ideas is likely to encourage pupils to engage in exploring possibilities, in the ‘hypothesizing’ and ‘projectivity’ (Emirbayer and Mische 1998 pgs.984 and 988) which is at the heart of creativity.

The final three bullet points here (‘teacher privileges talk as much as writing; teacher and pupils engage in lengthy discussions and dialogues; teacher feedback promotes learning, avoids simple evaluation’) are drawn from
Alexander’s (2001) and Lyle’s (2008) work on dialogic teaching. They are designed to encourage trainees to value interactive talk as a tool of teaching and learning, promoting an emphasis on the process of learning rather than on its product or outcome, and moving away from the ‘initiation – response – feedback’ exchange (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975), or the ‘lecturing’ approach which can tend to prevail in transmission teaching and which limits pupils’ agency.

**Creating time and space**

Control of time and space is a key aspect of the teacher’s dominance of the classroom and central to much transmission teaching and teaching to specific outcomes. However, by giving pupils some control over these resources, pupils are positioned as more agentic and powerful, and so are more likely to be able to exhibit creativity. ‘Creating time and space’ has two bullet points: ‘encourage mutual ownership of the classroom’ and ‘timing of activities is governed by engagement levels and intuition, not the clock’ both of which were drawn directly from Cremin et al’s work (2006). In the first, a primary teacher in their study says:

> the children do need to have ownership of the room and the environment<br>and indeed the whole school. They need to know where everything is,<br>they need to feel they’re part of all the things we do.\footnote{Cremin et al 2006 p.115}

This may, however, be substantially easier in a primary classroom where pupils are largely based in a single classroom, and where ownership can develop over a whole year. In the secondary school, pupils are unlikely to occupy a room for more than three hours a week; in addition, that room will need to be ‘owned’ by a range of different classes and age groups. However, this point draws attention to issues such as the control of resources which can be central to positioning within a context such as the classroom, although it doesn’t address differences in social and cultural capital which may dictate how far one pupil rather than another feels able to make a claim to these resources, and how far these claims are recognised and acceded to, or denied by others.

The second bullet point is drawn from Cremin et al’s comments that ‘the rhythm of learning was governed by engagement rather than the clock’ (2006 p.115). Again, this may be rather easier to achieve where a teacher has some control
over the shape of the whole day, or week, or even term. In secondary schools, the parameters are narrower, and governing by the clock may have to be taken within the boundary of a single lesson. However, the general point supports the idea of the primacy of the pupil’s learning rather than the teacher’s planning, and suggests that pre-planned lesson ‘timings’ may not be useful if the intention is to support the agency and develop the creativity of pupils.
**Appendix 2: The Creativity Statements for the Silent Discussion**

Children need to know a certain amount – the basics – before they can be expected to be creative.

Creativity in the classroom is all about letting children do what they want: it leads to unfocused learning and won’t help them to pass exams.

Low ability pupils, or pupils with behavioural needs can’t cope with open-ended lessons – they need structure and clear instructions.

Creative and open-ended teaching is only really possible with well-behaved and motivated pupils.

Without creativity, the children just become like robots, they have no independence and this doesn’t prepare them well for adult life.

If everyone works on different things and in different ways it’s hard to standardise assessments and benchmark their progress.

To get pupils to be creative you have to take risks and you have to be prepared to fail.

It’s pupils’ ownership of the learning that matters, not whether you have stuck to your lessons plan.
Appendix 3: The Creativity Statements and Group Discussion 2

The Creativity Statements used for the Silent Discussion (boxed), followed by the section(s) of the Group Discussion 2 which suggested it.

SM: the author / Course Leader.

Children need to know a certain amount – the basics – before they can be expected to be creative.

the issues are as well if you’ve got a bottom set they need to have that fundamental grasp of whatever it is before they can think about something else it’s no good going oh I can think about this differently if they can’t do it to start with which is the issue there (TOM GD2)

Creativity in the classroom is all about letting children do what they want: it leads to unfocused learning and won’t help them to pass exams.

I think it’s nice the idea is to let kids work independently, I’m all for doing it, unfortunately the society we live in and the education system we live in it’s very exam driven, it’s very this is what you have to do to pass this exam, let’s do it, and that’s what we do whether we like it or not and we are trained to do, whether we like it or not (REBECCA GD2)

Low ability pupils, or pupils with behavioural needs can’t cope with open-ended lessons – they need structure and clear instructions.

I think SAM is right though in all of them I was explicitly told don’t do anything creative they can’t work in groups don’t do anything creative with them don’t do anything just get them to copy off the board (AMY GD2)

Creative and open-ended teaching is only really possible with well-behaved and motivated pupils.

SM: Could you do it [CREATIVE LESSONS] with year 8 set 1?
AMY: possibly, probably yes, yes
SM: what would be the difference?
AMY: because they’d be more behaving, less behavioural
PEARL: yeah that’s it
REBECCA: more attuned to learning, if you’ve got kids who want to learn
they’re more likely to relish the opportunity to work independently
whereas if you’ve got kids that don’t want to learn there just going to see
it as an opportunity to doss and let someone else do the work (GD2)

Without creativity, the children just become like robots, they have no
independence and this doesn’t prepare them well for adult life.

ARABELLA: But all the ones who have been, I’ve got one who’s literally
been spoon-fed and he can do it but he won’t even read the learning
objective on the board because he’s used to someone writing it down for
him and telling him, bullet pointing exactly what to do so he has in terms
of creativity none because he’s always been told and I’m forcing him to
think for himself to do it and it is coming on but it’s just kind of been
sucked out of him
TOM: They’re not even really thinking then, you’re saying there you go
don’t really know what to do, yes there, it’s done
ARABELLA: They’re being robots
REBECCA: And it doesn’t prepare them for anything in future life does it
(GD2)

If everyone works on different things and in different ways it’s hard to
standardise assessments and benchmark their progress.

because I imagine some teachers, with like that recreation thing some
people just freak out completely and go oh my god they’re all doing
different things, what do I do? (REBECCA GD2)

TOM: but I think the reality is we’re always going to need some sort of
benchmark to judge people on
REBECCA: yes everything’s going to need, in order for that to really work
everything needs to change in our ways, the universities will need to
change, the world of work would need to change and
TOM: universities won’t change
REBECCA: no it won’t ever do it, like when you went for that job and they
were like have you got a first, if you’d got a first you would have got an
interview, sorry, so that’s a prime example, they judged you on your
academic success not how creative and how wonderful you are (GD2)
To get pupils to be creative you have to take risks and you have to be prepared to fail.

whereas where I am now it’s pretty much like ‘you do what you want, whatever you think is going to work, try it’, which is nice in a way but it’s bloody scary at the same time (TOM GD2)

SM: and also if they’re trying out there’s always the risk they’re failing
TOM: yeah yeah that they wouldn’t get anything out of it
REBECCA: but it’s good to not succeed, and that’s the only way they’ll learn that that didn’t work, instead of us going no that’s rubbish, that won’t work, you need to do it this way, you have to do it like that. (GD2)

Being watched all the time and having to stick rigidly to lesson plans is stifling: you can’t be creative under those circumstances.

TOM: I do feel a certain, with some of my groups I feel like I could go in there with just the beginnings of an idea and develop it but I feel like I have to jump through those hoops for the teachers to prove I’ve
REBECCA: I think the lesson plans that we have to do make us into very prescriptive teachers which then suffocates our creativity at the moment but again it’s that ideal that next year you can be that little bit more free and as you progress become more (GD2)

PEARL: I’m here every day and it’s like that sort of stuff stifles the creativity and if there’s one problem with it I’d say it’s that
TOM: yeah
AMY: timings
TOM: I like the idea that you’ve got the lesson plan but I would prefer it if it wasn’t so like
REBECCA: detailed and regimented
TOM: because I think the reality is I think when we’re teaching you’re not always going to be, and I think it’s in some ways it’s stifling to expect us always to be like bang on with those times (GD2)

It’s pupils’ ownership of the learning that matters, not whether you have stuck to your lessons plan.

REBECCA: and they’ve owned that conversation in a way, it’s their ownership of it that matters rather than doing a lesson that you’ve planned to the letter
ARABELLA: rather than talking at them and kind of governing the lesson
KIM: if they’re not engaged then there’s no point in dragging in out, move onto the next thing, it’s a waste of their learning time if they’re not engaged (GD2)
## Appendix 4: The Coding process – an example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data (from GD2)</th>
<th>Comments and Gee’s 7 building tasks</th>
<th>Key ideas / words / phrases</th>
<th>Summary codes</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KIM: but if you did that lesson and you did change it I don’t think whoever is watching you is going to be like oh no they haven’t done</td>
<td>Willing to change plans to suit pupils, some faith in her assessors to recognise this</td>
<td>Flexible with lesson plans Teacher / staff judgments / assessments</td>
<td>Responsive to pupils Flexible Changes lesson plans Risk to positive assessment</td>
<td>9.CP and flexibility / responsiveness and 10.CP and the risk to positive assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REBECCA: well they didn’t at my first placement but now they do</td>
<td>Mixed responses of class teachers to changed plans</td>
<td>Teacher / staff judgments / assessments</td>
<td>Risk to positive assessment</td>
<td>10.CP and the risk to positive assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARABELLA: I change mine</td>
<td>Confidence in her approach– identity</td>
<td>Flexible with lesson plans</td>
<td>Responsive to pupils</td>
<td>9.CP and flexibility / responsiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEARL: I take massive issue with this bit KIM because there have been instances</td>
<td>‘Massive’ – emotion; direct address to KIM – conflict here? Under pressure? Relationships</td>
<td>Assessment pressure?</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>10.CP and the risk to positive assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIM: things do go wrong in class</td>
<td>Interrupts; acceptance of change and unexpected. Relationships / significance</td>
<td>Risk Flexibility / planning The Unexpected</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>9.CP and flexibility / responsiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEARL: where</td>
<td>Tries to regain turn – disagrees with KIM – personal antagonism?</td>
<td>Flexible with plans, accepts change</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>9.CP and flexibility / responsiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KIM: you can’t be perfect</td>
<td>Perfect= following plan? Perfect= as judged by assessor? Acceptance of imperfections? Significance / social goods</td>
<td>Flexible with lesson plans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEARL: I’ve been marked down or I’ve had massive criticism thrown at me because I have deviated from my timings</td>
<td>Issue with assessment, rather than flexibility? And gaining good assessments? Social goods / identity</td>
<td>Flexible Teacher / staff judgments / assessments</td>
<td>Responsive to pupils Risk to positive assessment</td>
<td>9.CP and flexibility / responsiveness and 10.CP and the risk to positive assessment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 5: Themes, codes and data sets: an overview

#### Group 1 themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Data sets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Creativity as inherent</td>
<td>Creativity is inherent / born with it</td>
<td>GD1; GD2; SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creativity can be developed or taught</td>
<td>SD; GD1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Only some people are creative /a special talent</td>
<td>GD2; SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Everyone has potential to be creative</td>
<td>GD1; SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Creativity as artistry</td>
<td>Craft / making</td>
<td>GD1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Art / painting / drawing</td>
<td>GD1; WAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Creativity as a life-skill</td>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>GD1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thinking skills</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Life-skills</td>
<td>GD1; SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>GD2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Group 2 themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Data sets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Creativity as requiring knowledge / ability</td>
<td>Pupils need higher intelligence / ability to be creative</td>
<td>GD1; GD2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Top sets / bottom sets / special needs</td>
<td>GD1; GD2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pupils need prior knowledge to be creative</td>
<td>GD1; GD2; II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pupils don’t need intelligence / ability to be creative</td>
<td>GD2; SD; GD3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pupils don’t need prior knowledge to be creative</td>
<td>GD2; GD3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. CP and the risk to pupils learning</td>
<td>Risks to pupils passing exams / achieving targets</td>
<td>GD1; GD2; SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Risk to covering the curriculum / prescribed materials</td>
<td>GD1; II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Risk to ‘real’ learning</td>
<td>GD1; SD; GD3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. CP engaging pupils</td>
<td>Creativity is fun / enjoyable</td>
<td>GD1; GD3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creativity engages pupils into learning</td>
<td>GD1; GD3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creativity doesn’t engage pupils / switch off or don’t participate</td>
<td>GD2; GD3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creativity hides real learning</td>
<td>GD1; SD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. CP and outcomes

| Creativity might prevent you / pupils from meeting LOs | GD2 |
| LOs should be flexible / open-ended | SD; GD3 |
| LOs as written / product | GD2 |
| LOs as oral / process | SD; GD2; GD3 |

8. CP and Learner agency

| Pupil ownership and control of the lesson / aspects of the lesson | GD2; SD; GD3; II; WAM |
| Pupil independence, decision making and choice | GD2; SD; GD3; II; WAM |
| Agency / choice through physical movement / ownership of space | GD1; II |

Group 3 themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Data sets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. CP and flexibility / responsiveness</td>
<td>Being flexible</td>
<td>GD2; WAM; SD; GD3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being responsive to pupils</td>
<td>GD2; GD3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adhering to / changing lesson plans</td>
<td>GD2; SD; GD3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 10. CP and the risk to positive assessment | Lesson observations, scrutiny and assessments | GD2; II; GD3 |
| Pressure from staff to teach in certain ways / not to engage in CP | GD2; II; GD3 |

| 11. CP and the support of other teachers or mentors | The creativity of staff as inspiration / example | GD1 |
| Staff supporting the trainees’ CP | GD3; II |
| Staff hindering the trainees’ CP | GD2; GD3; II |

| 12 CP, agency and identity | Flexibility / improvisations | GD3 |
| Identity | WAM; GD2; GD3; II |
| Teacher persona | GD2; GD3; II; WAM |
| Positioning as a trainee / teacher | GD3; II |
| Agency / control (over space, resources, planning etc) | WAM; GD3; II |

182
References


National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE) (1999) *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education.* Suffolk: DfEE.


Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (2005) *Creativity: Find it, promote it! — Promoting pupils’ creative thinking and behaviour across the curriculum at key stages 1, 2 and 3 — practical materials for schools.* London: Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.


