To what extent does my embodiment of personal values allow me to extend opportunities for the most able at KS3 within Modern Foreign Languages, given the National Strategy Framework?

1: Standards versus arcadia

Simon Riding stated (May 2004)

" The way education is going is through standards because politically standards are what can be measured"

*You could also reference your points to the criteria you mention: draw on the **threshold documents** to refer to this imposition of standards on the education workforce.*

Standard 4.2 Wider professional effectiveness---School Development

Standard 2.3 Teaching and Assessment-Monitoring progress

1a: Recognising the role of standards upon the self

From the beginning of my life as an educator, there have been a number of standards which have exerted themselves upon my living theory and forced me or persuaded me to adapt my professional practice in order to fulfil them. In my PGCE year, I attempted to attain the standards for newly qualified teachers, throughout the first four years of my professional life I attempted to attain all the standards for subject teachers, and now I find myself faced with the standards for subject leaders. All of these sets of standards have served to alter or conflict with my embodied values.

From September I will be faced with the creation of a standards-based portfolio in order to move through the pay-spine threshold. In addition to these, standards imposed through academic research have required me to adhere to them in order for my work to be formally accredited. Even as I write now, I am aware that my writing must "contribute to academic knowledge"

Simon Riding responded:

"But aren't these choices that you are making: you don't have to go through the threshold: you don't have to write a Ph.D."

*I respond: The threshold allows me to access increased financial benefits which in this society I would not be as naïve as to not desire. This thesis is however my choice, but I **need** to write. I need to record these events, and this allows me an internationally recognised medium of sharing this research, and of accessing recognised academic institutions and co-researchers.*

When referring to the criteria for subject leaders (UK Teacher Training Agency 1996), I first attempted to fit into the mould. I would tick, question and cross each standard with a slavish deliverance in order to make sure that my work fitted into these standardized "common criteria". One of my main goals was the personal ambition to be able to tick every box, perceiving the completion of each standard to be a way in which to attain a personal arcadia. [1]This ambition relates to the concept of "work well done", the childhood pride that comes from a completed task that is recognised by parents. As we grow older, the capacity of others to wish to openly praise is

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[1] The National Standards for Subject Leaders (1998) divide into five broad sections. These are: 1. Core purpose of the subject leader 2. Key outcomes of subject leadership 3. professional knowledge and understanding 4. Skills and attributes 5. Key areas of subject leadership

reduced. We therefore seek an internal validation of good work, of work completed, which in part is what these standards offer:

Where is the idea of 'work well done from?-ask Jack to respond

"I can still remember at the age of seven or eight, being aware of the quality of relationship and in satisfaction in work well done…having a sense of pride in that.
When we had the discussion session here with the students, seeing the satisfaction in those students' faces at being recognized and having people interested in them..was fantastic" (Jack Whitehead, 28/04/2004, during the teacher-researcher group)

In May 2004 I was teaching two Year 7 groups. I developed an internal desire to identify the "right" students to be included in the fast track group for French from the beginning of Year 8. I felt myself pushing the role of standards upon my personal selection of these students. Whilst I discussed with my colleagues that personal "teacher gut feeling" was one of the best selection methods of these students, I was still pulled towards having a role of standards to align these recommendations to. I still had an

internal desire to adhere to an external standard. I could not

shake loose the desire to conform.

By trying to identify with the picture of personal success provided by the standards, I was already trying to achieve the impossible. I was ignoring my own voice, my own passion for education. The version of arcadia I was trying to achieve is only open to the authors of those standards. They are someone else's ideals, someone else's perfect vision. To me they:

"*were nothing more that than clearly defined but lifeless categories*"
(Delong, 2002, p.284)

1.2 Arcadia

My arcadia holds externally imposed standards, but allows me as well the freedom to embody my own living standards from personal values. These standards are in flux according to the professional passions and priorities I embody at any given time in both my professional and personal practice.

"*I hold both together. There is this amazing sense of delight when I feel I am in what my purpose is about. When we were talking earlier and your face (addressing fellow teacher-researcher) suddenly lit up,*

and suddenly I saw that energy..I don't need anything else… I feel that I hold both together, I am fully present" (Jack Whitehead, 28/04/2004, in discussion)

I have come to wistfully realize that the nature of my personal arcadia is that it can never be fully reached. I can always smile at its existence and know that I will strive a lifetime to reach it, but that I will only spend a few moments of my life within it's realm. Yet these few moments are sufficient for me, and leave me fresh to go ahead on the next journey, to the next moment in time.

"*"What cause then" said Musidorus, "made you venture to leave this sweet life and put yourself in yonder unpleasant and dangerous realm?"*
"Guarded with poverty," answered Strephon, "and guided with love"" (Sir Philip Sydney, 1546-1586,p.477)

Simon Riding responded to this:
"The sense of the Romantic poets, writing this, was that they wanted to escape from the Industrial world that was being created: it seems like a metaphor that you could pick up on? Could you be searching for

a better time: a time when standards weren't imposed from the outside

when the world was better?"

I respond: Can I be as vague as to say yes, and no? Earlier I stated

that the standards allowed me a starting point that I still need, a

foothold on a slope. I feel I am not asking for these to be removed, but

for the self to be able to prioritise within these, to make personal

choices about areas of focus relating to areas of interest.

This idea of a vision which comes from within related to Senge's

notion of *"personal vision"* (1990). Senge, with relation to this, states:

"Vision is a specific destination, a picture of a desired future..It can

truly be said that nothing until there is a vision. But it is equally true

that a vision with no sense of underlying sense of purpose, no calling,

is just a good idea-all "sound and fury, signifying nothing"" (1990,

p.149)

I feel that Senge's comments draw me back to standards. The standards

provide my *"underlying sense of purpose, my underlying vision"*

My view of life is a cup which is half-empty, and many would say that

this is a negative way of looking at life. For me it is the enjoyment of

anticipation of the next stage of the journey that drives me forward. I am learning that my arcadia is unique, it is my own creation, and whilst I may reflect on others' views of what a personal arcadia may hold, I do not wish to try and assimilate my own vision to that of others. I share this vision with Senge (1990), in his description of "personal mastery". He describes part of this as:

"People with a high level of personal mastery live in a continual learning mode. They never arrive.. It is a process. It is a lifelong discipline…Paradoxical? Only for those who do not see the journey as the reward" (p.142)

Co-researchers' understanding of their own arcadia holds a certain vibrancy which connects in their physical and emotional embodiment, but yet remains unique:

"I think you've just touched on the magic word: passion. That's what it's all about, it's what I say about me, it's what gets my gander up. No-one could work with looked-after kids if they weren't passionate" (co-researcher, 2004, in discussion)

"It was after that moment (presentation at international syposium)

that I was there..I felt I was in arcadia" (co-researcher, in discussion)

Jack Whitehead also talked about the nature of childhood upon us in terms of a personal arcadia, when as a child we are easy to please and enjoy told of work well done. We are given satisfaction and praise at regular intervals and made to feel valued. In the discussion meeting I recognized this simple, childlike internal desire is still present within me to conform and to be recognized (and yes!) praised by others. I still wish to "get things right". It is like the effect of a test score or a percentage, a measurable, quantitative judgement. I am learning to move away from this childhood value and to respect qualitative judgements as well.

Alan Hinchliffe, Headteacher, responding to this writing, also recognises this desire to be recognised:

"I do have a vain streak and so when I read your letter the first thing I did was to read the piece about me" (July, 2004)

Other researchers refer to age and experience as changing their vision of arcadia, with this becoming increasingly integrated with family. There is

a sense of moving from an internal arcadia, driven by oneself on the whole, to one which is a shared vision:

> *"That feeling (of arcadia) comes about through age..as you get older..you have been lucky to do so more many things..I go through that with my grandchildren. They are an enormous part of my life. I couldn't have had that experience at twenty-five..my expectations were vastly different. I don't think that could have been bought about by anything different than age"* (co-researcher, in discussion)

Co-researchers from the Westwood St. Thomas group also talked about the very opposite of a shared vision, an arcadia seen as an entirely personal journey that occurred alone regardless of age, in which internalised thoughts and values are embodied. Jack Whitehead talked about Ben Okri's (2003) search of arcadia as:

> *"an improvement of the living spirit, an embodied flow of the living spirit...Placing your trust in that if you allowed the flow of this living spirit.. this was very much a part of what being in arcadia was"* (28/04/2004)

This personalised internal arcadia is quite different from the almost physical interpretation of arcadia as represented by the Garden of Eden in Genesis:

"*And the LORD GOD planted a garden eastward in Eden..and out of the ground made the LORD GOD to grow every tree that was pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil*" (Genesis 2:8-9)

Simon Riding wrote in response to this:

"*Also link this to the sense of Jerusalem and its significance: Blake wrote Jerusalem as a Romantic response to the growing urbanisation of Britain and the loss of the cottaging industry. It's also significant that we are having this at our wedding: it's for me about building your Jerusalem (Arcadia) wherever you are: at present my Arcadia is within Westwood, but I need to build this at Bitterne when I leave. Blake reflected on the need to <u>build</u> Jerusalem.*

I agree with Simon's comments on trying to build arcadia in our present context. There is a temporary nature to each of the positions and physical locations in which we find ourselves. At Westwood I too had find my

arcadia for a while, but I recognised that my cup was nearly full and that

the creative tension between my vision and my current situation was

ebbing away, leaving me with a sense of complacency in which there was

no challenge. Day (2004) writes about this stage of a teacher's

development as:

"Reaching a professional plateau (in which there is) a sense of morality,

(and one) stops striving for success, enjoys or stagnates" (p.125)

 The imperfect and unsatisfactory nature of being in someone else's

arcadia led Adam and Eve to leave a vision that was handed to them and

not of their own creation. They needed to find their own version. Paradise

was not lost to them; it had never been their own to create. They desired

to take their own journey, to take ownership of their "arcadia" and live

life in a creation of self. Reuther (19??) explores this thought, stating that:

 "original blessing is the intrinsic nature of things" (Reuther, p.241)
but that

 "primary goodness (still) remains our true nature" (Reuther, ,p.241)

The recognition of personal arcadia as an inner journey was

summarized for me by the words of Carol Christ and the notion of

transcendence (Christ, 1982). Transcendence being the moments of time where one is present in one's own personal arcadia, not one created by others. The idea that another's view of arcadia may be a vision forced onto others relates to the role of standards upon my "self". Yet I feel that these standards were a starting point for me.

Simon Riding commented:

"Again, transcendence is an example of wanting to escape: you only want to transcend if you need to get away and exist within another plane"

I respond: Yes, but new to the position of Head of Department, these standards provide something outside of the nothingness that is replaced by experience as time progresses. An albeit temporary vision which experience and the development of the self leads us to leave of our own free will. It is the point of recognition that we have transcended those externally set values and begin creating our own vision of a personal arcadia relating to the true self. It is not wishing to escape, but simply wishing to close the gap to personal vision. I agree with Simon's comments on trying to build arcadia in our present context. There is a temporary nature to each of the positions and physical locations in which we find ourselves. At Westwood I too

had found my arcadia for a while, but I recognised that my cup was

nearly full and that the creative tension between my vision and my

current situation was ebbing away, leaving me with a sense of

complacency in which there was no challenge.

Day writes about this stage of a teacher's development as:
" reaching a professional plateau..where the now well-established

cycle of repitition..provides security but may paradoxically lack the

variety, challenge and discovery of earlier years. It is a time when

many teachers are likely to seek new challenges, either by taking new

responsibilities in the same school or by moving schools for the

purposes of promotion" (Day, 2004, p.159)

Simon continues:

"But….you still have to come back to the standards! It doesn't matter

how you look at it, you will still come back after your 'transcend' to

the reality. Beyond this, there is an argument of New Historicism

against Cultural Materialism within this: an argument about whether

naming something at least allows you to attack it, whereas not naming

something doesn't give it value in its existence"

I respond by referring to Christ (1982):

"The spiritual quest..begins in the experience of nothingness, the experience of being without an adequate image of self. (The) drive to pursue the quest beyond the experience of nothingness, without being trapped in a compromise with a prevailing mythology is rooted in a vision, and an experience, however fleeting, of transcendence which she identifies with the vision" (Christ, 1982, pp.11-12)

Phillips (2004), in his transfer paper to the University of Bath, talks about a "*birthing*" of the self, an unprepared-for event, which reveals a different sense of the self. He talks about a personal feeling of preparation for those events, and this relates to my own feelings of those small but significant moments of personal arcadia. Each "birthing" allows me to consider what my personal arcadia is. It forces me to realize that these moments cannot be pre-planned by their very nature. Each event is a pleasant surprise.

It would appear that my self cannot justify itself independently, my self is still dependant on an external system for worth and validation of ideas.

Through my writing I hope not only to convince others of the contribution that my writing is making, but more importantly try to

convince myself that I my embodied values are something unique that I can value independently and which do not need to conform to a pre-prescribed system in order to be considered valid. I reflect upon Jackie Delong's writing:

"*I persist in trying to fit my practical knowledge into their typlologies..I am learning to take the ideas of others only in so far as to reflect on my life and to resist their application as a means of explanation*" (Delong, 2002, p.239)

I hope as Jackie Delong did:

"*Gradually I found that I had faith in my creativity and a confidence in my embodied knowledge as part of my growth of awareness of my (role)*"
"*Through my descriptions and explanations of my life as a leader I give meaning to my embodied knowledge.*"(Delong, 2002 ,p.239-240)

1.3 Examples of a living contradiction (2003 and 2004: My first year as Head of Department)

I have recognised the conflict between the role of standards upon my professional life and my desire to attain a personal arcadia free from external influences. In May 2004 I presented an example of this

contradiction to co-researchers, whilst discussing the notion of influence on personal values.

May 2004:The Westwood St. Thomas Research group

A discussion led by myself exploring influences on personal values

I used Kuzsmarski's four areas of influence upon personal values as a basis for the discussion[2]. My original intention was to refer to these categories, but not to allow the discussion to be dominated by these prescriptive criteria. I desired to operate within the discussion outside of these four standards.

I presented however a living contradiction to the group, whereby I narrowed the discussion to the prescribed areas of influence as laid down by Kuzsmarski. I was asking others simply to conform, not to challenge or interpret their own influences as I had wished. It would seem that at this point there was an internal influence to conform which dominated my self, which desires to be recognized by another, to fit into a set pattern. This was highlighted by Jack Whitehead during the course the discussion as he addressed the research group:

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[2] Susan and Thomas Kuczmarski (1995) have agreed four factors which influence values over time: 1) family and childhood experiences 2) conflict events which evoke self-discovery 3) major life changes and experiential learning, and 4) personal relationships with "important individuals" (p.43)

Jack Whitehead: (to the group) *"I don't think you are doing what Karen wanted you to do.(turning to me) you've asked people to fit themselves into these categories..sort of like the tick boxes"*

Teacher-researcher (laughing):*"I'm doing what I didn't want to do then"*

Jack Whitehead:(to the group) *"You've been giving a creative response which actually transcends the categories..it's not fitting that into the categories,it's actually telling a narrative which creatively engages in a highly creative way to show the transformative life experiences that you've had..no number of categories is going to be sufficient to explain..it's part of our productive life"*

This judgement was confirmed by my own comments as I reviewed the video evidence from the session:

Teacher-researcher: "As I was looking at these four factors, it suddenly struck me that I could actually put my experiences quite nicely into these categories which have personally influenced me, so for example family and childhood experiences"

"I wondered if people would consider these four categories viable in terms of what influences your values over time?"

"Do you think these categories have an influence on our professional lives as well?" (Collins, 28/04/2004, in discussion)

This piece of dialogue clearly shows that I am seeking to construct categories for my valuative judgments. I am not using my own personal criteria but using external criteria as a measure of this. I demonstrate here how I undervalue my own capacity for developing what matters, and how at this stage of writing I was largely dependant on external sources, despite my desire to be the contrary. My questioning style to the group demonstrates a leading emotionless style, asking colleagues to confirm my own statements, rather than challenge them.

Simon Riding responds.

"But what criteria should we use? We cannot have everybody using their own personal criteria otherwise how could this work?"

Simon's response leads me to consider the work of Sebba (2004) which describes how educational research should involve three domains of research ; the teacher-researcher at the grass roots level, the researcher and the policy maker as co-validators in the research. Without the three parties working together Sebba (2004) argues, any

judgement would be based on the individuals' observation, and would be diminished in its educational worth.

Sebba argues for:

"A greater emphasis..on improvement driven by users rather than suppliers of research" (p.43)

She also asks that:

"*The dialogue between policy-makers, practitioners and researchers needs to be built into the research process from the outset to ensure that the research questions, design, data collection, interpretation and dissemination are all influenced by multiple perspectives*" (p.43)

The evolvement of s-step research that is recognised through academic institutions is helping "grass-root researchers" such as myself to field and extend the work of academic researchers and vice-versa, such as has been the case in my relationship with researchers Sarah Fletcher and Jack Whitehead at the University of Bath.

Evans (1995) one example of an s-step researcher, argues for s-step research, stating:

"I believe that we should start from the values of the practioner-researcher…I believe that the asking of questions about our practice..is crucial to the process of action research" (1995, Chapter 2, p.11)

Jack-How would you respond to the notion that your work with groups such as the Westwood and John Bentley group has influenced the role of the academic researcher? And vice-versa? Are we, through encouraging s-step research, challenging policy makers at the University to develop the academic standards by which we are judged?

Standards represented for me a way to categorize my work, to be able to fit inside a box. Anything I did which could not be applied to one of the criteria, I did not feel carried such great worth. I sought external validation.

Simon Riding describes these standards as:

"liberating: if you define criteria then at least you know where the line in the sand is drawn and you know what you are fighting against"

If the line in the sand is leading you away from "personal vision" (Senge, 1999), you wish to re-trace it. I however like the use of Simon's "liberating", as knowing that the standards by which I am trying to judge personal and collaborative work have an external validation is liberating in the sense that this work is "work well done" (Whitehead, 2004)

"Being competent in teaching as a technology and teaching as a moral practice is part of a professional's practice but if the view of teachers as skilled technicians in the classroom whose only purpose is to implement the set curriculum prevails, then the complex art and science of teaching may be downgraded to possession of a cluster of baseline technical skills" (Day, 2004, p.5)

Within the first year in post as Head of Department, I allowed standards to drive my professional practice, at the same time reducing my personal creativity as I strived for tasks to be finished. I placed completion, finite ticks of acknowledgement, as high priority tasks on

my agenda. This externally driven agenda stifled creativity to the detriment of my colleagues and the pupils within the school, as was highlighted during one meeting in April 2004.

As Simon Riding notes:

"It's about learning to live creativity through the externally imposed criteria: about learning to be creatively compliant"

Meeting to discuss the identification of Year 7 gifted linguists for acceleration

The "agenda" of this meeting was to identify the most able linguists within the Year 7 cohort for inclusion in the accelerated group from September of the following year. What follows are my notes from the discussion, written in two parts. The first part is the reflective writing immediately after the meeting, and the second a later entry after review of the video evidence of the meeting with co-researchers.

After the meeting

E-mail extract between researcher and mentor

Dear Jack,

Just reviewed video from Wednesday's session (giggling) and enclose

my responses to this. I hope to be able to review the part of the video

to

which my comments refer during the next session, and also to show a

vide clip from a meeting this week identifying the fast track group

from the current Year 7 MFL students. I feel that the video

demonstrates me in a personal arcadia, with a positive life flow

demonstrating itself in my

actions.

Hi Karen - just read your piece - you write with a powerful capacity to

captivate the imagination of this reader - you communicate so clearly

and

I want to read more! - and maybe more importantly to see your

commentary

in relation to a visual narrative of your educational influence with

others. It's going to be fascinating to hear others' responses to your

recognition of yourself expressing a positive life flow - I'm already

connecting the flow of energy to an expression of your life affirming

spirit - looking forward to continuing our educational conversations at

Westwood.

Love Jack.

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During dialogue with my three colleagues with respect to the gifted
and talented proposed languages group in Year 8 in 2004/2005 there
was a real sense of open dialogue, and of colleagues engaging in a
discussion which was transforming our ideas as it proceeded, and
allowing us to find a common path forward.

At the beginning of the dialogue one colleague stated that staff
judgement is a valid criteria for selecting students. I described the
problem within languages that students in Year 7 are coming in at
different levels in terms of their language level. Another colleague's
view was that there is a point in the year at which those with no prior
knowledge attain a "level playing field" with those that had prior
knowledge.

A the beginning of the process I used the phrase "*cautiously
approaching*" the verbal reasoning scores for aiding the department in
the identification of these students, yet it seemed as we reviewed each
name that we could access this data as a good indicator of student
ability within language learning.

I started to panic when one colleague commented that not many of the students in the particular cohort we were discussing met many of the criteria for language "giftedness" as stated by "The National Association for Gifted and Talented Youth". At this statement my first reaction was to panic. In a selective boys' grammar school, how could we not find thirty students who would fit the criteria? She then went on to state that we use different criteria to identify these students, that we look at the students' personal organization and motivation in the subject as well as referring to the traditional, *external* criteria.

Her comments went on to extend the group's inclusion to students who were "teacher pleasers" within the group, who worked hard, contributed well to the lesson, and who were well organized and mature in their approach to language learning. I began to re-focus on the criteria supplied by NACE, as I was concerned that within a selective school we were not reaching the criteria with more of the student cohort. When I considered though that one of the criteria was "*an interest in language learning*" and "*an empathy with other cultures*" it led me to reflect that my definition of "*teacher pleasers*" actually constituted some of the criteria for more able.

My thoughts on this are that these students who desire to learn language could be a real asset to the group, and could aid less organized and enthusiastic members of the group in their learning. They could help to support positive atmosphere within the group, and could set a good work ethic within the group from its starting point in September.

On a cautionary note I was however concerned that allowing students in who would not traditionally be considered in the most able bracket may lose impetus as the academic years progressed, and by the end of Key Stage 3 may be struggling to keep up with students who possess a higher level of language learning ability, which could serve to de-motivate them. Within Year 7 I expressed the concern that many students often demonstrate a desire to prove their worth, particularly within a selective school where high standards of academic success are seem as the norm.

At the end of the discussion there was a general consent that we should refer to the verbal reasoning scores for the most able students identified using this criteria, and then review our personal judgements after the results of the end of year examinations were known.

I also acknowledged later that there had been a shift in my personal view of identification of students, that the values that my colleague expresses during the meeting had been transferred in part to the self. I recognized that I was still struggling to identify the role of standards upon my personal view of identification. I asked myself why I had been so afraid to acknowledge a view of identification outside of the values, and again the answer returned to me was one of personal worth, of justification in one's own ideas. It is a continuation of the personal struggle within me to recognize the worth of the self and the embodied knowledge which it carries.

I came out of this meeting feeling energized at the level of discussion that had taken place. There is a closeness of body language displayed in the meeting, and although I am not necessarily smiling in the meeting, I am "there" in terms of a personal arcadia whereby there is an open and honest level of discussion going on throughout the meeting, and the people present in the room are finding the same direction forward together. As I watch my body language, there is a clear smile when Helen enters the room, a genuine lit-up smile at the pleasure of her joining the discussion. Also, at points in the meeting, I am leaning forward across the table to engage or listen to points of the

discussion. I am inadvertently showing my level of enthusiasm for the topic under discussion in a sub-conscious non-verbal manner.

As Day (2004) states, "*although it is not always possible to predict the turning points in teachers' work and lives when intervention is needed to nurture or re-ignite passions for teaching, (an example) that might be considered (is) leadership that is transactional or transformational (concerned with fostering learning communities through participation and dialogue)*" (p.161)

Within this dialogue I felt that we were working together to foster a community of more able students, and that joint participation on the creation of this was aiding us to have a joint sense of ownership over what this community could become.

Reflection: one week later

It is difficult to acknowledge when one is wrong in one's judgements. As I re-read the judgements that I made from the above meeting and watch the video evidence of the meeting, I see two very different, very conflicting accounts. The account above reflects the ideal self, the person who I would have wished to be within that meeting: a person

who is communicating with colleagues and valuing colleagues views and contributions.

INSERT VIDEO CLIP OF MEETING

I find the reality of the self that is projected within that video very different. There is a conflict between who I wish to be and who I actually am, the interactions that I actually make. Within the meeting I felt that the video was intrusive, that I was not comfortable with its presence, that I had to appear as efficient as possible; as *perfect* as possible within the role of Middle Manager.

The result of this conflict is an individual who appears unrecognisable. As Jack Whitehead commented upon viewing the video:

"I couldn't actually recognize that person as you" (May 2004).

This was a self who was inhuman in their approach, who missed inclusivity to the detriment of one of the colleagues within the meeting. This was a self who seemed uncomfortable within their physical presence, adopting a task-focus, cold approach which was

very masculine in its demeanour, even down to the clothing worn. In my drive to be a perfect leader within the meeting I had become everything which I desired not to be.

Within this meeting the students themselves, the very focus of the discussion were reduced to simple numbers on a page. At one point in the meeting a colleague begins to describe one of the pupils under scrutiny in emotional terms "*He is brilliant..always asking questions..he hasn't even done any French before*" These are comments passed over by myself, as I strive to reach the end of my agenda within the allotted time of the meeting. By the end of the meeting, through striving for an agenda to be completed, for a box to be ticked, I missed all the potential creative energy within the discussion. Any creativity was stifled by the agenda approach.

When a colleague was talking about the identification strategies for the students, and how few students within the year group qualified to be "gifted" using these terms, oh! how I wish I could have returned to that moment, and capture the essence of that creative discussion, nurtured it and grown it into something more powerful.

Standards represent finite boxes which can be measured, which can be answered yeas, no or working towards. By trying to conduct the meeting in this way I was again accepting the yes tick box as superlative in the meeting context. It again leads me to reflect on how the projected self-image compares to the actual image which others recognise as you.

The video evidence acted as a mirror in this instance. It allowed me to truly look at the self from an external perspective instead of an internal one, which allowed me to realize the misconceptions I had perceived. I reflect on how closely the reality of one's reflection relates to the one they carry in their head. I for one am often slightly surprised every time I catch my glance unexpectedly in a mirror.

Image 1:

A reality check: On honeymoon in August 2004, Simon took this image without me knowing. I believe this image highlights again the difference between perception and reality of the self.

As Jack Whitehead e-mailed me in May 2004:

"One of the qualities I've noticed that seems to serve you really well in

strengthening your learning is your humour"

Jack then talked about his own shared laughter with a mixed-race

educator, Paulus Murray:

"Gregory Bateson (1980) has related humour to evolution. He says

that the mere fact of humour in human relations indicates that

multiple typing is

essential to human communication. In the absence of logical typing he

says that humour would be unnecessary and perhaps could not exist.

The

significance of the experience of humour I am sharing with you as a

standard of educative relation, through the video-clip is focused on

the

multiple typing of white and mixed-race identities. (p. 124, Bateson,

G.

Mind and Nature, New York; Bantam. 1980)"

Jack's reference to "*the sharing of a standard of educative relation*" in

the context of humour allows me to consider the different levels at

which a person operates in relation to their values. For me, sharing humour is an essential part of a qualitative relationship I need to have with another person if I am to feel truly comfortable in their presence. It takes a depth of trust with the other person for me to interact with humour. It is a sign that I feel more comfortable operating within a wider set of my values, through the revealing these in verbal and non-verbal dialogue.

Since taking up post as Head of Department I felt that I was creating a relationship of trust and open dialogue with another Head of Department in a sister-school. I felt comfortable within that relationship to show humour to aid my personal learning. One remark I made was however received negatively by that colleague, and since that remark I have felt more closed in dialogue with him, unable and indeed unwilling to display humour for fear of reproach. This event, I feel, partially explains the way I often displayed the self when dealing with colleagues in the first year of my appointment. I found it easy to reflect on my actions with humour at the depersonalised image I was presenting, but felt unable to communicate this humour with colleagues in my department for fear of rebuttal.

Through this dialogical approach that I believe shows true learning and reflection of the self, I aim to show you as the reader this journey of self-realization. As Jack Whitehead commented via e-mail: *"Your writings enable me to feel invited alongside you in your enquiry and to offer responses that I think Pat D'Arcy would recognise as aesthetically engaged and appreciative responses"*

2.1 Value laden: value-free

Paul Greenbank (2002) reflects on the roles of values within educational research. He states that researchers should be:

"open and honest about how values influence their research" (p792)
but that:

"value statements, biographical details and reflexive accounts..can be seen as over-indulgent and may lead to marginalization of research participants"(p.795)

Within the work of doctoral thesis's such as Delong (2002) and Evans (1995), there is a heavy accent of how the work that individuals are undertaking is affecting their personal values. Their research is not only a study of their own work, but shares equal status with the

development of personal and others' values over time. My writing has encompassed the role of personal values on the self, yet I do not see this type of research as over-indulgent. I see the understanding of one self as parallel to the understanding of one's work and progress. Ignoring the one serves to isolate and reduce the improvement of understanding which one is gaining.

As Evans (1995) notes:

"Change can only take place effectively when the self is engaged because change is part of a rolling programme, which is always that "accounting for oneself" involving an intra-subjective dialect in which the researcher transforms her understanding of her own practice as she attempts to present it in a public form" (p.20, Chapter 2)

Without the discussion of values within the research, the research would lack the personal qualities that *define* the research. While it is true that the author's stamp on my research is highly evident, and will not show "*value-neutrality*" with respect to their work, the development of the self allows the researcher to demonstrate his/her personal influence over time.

Troyna (1994) argues that such qualitative research:

"is subjective, value-laden and therefore, unscientific and invalid, in contrast to quantitative research, which meets the criteria of being objective, value-free, scientific and therefore valid" (p.25)

An example of objectivity within context was my conducting of meetings in my first term as Head of Department as illustrated above. I wished to maintain an objective focus to the meetings I conducted, to be "value-free" in the self and to conduct the meeting solely to a pre-prescribed agenda.

The result was not a "value-free" approach to the meeting, but rather a "value-altered" approach, displaying characteristics that Rokeath (1973) would describe as *"competency values"* (what an individual believes is the effective way to go about something). The creativity that could have emerged in the meeting was stifled by this approach. Any personal passion for the issue that was being discussed was omitted from the meeting. Not only was I de-humanized, but the pupils being discussed within the meeting were also de-humanized to a set of figures.

What practitioner-researchers such as Delong (2002) and Evans (1995) bring to their research are value-laden, living theories that

strengthen the claims they are making. Through co-enquiry with individuals I aim to reduce the marginalization of participants within my research. My research will carry it's own subjective personal signature from the author, a signature which can only serve to strengthen the claims made. This is one of my claims to the contribution to original academic research.

I was however cautious about bringing my "*whole*" self into the domain of my research through narrative accounts of events that go beyond my professional practice. Delong (2002) talks about her family and relationships in an open manner that lend to the account a sense of "wholeness" and of deep personal involvement and learning, and Whitehead (2004, in discussion) talks about the sense that family and personal lives shape our pedagogical understanding. Senge (1990) supports this view in relation to "*personal mastery*". He states:

"*To seek personal fulfilment only outside of work and to ignore the significant portion of our lives which we spend working, would be to limit our opportunities to be happy and complete human beings*" (pp.144-145)

Need to explore relationship with Simon, and how this has impacted on my research and vice versa. How has the commentary response added to the research writing?

2.2 Third-party values

Personal values that an individual holds are distributed into three sections. Firstly, the core values that remain within an individual and which form the original unique identity of any one individual.

During my initial teacher-training year, I struggled with the Departmental assessment system. This consisted of a set of loose tasks which had little evidence of success criteria, and which were not shared with pupils prior to being conducted. I was adamant that pupils should be aware of a purpose for all assessment which they completed and that the success criteria should be shared with them as early as possible.

Secondly there exists the creation of a set of transitory values, those that develop as a result of an activity in which an individual is engaged.

During the completion of my final unit assignment for submission to the University of Bath for a Masters award in Educational Management, I became strongly aware of the role of ethics when involving pupils in research. This value developed through working with a small group of individual pupils, who made me sit up and realise that their comments could not simply be included within my research at my own choosing, but that the sharing of their comments needed to be completed in consultation.

Thirdly there are the "*third-party values*" which I hold. These have been created as a result of my contact, my engagement, my developing relationship with significant people in my life.

Alain Hinchliffe is one such example, the former Headteacher of Westwood St. Thomas School in Salisbury, with whom I worked for three years. Through his engagement with me, such as always thanking me for my work, always noting the contribution that I was making to the organization, he has instilled in valuing others. Previously to working with him, I did not hold this element of professional and personal practice in high esteem. I was an island, of the thought that everyone was out to get their own, and the sharing of ideas and resources was a way for others to do less work.

I

In response to this comment Alan responds:

"It does seem to be clear..that "recognising the achievements of others" and "communication/consultation" are positive forces which need to be encouraged in leadership at all levels…It was an approach discussed amongst the Westwood senior management team and my prompting of this came from a perceived weakness in a previous 360 degree appraisal. That is what I am trying to work on here, based on the evidence that it can be the best way forward"

Alan's comments allowed me to realise that this value was not an intrinsic part of his original values, but a transformatory value that developed as part of his work with individuals at Westwood St. Thomas. From his final comment it would appear that this value is now forming part of that core as his work continues.

At any one point in time, a person is operating within the paradigms of his/her three sets of values, dependant on the activity within which he/she is engaged. There is a constant re-aligning of the values, which each person is engaging, and through the dual experiences of time and experience, values become a part of the core, remain dormant until the

next time they are engaged, or disappear from the living theory that is the make-up of a person at a given time.

It was not until I started in my new position as subject leader that I became aware that valuing others had become a core part of my own living theory. I was determined to give my colleagues the same sense of worth that I had been given over the previous three years, and to give them the same amount of pride.

As my professional life continues there is an excitement of anticipation of what values future contacts might impart onto me. The knowledge of a personal re-aligning of values as my professional life continues. This is in conflict to the concept of "*self-sovereignty*", in which it is the self who has control of his/her transformation and not others:

"The warmth and comfort of happiness is hidden within the self.. For many, self-progress and personal transformation are keys that unlock the Gate of Happiness… Happiness is prosperity which comes from self-sovereignty. Self- sovereignty *means being master over the mind, intellect, personality traits, and physical senses of the body; being complete with all powers and virtues; and attaining a perfect balance*

between masculine and feminine characteristics. There is that state of perfection within each human soul. On the spiritual quest in search of such perfection, the intellect goes through a process of discovering its divine nature"

(2004, livingvalues.net/happiness)

Engagement with students, with colleagues, with friends and family all leads me to reflect and reconsider my personal living theory. The text above suggests that "*self-sovereignty*" allows the individual to complete their personal quest for happiness, but what this fails to state is the role of others in the creation of personal happiness. Without my work with Alan Hinchliffe I would not be able to achieve the personal happiness pursuit that I am engaged in today with regards valuing those around me. Third-party values aid and the pursuit of my personal happiness, through showing new paths open to individuals in their request. It is an opening of doors. Through being aware that this personal happiness is not a conscious act, I believe to be coming closer to a state of personal freedom:

"*Ultimate freedom is liberation from bondages created from acting in the consciousness of the body - out of attachments to the self and its senses; to others*" (2004, www.livingvalues.net/freedom)

2.3 Learning as a result of values

Through living and exploring my own action research methodology, I have been able to extend the boundaries of the influence of my own values. As a result of the process of discussion, I realize that I am improving myself as a primary consequence of this dialogical process, and working with others to improve themselves as a secondary result of this.

There is also a process of tertiary learning. This comes as a result of supporting the work of others. When we completed the review of students' work in my first year in post as subject leader, it was me who was learning as a result of this process, learning from the expertise of the staff in my department who knew the system within which they were established, and also in the comments made upon my own students' work by colleagues.

"*None of us is as smart as all of us*" (Blanchard and Bowles, 2001, p.60)-parable of a hockey team

Opening oneself up to this critical thinking as a leader of a subject area is a process that I value wholeheartedly. Whilst I believe in the idea that a leader should exemplify that what he expects of his/her colleagues working with him/her, it is essential that the critical evaluation of work conducted within the Department is shared by all, and that the hierarchy falls away to reveal an equilibrium of discussion where appropriate.

"My learning and relationships are created and sustained out of the dialogic processes that are natural and indeed crucial for my ontology" (Delong,p.49,2002)

Within Moira Evans' writing (1995), she attempts to list her values at the starting point of her thesis. My argument is that we are only conscientiously aware of a part of the values that we hold ourselves, which form the individual self. To sit down and list these requires a conscious thought process that excludes those values held at a deeper level of sub-consciousness.

To begin to list and to label is again adhering to an external standard, whereby this unique embodiment of the self is transferred to a meaningless finite set of examples that can only begin to capture a

fraction of the essence that we all carry. In many examples of writing there is often an attempt to reflect on personal values and to list these in a written form.

2.4 Learning through others: Trainee teachers and transformative values

Yaffe (2003) sets out to promote self-awareness amongst Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) during their first year in the teaching profession, asking them to engage with and action research cycle to bring about an explicit awareness of their tacit knowledge. It is this tacit knowledge that has asked me to explore the way in which trainee-teachers embody and explore this tacit knowledge, and how, through unconscious methods, allows the work of the Department in which they are working to move forward.

I believe that trainee-teachers bring an embodiment of values that is fresh and waiting to engage in professional dialogue. I have experienced this first-hand, through trainees with only weeks of classroom experience, already showing insights that more experienced teachers dismiss because it is not in line with their established practice and procedures. A move to co-enquiry has been possible, where there is a breakdown of the normal

hierarchy within the establishment, and a sense of shared learning and of moving forward in depth of understanding. This is a feeling that I noted in my journal of Friday, 28th November 2003:

Friday, 28th November

"Trying to comprehend the level to which I ensure meeting the needs of the most able within my groups has made me value enormously the contribution made by the PGCE student working within the Department. Without the collaboration that has taken place between the trainee and myself, the focus of Gifted and Talented would have been a one-man bandshow, an area I alone was calling for to be recognised and trying to show my colleagues that this has great worth.

Throughout the past three weeks, since the student and myself chose this as a focus to her professional development, there has been a sense of the dissolving of hierarchical structure, of the realisation that we are on equal weighting, and are both moving the enquiry forward. This leads me to consider the idea of distributed leadership in a new way; that partial members of a society are also capable of being empowered in an area of importance to them, as are the established members of that society. It has not always been me doing the leading, for I have been led as well"

Joan Whitehead (2003) talks about the contribution that teachers entering the profession make, in terms of the influence they have on current, and in some cases, stale practice, and also in the value of them working alongside more experienced colleagues as equals:

"More democratic and less hierarchical, able to value and respect the contributions of new recruits as well as longer serving staff and also value the contributions of paraprofessionals" Whitehead(2003)

The nature of the relationship with these trainees is almost certainly a finite one, but within that timespan relationships are formed which are mutually supportive and creative. Being a finite period actually aids the creativity process, in that there is an explosive burst of energy that may not be sustainable over a longer period of time. This is frustrating to those of us working with the trainees in schools, as we do not get to see the finished product, but the time they are working with the school serves as a time for mutual development and for the teachers involved a refreshment of their own pedagogical knowledge.

In the Spring term of 2004, I was fortunate enough to be working with an extremely vibrant and adept trainee who I have no doubt will continue to

be a outstanding classroom practitioner. As the journal above comments upon, she and myself became co-collaborators on issues surrounding my core research of gifted and talented students within modern foreign languages, given the introduction of the Key Stage 3 Strategy. Her comments allowed me to confirm or alter my perceptions of what was occurring in my classroom practice. There was another pair or eyes within the room, witnessing my trials and successes, joys and disappointments. This went far beyond the medium of having a video camera recording the interactions, as there was actually a *living witness* present with whom to reflect on the learning evident in the room.

The postgraduate certificate of education course featured, from 2003, a heavy bias on teaching within the style of the KS3 strategy. The trainee was a person who had more prior experience of the KS3 strategy style of teaching than the Departmne combined. This trainee was an emergent expert from whom we could learn.

Her observations on the strategy included:

"The emphasis on breaking down language into its componant parts allows students to express thoughts and feelings which they really mean,

turning the language into a bona fide medium for self expression, rather than a set of set phrases to be trotted out on cue"

and

"*Students in Year 9 who are not familiar with this way of approaching language teaching initially seemed frightened by being asked to break down and vary phrases with which they are familiar. They seem to regard blocks of "correct" language as sacrosanct"* (March 2004)

What startled me when initially read these comments was the depth of understanding that had so quickly been accomplished during the time the trainee was working with us. The link made to other students who had not previously been taught in the strategy style confirmed by own belief that we were giving our students a "better deal" through teaching and learning in this way.

When talking with the University of West of England cohort of trainee teachers in June 2004, there was an extraordinary feeling of self-awareness amongst the trainees present. Accounts were given of moving

classroom practice forward on a whole-department level within a Welsh school[3] through demonstrating the strategy within classroom teaching.

"Well, one of the teachers liked what I was doing in the, eum, classroom, with the starter, middle and plenary…started doing the same. Others were, well not so keen about doing a starter, they thought the kids got confused by having a starter, but then, um, found it really settled them, and, um, then they started doing the same" (part transcript of session on 01.06.2004)

"What do you mean by real learning?"

"At the school I was at, behaviour was a real problem. So, um, KS3 strategy, if the same structure is applied in every lesson, it gives that security blanket to the pupils when they come to the classroom. Every classroom, same system, and they feel secure. In my classroom, I had a board, you know, starter today, and what we are learning today. Others asked me about this, wanted to do it as well"

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[3] The Welsh education system was not actively introducing the Key Stage 3 strategy within its secondary schools in 2004, and therefore classroom practice was more traditional in its approach to modern foreign languages

"I was working in an independent school, and he has welcomed the KS3 strategy, as the pupils were curious to know what they were learning today, and also the recap, and at the end, we could check the learning outcomes. So, it was welcomed by both teachers and pupils"

"Yes, he welcomes us using it, but doesn't actually want to do it himself!"

"Seeing the ideas from the Key Stage 3 strategy taken into Key Stage 4 lessons, we, um, saw that as incredibly successful"

"I don't know about anyone else but I actually use this automatically anyway in Key Stage 4 and 5. The school I was at, this just made sense"

"They (colleagues within the MFL Department) found they were doing starters anyway, you know small consolidation exercises at the beginning of the lesson, but plenaries were more of a problem. They looked through the stuff I had in a departmental meeting when we were discussing the strategy"

These engaging responses exemplified the level of co-development that had been taking place in the partner schools as a result of the trainees working in them. At a later part in the discussion, I highlighted how much of a contribution that my colleagues and I had felt they made to the work

of the Department. This, some highlighted, was a welcome comment, as at times they felt "in the way" and another burden on their mentor's time. The reflection on this is profound, in that there is a great deal of time which is spent working with the trainees on placement. Yet I feel that for nearly all mentors it is a labour of love, one which they cherish and get a buzz from doing. It is a sense of the pride in seeing someone develop as a result of working with you, yet part of this pride is in the mentor themselves, and in the knowledge that they have the capacity for the development of others within them. It is in the satisfaction of knowing and recognizing work well done.

I saw this pride in the University PGCE subject tutor, her glow as she discussed her "best" students, and her ecstatic recollections of their progress. I alike her enthusiasm for her work as akin to parenting, in knowing that her "offspring" have been well bought up partially though her capacities as a mentor and tutor, and that they are now ready to fly the nest. Fletcher, in her book "Mentoring in Schools" uses (Fromm 1970:24-25) to explain this relationship:

"*(The Mentor) does not give in order to receive; giving is in itself exquisite joy. But in giving he cannot help bringing something to life in the other person, and this which is bought to life reflects back to him;*

truly giving, he cannot help receiving that which is given back to him..In the act of giving something is born, and both persons involved are grateful for the life that is born from them" (Fletcher, 2000,p.5)

2.4.2 Learning from others: students and colleagues

"Teachers exercise power over pupils, senior managers exercise their power over teachers, and the smarter teachers know how to manipulate or manoeuvre around senior managers. Politics is about enquiring and using power and influence. At their worst, micro-political environments make a school dysfunctional and prevent positive change (Sarason, 1990). At their best they interact positively to advance their organization's purpose (Stoll and fink in Stoll & Myers,1998,p.201)

What Stoll & Fink do not make reference to here is the pupils who exert their influence and the within an organization. Without the pupils as the core business of the organization, the organization would not exist. Each cohort of pupils changes the dynamics of the organization, asking it to respond in a different way.

Pupils influence teachers with respect to behaviour, expectations and dialogue. They ask that others working with them engage them. There is a

two-way dialogic and behavioural approach between pupil and teacher. Both groups wishing to live their life and hold true their own values, but at the same time accepting others' values to create a harmonization in the relationship. This two-way influence is the key to success of interpersonal relationships in the classroom. The nature of this influence was acknowledged by Joan Whitehead (2002) in the paper: *Pupils: The forgotten partnership in Educational action Zones:*

"*There was therefore recognition of a shared responsibility, that of the teacher for establishing conditions conducive to learning and complementing this their own positive disposition to learn through their interaction with the teacher, their relationship with their peers and their own self discipline. What is interesting is that more students were prepared to see learning as their responsibility and volunteered actions they could take to improve compared to the numbers who identified responsibility and actions residing with the teacher*"

My own influences have been very much centred around pupils and other people that have wanted to make me improve my self. In previous research related to the mentoring of the most able, I summarised work with significant others (Delong, 2002) as:

"I have also discovered my "life-affirming energy" (Whitehead 2003) perhaps for the first time; that which is reflected in a moment of time, an engagement with individuals, a feeling of pure joy at that in which one is engaged. This I feel when working with the student-researchers, this I feel when I am engaged in real-value teaching and learning; the purest form of pride in my professional practice" (Collins, 2002)

These significant others show me doors that can be opened and make me believe that the "I" has real worth. These people have influenced my own educative values, and have aided me in the transition from a failing teacher whose educative values consisted of leaving on the bell, to one who the very prospect of engaging about educational values is exciting and opens up the excitement of transformational dialogue.

Choosing to leave my first position as a teacher was a difficult decision, but one which felt as though I was trying to release myself from an ever tightening noose-one which I was inevitably creating for myself. With my arrival at Westwood St. Thomas, the perhaps fated meeting of my husband and able to work under an inspirational Headteacher who truly made me feel valued and who recognised the contribution that I could make if given the chance.

**_I want to read more about your early career experiences and also more
of your autobiography that has led you to be the educator that you are._**

 The structure of my practice as a Newly Qualified Teacher never allowed
me to consider my own living theory, the make-up of personal values that
I embodied. Delong suggests a third-party is able to uncover one's
capacity to influence (Delong, 2002, p.63) which seems to partially
explain the relationship I have had both with my former Headteacher and
my husband.

*Simon-"Do you feel that you have unlocked the capacity within me? Has
this been a two-way process?"*

Simon responds:

*I think the relationship we have had professionally has been an
interesting one. I think it has been two-way: we have both gained from it.
I have gained a sense of intimacy from the research I do as I have done it
alongside you and it has also helped to spur me on and push me: an
almost competitive edge has been added to it. I think, when I reflect back,
that you needed someone to believe in you professionally and this is what
Westwood gave you: you seemed to be lost and very demotivated when
you arrived, yet you seemed to have a capacity for doing good and*

wanted to make a fresh start. What I think you lacked is a work ethic that

was rewarded and when you began to get rewarded both financially and

in terms of success and promotion, you responded very well to this. I

think you needed to learn things and maybe your previous school weren't

prepared to invest in you. However, you kind of came into a family that

accepted you at Westwood.

I agree wholly in this context with the thought shared by Delong that:

"*Part of my regular practice is that I ensure that staff members get the*

credit for their work" (Delong, 2002,p.232)

This is a value instilled into me by the significant others with whom I

have worked. Upon taking up my new post as Head of Department, it was

evident that within the organization, the stakeholders did not provide such

open expression of good work. I felt this gap with anguish. Without the

simple words of "Thank you", it was difficult in those first months to feel

a real sense of worth for the work that I was undertaking. I felt I craved

an external validation of the claims I was making about my own

professional learning. At what point do we reach beyond the childhood

need of recognition and the need to feel values and praised? I feel that

this internal desire is still present within us all to some extent, and that this is a culture I wished to instil within my own Department.

At the end of the first half-term at Bishop's I approached each member of the department to thank them for their contribution and support in the first two months of my post. As I thanked Claire, I remember how she touched me on the arm and said that the team were all behind me. This moved me nearly to tears, as though the first two months of being in post, this was the first outward spoken notion of positive feedback. Something in the physical nature of the brush on the arm also made me feel warm and secure, a return to the childhood desire to feel warm and secure in one's surroundings.

"There are certain men in Africa who shake hands with you and afterwards you don't feel well. There are certain people in Africa who give you peculiar objects, and once these objects have touch your palm a sleeping paranoia awakens in you, and washing your hands a thousand times with carbolic soap or herbal potions can't rid you of the sensation of being spooked..So it was with the message that was passed on to me. I wasn't the same again" (Okri,2002 ,p.26)

In discussion with the Headteacher of Bishop's in October 2003, with regards an application for Investor in People's award, I engaged in the opportunity to make my thoughts recognized. I stated how the culture of thanks was regarded so positively at Westwood, and how this was something which I felt could contribute to the positive validation of individual's work to the organization as a whole.

In addition to the huge role which colleagues and student-teachers affect the personal development of the self, students themselves are pivotal to gaining both personal and professional understanding.

Over the course of my professional life I have come to recognise the hugely significant role that students play in shaping the learning environment, both for themselves and for the teachers they have contact with.

A significant moment in my personal learning, which has fundamentally shaped my self, was during my final year at Westwood St. Thomas School:

"A student whom I taught had read my research upon the Internet, and had recognized himself within the account, but with his identity not disclosed. His reaction to this was one of anger and frustration, as he stated that he would have wished to have been asked and involved in the

research. Within my last research I documented the affects of this profound event upon my own values, which has made me insistent on naming students as active participants within the research:

> *"By including the students' voice within the research, this has allowed me insider knowledge into their perceptions of learning. This inclusion has allowed the research to be tailored towards the needs of the students, and has produced dialogue of an informative and insightful nature between teacher and student. I would credit the use of students as co researchers in any further research that I undertake with regards to my own education practice"* (Collins, 2003)

This summary highlights the incredible journey made within my understanding as a researcher, and the recognition within this that students, when invited, are insightful and capable of much more than we credit them with. Involving students as named participants and co-researchers of the research has provided an account of my claims and helped me to substantiate these, as well as highlighting where I am exerting an influence over the education of others" (Collins, pp.15-16, 2003)

Anderson and Wood with reference to the Bedfordshire Schools Improvement Partnership (BSIP) highlight this type of input from pupils, leading to the shaping of educational practice:

"(Pupils) are potentially the most important source of information about the impact of developments in teaching and learning..however, pupil comments may be treated with some caution believing they cannot accurately and easily understand the dynamic of the classroom or articulate the complexity of a social science like education"
(p.24,Vol.17, Issue 5,2003)

Anderson and Wood then go on to recommend that:

"The students voice relies on durable structures, appropriate protocols, expectations and a thorough preparation of staff an pupils to benefit from reflecting on practice. If pupils can be trained to offer measured, informed and articulate opinions then who better to fee back on learning and teaching that the pupils themselves" (p.24,Vol.17, Issue 5,2003)

I agree wholeheartedly with the last sentence, but previously I had not considered "training" of pupils to give feedback. One argument for this was to allow a fee flowing response from pupils, which allowed a

creative and engaged response unmarked by "durable structures" and "appropriate protocols". I refer back to my "agenda criteria", whereby having a set structure to a meeting stifled the creativity and engagement of response that could have ensued.

Admittedly though, perception that student feedback is a method which is transferable between institutions was a naïve misconception that I had. When I arrived at Bishop's, I attempted to put the "Westwood" model into practice, and found neither staff nor students were prepared for this kind of feedback.

October 2003: Sixth-form students feedback

One of the hardest moments in my first year as Head of Department was during the sixth-form review of teaching and learning carried out in the Autumn Term.

As part of this review I asked a representative of students in each Year 12 and Year 13 tutor group to complete a questionnaire based on their own learning.

In desiring an open-ended response that allowed students to express their thoughts, I gave out a sample of questionnaires to students after a lesson that I had observed without working with them beforehand to look at how they could best give feedback. Two days later, the questionnaires arrived back. The responses were on the whole positive about classroom practice

and their own learning, and were an encouraging and engaging read.

However one student had commented on "*the pace of lessons*" which he described as "*sometimes too slow*".

I then shared the feedback with colleagues concerned. One colleague, to whom the comment above related, took the comment to heart and was upset about the negative nature of this.

She commented at the time:

"*I do not agree with this comment, as the students within the group are of mixed-ability, and we need to cater to all, not just some of them…The students were given no guidance on how to complete these forms, and I feel this type of feedback reflects negatively on us as a Department*"

Following this feedback, the relationship between the colleague and the student was strained. This was a situation that only eased after some months.

Until this point, I had expected to receive both negative and positive comments. It was a realization that to make improvements in practice, both sides were vital. I had expected to transfer the system of student voice from Westwood St. Thomas to my new school without adapting any of the protocols.

This was a naïve expectation. Both students and staff were not trained in this type of feedback, and allowing for an openness of response, which was unguarded in its content, was a learning experience I would not wish to repeat. Introducing this type of feedback which is valued by students and colleagues, is evidence I hope to show the reader, of personal learning of the self. To begin to comprehend what I was trying to achieve here, the following conversation acted as a spark:

29th June 2004 (in conversation):

Teacher-enquirer: I want to have a reference to understand this difficulty I have felt in developing student research at Bishop's.

Simon Riding: I know Senge(1995) talks about systems thinking and personal mastery in his "Fifth Discipline". This is more about you learning about yourself that that of your Department.

Following Simon's lead, I began to engage with Senge´s ideas. I began to then see the experiences outlined as a desire to work towards "*personal mastery*" (Senge, 1990), an area of personal growth and learning, in which I desire to continually expand my ability to create the results in life I truly seek. In this case, the result I seek is to engage pupils as active participants in the research, to allow as Anderson and Woods state (2003)

for the pupils voice to as a positive contribution to self-learning, and not as an area to be feared.

Senge (1990) breaks down "*personal mastery*" into two activities, firstly clarifying what is important to us, and secondly continually learning how to see current reality more clearly. (p.141) I believe I have achieved the first through recognition of my inherent and third-party values with relation to students voice and valuing others. I also believe that the second is an area harder to participate in, one which self-study research allows an individual to formulate.

In earlier writing I believe to have proven that I have worked towards this, through the recognition that my view of one meeting was unjustified. It is however through others that this realization has come about, through the input of co-researchers using the medium of video to see "with open eyes" the "*current reality*" (Senge, 1990). Senge talks about this connection to others and to life itself as being one of the qualities of "personal mastery". I believe that through the teacher research group we have been co-enquiring to develop personal mastery, using the insightful views of others to advance our personal learning and aid us to do the same for others.

The sixth-form feedback scenario and review of video evidence has allowed me to develop a sense of the:

"juxtaposition of vision (what (I) want) and a clear picture of current reality (to) generate..creative tension: a force to bring them together, caused by the natural tendency of tension to seek resolution" (Senge, 1990, p.142)

It is recognising that this juxtaposition is not an enemy; it is a friend that allows me to embrace personal learning and desire for others to embrace this in their professional practice. Referring back to the creative tension that I held within my first year as Head of Department, I felt that I was not able to embrace the creative tension that I felt. Senge (1999) describes my situation as a:

"rubber band which is stretched between vision and current reality. What does tension seek? Resolution or release. There are only two possible ways for the tension to resolve itself: pull reality towards the vision or pull vision towards reality. Which occurs will depend on whether we hold steady to the vision" (p.150)

I see this juxtaposition as being represented within the self as a series of two voices. These two voices I recognise as such within Delong´s writing, as she talks about:

"a story of conversation with myself" (p.15, Chapter 2)

One voice representing the "outer voice" or "current reality" and the other representing the "inner voice" or "personal vision". The use of these two voices is an element which I can recognise within my own self, and the nature of this unceasing "creative tension".

In my first year as Head of Department I felt constantly under pressure from my "inner voice" because of the gap between what my personal vision represented and the current reality of my situation. I felt I was clearly choosing the easy option of trying to "*pull my vision toward reality*", allowing the negative results of some of my professional actions to dictate my personal strength. Through my writing I am trying to convince you as a reader that I have found my "*personal strength*" to "*pull the reality towards the vision*". I have found ways not to lower my vision, but to pursue it.

Throughout the long, dark evenings of that first year I would look around the Department office, wander through the classrooms when everyone had left. It was at these times where I was able to reaffirm my vision, it was at these times that I was able to recognise the tension that I was feeling as an emotive, not a destructive force. These quiet moments of reflection, with only the school cleaners for company allowed me to create anew what I wanted. I share this conviction with Day (2003), as he writes:

"Teaching is by definition, a journey of hope based upon a set of ideals. I, as a teacher, can and will make a difference to the learning and the lives of the students I teach and the colleagues with whom I work-despite an acute awareness of obstacles of motivation and commitment (my own and others), the socio-economic circumstances of students, resource constraints, and policy factors over which I have no control..Arguably it is our ideals that sustain us through challenging times and difficult circumstances; and it is our ideals which commit us to changing and improving our practice as the needs of students and the demands of society change" (p.20)

INSERT IMAGE OF POST-SCHOODAY CLASSROOM

It is sustaining the journey to the ideal that requires this personal strength. In my year as a trainee-teacher, I was told it would be better if I

considered another career option after a series of disastrous lessons. I persisted and stayed on my journey of hope, I worked at my areas of weakness, I employed the expertise of others and I succeeded. In the darkest years before moving to Westwood St. Thomas, my journey was not easy, but I retained the strength to believe that I could be a good teacher, that I could improve and inspire the work of others and of myself.

"Persevering, courageous, being persistent in adversity" (Day, 2003, p.21, Qualities of the Passionate Teacher)

Through my writing I aim to convince you, the reader, that I am aiding myself and others to develop our own unique sense of personal mastery.

4.1 As a woman

Two different realizations in which I have found myself have forced me to identify, as Evans (1995) has done, to consider my position as a female researcher. I use the phrase "forced", because I wish to distance myself from feminist theory, instead not wishing to believe that the very fact of my gender influences my professional conduct in any way.

The first of these two is the "masculine style" in which I was operating as Head of Department in the first year of my appointment. In trying to not allow my gender to be significant in any way to my practice, I held a living contradiction in the "male" subjective approach that I adopted. It was this "froideur" and lack of emotional input on my side, which I believe distanced my colleagues and bought a negative tension into the Department.

"It was not clear at first exactly who I was, except that I was someone who was being made to do certain things by someone else who was really the same personal as myself-I have always called her Lilith. And yet the acts were mine, not Lilith's" (Riding, 2000 Introductory quote in Gilbert and Gubar)

The second is the influence of my husband, Simon Riding, upon me. Seeing his success as a "male leader" and educational researcher, I desired a similar situation as educational manager. In his leadership, he displays qualities of clarity and a certainty of personal vision whilst also displaying passionately those qualities attributed to female researchers, such as allowing "the personal" to influence his research writing. There is however a certainty to his writing upon which I commented, and an

expectation that the reader should share his viewpoint. There is no room for negotiation.

"If the Queen's looking glass speaks with the King's voice, how do its perpetual kingly admonitions affect the Queen's own voice? Since his is the chief voice she hears, does the Queen try to sound like the King, imitating his tone, his inflections, his phrasing, his point of view? Or does she talk back in her own vocabulary, her own timbre, insisting on her own viewpoint?"(Gilbert et al, p.46, 2000)

In Chapter two of her thesis, Evans (1995) describes the differences between feminine and masculine styles of research writing, and how traditional research holds a largely male input. Whilst I recognise that my style of writing includes aspects of female characteristics, such as "feelings, dilemmas, experiences and the "personal""(Chapter 2, p.10) I attribute this more to the "new breed" of s-step research, as led by Whitehead and ?, where personal accounts are valued as part of the epistemological make-up of the individual. Allowing the personal to enter the professional domain is the type of writing which both Simon and I are exploring. It is within this writing that there is a crossover of traditional female and male style of research. Perhaps we are finally learning to cross the divide, as I learn for the first time in my writing to value the

contribution that my "personal" is making to the teacher-enquirer that I am learning to become.

Evans (1995) refers to Whitehead´s idea of living educational theory, in which "*its particular emphasis on personal renewal as a means of promoting a good social order*" (McNiff, Whitehead and Laidlow, 1992 in Evans, 1995, p.56) and also to Whitehead´s referral to "*the centrality of the "I" of the researcher in relation to her practice, to other participants, and to the context of the research*" (1995, p.56). I believe that this *"renewal"* refers to that reflection time after the school day in my first year as HoD, in which I needed to renew myself with relation to my personal vision. This was when I was considering *"the gap between vision and current reality*" (Senge, 1999, p.150).

3.1 The approach

The engagement with and use of the theories of others brings credibility to my work, and allow the validity of my claims to be measured.

I share this belief with Jackie DeLong (2002) who states:

"*The professional development of each teacher rests in their own knowledge-making capacities as they examine their own practice in helping students to improve their learning*" abstract

My approach must allow me to believe that I am capable of creating my own knowledge through "*living through others*" (Riding, 2003) and capable of making methodological choices that allow me to best validate my claims (Black, year?)

This research has allowed me to acknowledge that what we hold as knowledge, the sentiment and recognition of that which is valid, alters as time continues. Undergoing a change in circumstances has allowed to question the sustainability of my own knowledge, to review the embodiment of the values which one year ago I held dear.

I intend to refer to Catherine Snow's desire to "*systematize procedures for accumulating teacher-researcher knowledge and vetting it for correctness and consistency*" (Snow, 2001,p.9)

Although much research evidence is available via government funded organisations such as the "*National College for School Leadership*" and the "Department for Education and Skills (DfES)" the validity of the research findings is inevitably variable in the process of validation that it has undergone. One of the frustrations which I felt undertaking this research was the feeling of working in isolation, of needing to seek out other research bases for collective comparisons and responses. "*Re-inventing the wheel*" and accidently coming across similar research enquiries has led me to question how this process can become more open and accessible.

To explore further…….the Westwood group as an example

Localized networking within the context of the Language college

International networking-linking with other researchers

3.2 A framework for writing

DeLong refers to herself as a postmodern writer, and refers to Lyotard's (1984) views on the postmodern condition, whereby "*the text he writes is not governed by pre-established rules, and (he) cannot be judged according to a determining judgement, by applying*

familiar categories to the text. The writer is working without rules in

order to formulate the rules of what will have been done"

Simon Riding comments:

You could also bring in more of the postmodern debate here: the sense

of Barthes' Death of the Author.

"Is mess the process of following this zig-zag path of crossing from

the intuitive to analytical mode of thinking and back that helps identify

pertinent knowledge?" (Cook, 1998,p.103)

As Delong (2002) noted:

"The nature of my educative influence and my living standards..are

the values that I hold myself accountable for in my daily life and

work. They are living because they emerge in the living of my life

according to the values that I hold to be true and at the same time

changing and refining as a result of life's experiences" (p.56)

The reflections that I have given throughout the text are my reflected

experiences. I do not see these as autobiographical in nature, but rather as

a collection of internalised thoughts that I have included within my own writing.

4.1 Nature of leadership

"*I found leadership to be context specific, dependant on the gestalt and very much a problem-solving, creative thinking and relationship-building exercise*" (Delong, 2002, p.233)

One of my main frustrations upon arriving at Bishop's was the loss of ownership of the gifted and talented provision in my previous school. I felt very much as though I had lost a part of my practice, and that the knowledge that I had gained over the past two years would be difficult to sustain in the context of the new organization. With reference to Jackie Delong's comments above about leadership, I realize that a leadership style of a system is very much dependant on the organization within which it is operating.

Transferral of leadership from one institution to another is a process similar to re-aligning one's values as circumstances change, whereby the "core" values are kept and other values develop to fit the new context. It was the realization that I could not simply transfer the style of leadership

I had developed at Westwood to Bishop's, but that listening and responding was crucial to develop the right capacities for the circumstances.

For example, although I retained the core elements of my leadership style with regards provision for gifted and talented students, such as the first priority of classroom based provision, opportunities available via the scheme of work and the use of creativity, I felt an internal shift in provision for this cohort. The narrowing of my focus from whole school to subject specific presented me with a real challenge.

Here I was actually facing my own demons that I was responsible for creating opportunities and not asking others to do this. I was also facing a Department for whom this was a previously untouched area of practice. Essentially I felt I was making the transition from working with friends (the volunteers who shared my passion for gifted and talented at Westwood St. Thomas) to working with my family (those who I wished to share my passion, but who I was already committed to work with). In this though I share Jackie Delong's voice on leadership in which she states:

"I believe I can open doors and offer opportunities, but (others) must have the will and commitment to improve" (2002, pp.233/234)

"*Learning on the job*" was a frustrating but life-altering necessity of the first year in post. Nobody can prepare another for entering Middle or indeed Senior Management. There is a sense of bewilderment in the first few weeks, as one struggles to cut oneself lose from the norm, from the comfy slipper that was their previous professional role. Adapting is a sense of personal transformation, in hoping that in shedding one's old skin and growing a new one that the very best of the past is within that fabric.

4.2 Nature of passion

Instilling the passion in others but allowing them to find their own path has really asked me to focus on how I translate my own passion into my own practice. Realizing that I do not have ready-made colleagues with which I can collaborate on gifted and talented, but who share my passion for life and have a will and commitment to make things better.

Tomlinson (2004) on his summary of keynote speakers at the 2004 Belmas conference summarised Chris James' keynote speech "*exploring the lives of educational leaders in building creative and passionate*

schools and colleges"(Management in Education, Vol.17, issue 5, p.6).

Tomlinson continued to summarise James by stating that the "*key task of the educational leader is to work with these emotions. This will lead to schools where creativity and innovation are welcomed, where there is a passion for education and where there is a spirit of generavity*[4]"

My passion is what drives me to continuously seek improvement in what I do within a professional context. This bought home to me the reason for my first part of writing, in which I have been consciously trying to understand my self before exploring the influence of others upon my self, and vice versa.

"*Building relationships starts with knowing oneself and then getting to know others*" (Delong, 2002,p.236)

I have claimed that the self does not have one owner, but that it contains "third-party values" which are borrowed and then assimilated through working with significant individuals in one's own practice.

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[4] "Generavity" is a concept developed by Erikson, implying that schools will care profoundly for the next generation manifesting the virtues of love, hope, will, purpose, competence, fidelity and wisdom. They work to enhance their change capacity for regeneration.

Therefore, as James talks about the educational leader understanding his/her emotions, there is a simultaneous consideration of the emotions that others hold with whom I engage, or have engaged with in the past. One of the foundational examples of this type of third-party emotion which has translated into a central passionate belief that I hold, is the question:

"How can I prove that I have had an educational influence over anyone?" (Whitehead)

This has led me to question any educational influence that I have believed to have, and to seek the voice of others in clarifying this claim. My work with students, bringing the student voice to seek clarity on my own claims, has allowed me to have a qualitative evidence base for my research that has proved invaluable. Similarly having the privilege of co-enquiry with student-teachers allows an additional dimension of proof of *"work well done"*.

Through the influence of Jack Whitehead over me in this context, I need to understand the complexities of proving my values to others. I need to realize that mine is a shared passion:

"For a given individual, or for a collective actor, there may be a plurality of passions..Their relative weight in influencing people's behaviour depends upon negotiations and arrangements between individuals and those institutions and organizations" (Castells, 1997,pp.6-7)

I consider therefore the voice that is writing this research. I consider who has ownership over the research. Is it my self? My self is a collection, a "plurality" of others' passions as exemplified above. When I place my name upon the ownership of this research writing, I will feel uncertainty at doing so, for it is the students who I have worked with, the student-teachers, my colleagues within the Department and other schools, my fellow researchers. All these individuals hold a shared claim to this writing as well. When I defend the claims of educational influence that I have made, it occurs that it would be better to have representatives from all the groups above present, for who better to *validate* my research than these other significant contributors., which shows first-hand evidence of educational influence upon the other.

"In my life and work I believe in collaboration. I hold the same belief in research..I have embraced many willing collaborators" (Delong, 2002, p.282)

4.1 Justifying the approach

"I wanted a method that allowed for my creativity to ask my own questions and integrate my own insights" (Delong, 2002, p.269)

Living educational theory action research (Whitehead, 1989, 1993, 1999) is the only method in which I have worked, and I must consider whether my neglecting of other approaches has narrowed the impact that my research may have. It is however the freedom to focus on the nature of the "I" within my research, and the ability to be able to change the direction of the research as it progresses whilst making my own decisions about methodological choices which has proved too hard a temptation to resist. The personal growth that I have felt as a result of using this process has co-developed the ability to believe in the claims I am making and the creativity and vision to move forward.

If research does not contain a question focussed on the "I", focussed on a living being with embodied values created as a result of life experiences, then the research itself has no ownership. I believe that unless there is a claim of ownership, then the research cannot claim to have worthwhile purpose. Even if this claim of ownership is a multi-dimensional ownership.

Using qualitative judgements as a method of validation by those significant individuals involved in the research allows evidence of real influence to be shown. Choosing to look at actual practice in which one is engaged answers Jack Whitehead's question:

"How can you prove that you have influence over anybody?"

Schön also gives reasons for investigating current practice:

"Often we misstate what we know how to do. Indeed, when we ask people to describe what they know how to do, we are likely to get an answer that mainly reveals what they know about answering the question. If we want to discover what someone knows in action, we must put ourselves in a position to best observe her in action. If we want to learn about our doing, then we need to observe ourselves in the doing, reflect on what we observe, describe it, and reflect on our description" (Schön, 1995, p.30)

It would however be extremely difficult for me to show you how I embody my values solely by a written response. The joy I receive from watching students' and colleagues' progress: you are not there in my classroom with me, sharing in the experience, neither are you there at the

end of the school day to witness those exchanges. This is why I feel writing on paper to be a poor method to demonstrate to the reader the values embodied in oneself, the educational influence that I am claiming to have had.

The written word only appeals to only a limited part of the senses, and does not allow the reader to be invited into that person's world. The use of video as a *living witness* allows the viewer, if not physically to be present, to gain a real sense of what is happening. Reading and seeing the process in action add value to by claims. Think of the delight that you feel when sitting in a cinema auditorium, living the lives of those people on the screen and sharing with them their emotions. This allows real empathic awareness to take place.

Demonstrating my original claim to knowledge is a multi-dimensional task that requires more than simply words on a page. The challenge is therefore to show one's tacit knowledge, to be able to share the moments of touch, of sentiment, of dialogue that adds to the living vibrancy of my living theory of knowledge (Whitehead, 2000). This takes you one step further than the limitations of the written word. As Delong states:

"I do find, however, that the printed word has limited both my capacity to creatively describe and explain and the limitations of language to capture aesthetics, spirituality and emotion" (2002, p.285)

Whilst video evidence serves to some degree to bring life to one's claims, to allow the spectator to more fully comprehend the level of interaction, of emotion of a small moment in time, it cannot transcend to allow the spectator into the arena. The spectator is not a living witness, but a third party in the proceedings.

Writing as a process appears to internalise my thoughts, and although previously I though of this as a linear process, it is a jumbled message which needs re-ordering to allow it to translate its intended purpose, to answer the research question. The intended purpose of my writing is to give voice to my thoughts, it is to make sense of the process which I have undergone. I write for the self and I write for the significant others involved in the research. I write because I need to. I write because my internal desires persuade me to.

"There is still a defining line that prevents me, and many practitioners, from seeing themselves as part of the academic community. Part of this is

that our knowledge is seen as practical and inferior and not formal and therefore, not real knowledge" (Delong, 2002, p.301)

Part of the great frustration during the research process has been the non-systematic way in which teacher-researcher knowledge is shared. Whilst various organizations offer their practitioner research base as an on-line knowledge base, there is no centralization of this knowledge, and a feeling that the wheel is being re-invented again and again. Linking with other researchers in the field of the gifted and talented and language learning has been a difficult and time consuming process, involving much snail-like process for often small gain.

I empathise with Delong as she states:

"*I am involved in a six-fold role: teacher, researcher, knower, doer, expert and novice and desperately trying to combine all six, wishing to be a "practitioner-scholar*" (Delong, 2002, p.302)

Validation of the claims I am making

"*There is still a defining line that prevents me, and many practitioners, from seeing themselves as part of the academic community. Part of this is*

that our knowledge is seen as practical and inferior and not formal and therefore, not real knowledge" (Delong, 2002, p.301)

My educational study can be categorized as a self-study of teacher education practice, or "s-step" research. Within this research I am conscious that my *subjective* personal influence will be within the very seams of my writing, and in the claims I am making. As Whitehead (2003) states:

"the nature of "first-person" or "I" enquiries provide an ontological connection to the epistemological standards..It is a form of research that requires of the researcher a willingness to hold himself or herself to account in terms of values"

The rigorousness of this type of validation comes from the internal passion of the researcher to hold his or claims up to scrutiny. It is a measure of the personal and professional integrity of the group of "s-step" researchers to verify their epistemological embodiment of knowledge. In her doctoral thesis Delong (2002) uses internal validation through prolonged internal discussion of the claims she is making. We are accepting, through choosing this method of research to "*accept a*

reasonability to account for (our) own practice and learning in terms of values" (Whitehead, 2003)

Validation of s-step research is the "I-You" nature of the spiritual quality of recognition (Buber, 1970, p.178). Through asking students to work with me on the level of student-researchers, and through the breakdown of hierarchy within the Department and within the mentor-mentee relationship with teachers in initial teacher training, my I-You relationship has been re-awakened. I am cautious about making claims about others' understanding without these claims coming from the individuals concerned themselves.

I seek from these relationships with "significant individuals" to have the self affirmed and recognised as the person I wish to be. This type of relationship must however be two-way. If I am having my own self reaffirmed, then so must the individuals I am working with. Within my work with students, I can claim that I support and nurture their vision of self, in that they seek to be better language learners, to know how to build a better "quality" of language.

My work with students within the languages strategy has provided me with the toolkit to build and develop others' language knowledge. It has

provided a means for self-improvement that was missing before. As a

PGCE student commented on her work with the strategy "*When the*

students have the tools to tailor and personalise the target language, this

increases their motivation. The emphasis on breaking down language to

its' component parts allows students to express thoughts and feelings

*which they **really** mean, turning the language into a bona fida medium for*

self-expression, rather then a set of set phrases to be trotted out on cue"

(2003)

Significant individuals also provide researchers with the childhood

recognition of "work well done" Whilst I admit to having a desire for this

type of recognition, I admire people who have an innate ability of self-

worth, who appear to cope well in the security of their own self-worth.

My fiancé, Simon Riding, is one of these individuals. He has a capacity

for pride in his own work that does not appear to wane or dampen with

time. This is a quality I admire.

Response from Simon-Is this correct? Or does he still need to have his

work externally recognised?

Quote Bank

Not accepting that one way is better than another, but recognizing that all ways have their own merit in different circumstances.

"What I have frequently articulated as an indicator of a good school is the school who sees parents and community (as well as children) as assets and resources to improve learning and I look for how many volunteers are involved in the school" (Delong, 2002, p.242)

"Where teachers, parents and administrators identify their own issues, research their practice and find their own solutions through creative engagement, real change can take place" (Delong, 2002, p.243)

"I do not intend *responding appropriately to individuality* to be a luxury but a standard to which I am held accountable" (Delong, 2002, p.245)

"If you know what is within you, and you bring out what is within you, what is within you will save you. If you know what is within you, and you do not bring out what is within you, what is within you will destroy you" (Gnostic Gospel of St, Thomas in Clarkson, 2000)

"I often find myself unable to live my life fully according to my values in the sense that I hold certain values and experience them being negated in practice" (Delong, 2002, p.49)

"Theory surely leads to practice. But practice leads to theory. And teaching best shapes both research and practice" (Boyer 1990)

"The role of policies is to free up people to do creative things for students and not to block or restrict creativity" (Moffat in DeLong 2002,p.27)

"It seems to me that educators are in the improvement business" (Delong, 2002,p.57)

Leithwood defines this relationship as "Influence..seems to be a necessary part of leadership. This suggests that most of the variance in leadership concepts, types or models can be accounted for by differences in who exerts influence, the nature of that influence, the purpose for exercise of the influence and its outcomes" (Leithwood et al, 1999, p.6).

"Not great leaders alone, but great leaders who exist in a fertile relationship with a Great Group" (Bennis & Biederman, 1997, p.3 in Delong, 2002 , p.234)

Mike Bassey (1995) is used by Delong (2002, p.271) to justify her action research methodological choice:

In research on educational settings a claim to knowledge is likely to be some theoretical aspect of teaching and learning, or about educational policy, or about teaching or managerial practice. It may, for example:

- ✓ Contribute incrementally to the accumulated knowledge of the topic under study

- ✓ Challenge existing theoretical ideas

- ✓ Offer significant improvements to existing practice

- ✓ Give new insights into policy

- ✓ Introduce a new methodology of potential power

- ✓ Provide a significant piece in a jigsaw of understanding; or

Bring together disparate findings and integrate them into a new theoretical structure (Bassey, 1995, p.71)

"I have found that I need an audience for my thoughts as well as a respondent" (Delong, 2002, p.283)