

**VOICE, POWER AND TRUST: A CRITICAL EXPLORATION OF THE FACTORS
FACILITATING STUDENT VOICE WITHIN A SECURE TRAINING CENTRE**

by

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ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with exploring issues relating to voice, power and trust for trainees within a Secure Training Centre, whilst those trainees participated in an evening activities programme in 2009.

Classes were led by myself twice a week and attended by groups of up to eight trainees, plus their secure care officers. The trainees were vulnerable adolescent males who had either committed crimes or were remanded in custody. As part of these classes, the trainees had the opportunity to share their perspectives on a variety of topics. This occurred through both traditional research methods and a variety of innovative techniques, such as the use of wireless keyboards to facilitate a text based dialogue across a range of topic headings. Over a period of time, trust was built and insights explored.

In my research I have made use of a hybrid approach, borrowing insights from Critical Ethnography and Practitioner Research. By doing so, I have attempted to show that through a critical approach to power and ideology, the provision of opportunities for young people to express their insights can lead to various positive outcomes. By combining critical ideas with those typically associated with Practitioner Research, it has been possible to reflect on my own practice to improve outcomes for young people.

This thesis is an exciting exploration of how young people, held within secure accommodation, react to the opportunity of expressing their views. It is relevant because it explores the perspectives and empowerment of young people who have been incarcerated, an area which is recognised as being profoundly challenging.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 The research problem

This study looks at the viability and effectiveness of offering voice to young people in a Secure Training Centre, as experienced and reported by a cohort of trainees and positioned by institutional policy. The research questions that the study addresses are:

- To what extent is the concept of voice workable within the confines of a secure training unit?
- How do boys, situated within such an institution, report these experiences within the context of an ethnographic case study?
- In what ways is the reporting of these experiences positioned by institutional policy documentation?

By exploring these questions, I hope to establish how to most effectively encourage a vulnerable cohort of young people to build trusting relationships and express thoughts and feelings.

1.1.1 The structure of the study

This thesis has six chapters in all. The second chapter offers a literature review of the concept of power, and how it can be applied for specific institutions. The literature exploring the concepts of trust, identity and student voice, with specific relation to educative environments and the secure estate, is also reviewed. The third chapter, entitled ‘Research design and methodology’, establishes the rationale for harnessing a mix of a critically ethnographic and practitioner researcher approach; the means by which data was collected and analysed; the ontological and epistemological justifications; the position of the research in the field including the ethical issues; the impact of pilot research and the limitations in the approach adopted. In chapter four the data which address the research questions is presented. The fifth chapter offers critical and analytical reflections on the study as whole. This is followed by the final chapter which offers a discussion of the data presented. It also summarises and reviews the research study, including key conclusions and recommendations. A detailed outline of each chapter is given in 1.3 below.

1.1.2 An overview of the study

My aim throughout the course of this study, as a responsible adult and teacher, was to offer the young people with whom I was working opportunities to engage in dialogue. It was hoped that through dialogue, the young people would benefit in a number of ways. Firstly, they may benefit from developing relationships with positive role models. Secondly, I hoped that the dialogues might touch on topics which would benefit their education, most obviously connected to an outdoor pursuits programme which was the prime structure of activity underpinning my contacts with the young people. Most significantly, I hoped to engage the trainees so that through the activities that we participated in together, they would trust me sufficiently to share their views on topics that were directly pertinent to their existence within the centre.

The study focuses on offering incarcerated young people the opportunity to express themselves. Talbot (2004) suggests that offering people the opportunity to express a voice is to offer a positive experience, both for the person concerned and for others. This potential is shown in the anonymous statement of a prisoner when discussing their participation in a prisoner council:

It is important for me to help those who have no voice, the ones who are ignored and are vulnerable (p11)

It was clear that offering incarcerated young people a means by which to express their potentially challenging views would not be an easy task, but it was one to which I felt committed, both as an educator and as a human being. As Rudduck and Flutter argue, “consultation can help build a more inclusive ethos in schools...where principles of inclusion are particularly vulnerable” (2003, p157). Their argument is equally valid in the context of a Secure Training Centre.

This study also builds on the developing significance of student voice practices which continue to develop in education. The rising importance of student councils, “providing early experiences of the role that pupils can play as active citizens” (Whitty et al., 2005, p5), is a feature of this developing agenda. Consequently, there has been a growth of student councils within education. Figures have risen from approximately 33% in 2003 to 50% in 2004 and 97% in 2005 (Whitty et al., 2005, p17). Increasingly, educative establishments are looking to

the young people that they teach to contribute their thoughts, reflecting the recognition that education is a lifelong process of growth. Student voice is seen as important as it engenders responsibility and offers an active dimension for future political engagement.

1.1.3 Literature and policy contexts

The focus of this study has largely been ignored within the literature on custodial experiences for young people. Whilst some studies have focused on specific incarceration experiences, such as bullying (Beck, 1995; Connell and Farrington, 1996; Power et al., 1997), substance use (Cope, 2000), trauma (Abram et al., 2004), and loneliness (Markus, 1996; Rokach and Koledin, 1997), this study is distinct in that it focuses upon younger offenders, their views and their expressions within a newly established style of secure accommodation. The extant literature has few in-depth studies of young people's experiences of detention (Askar and Kenny, 2008, p595). We also know that studies have neither explored "how youth experience the conflicting discourses of treatment and punishment" within the secure estate, nor the "gendered aspects of all-boys facilities" (Abrams and Anderson-Nathe, 2012, p4). My aim was to begin to remedy this omission through the use of a critically ethnographic approach combined with a variety of innovative techniques. The study was thus a hugely risky enterprise undertaken in a universe of unknowns. As Williams (2005, p194) has said: "innovative projects in prisons are vulnerable to being abandoned in the face of pressure of numbers or other threats to security". At times, this study was certainly exposed to these pressures.

The study is set against a perceived national concern about the challenges for teenagers, a point illustrated by Verkaik (2005) when identifying how "children are the subject of more antisocial behaviour orders than adults" and that "figures show that children have become the prime target of antisocial behaviour orders with more than half of Asbos issued between June 2000 and March 2004 against children - 1,177 against children and 1,143 against adults." (Independent.co.uk, 2005). It is difficult to escape the possibility that the issuing of Asbos to such a particular demographic within a population reflects both a desire to protect the younger people within society, but also the political agenda at that time of taking a public stance on taking crime seriously.

Successive governments have tried to re-engage such teenagers, many of whom are defined as 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET). Various strategies have included the

development of vocational diploma and pathway programmes; encouraging mothers with teenage pregnancies back into education, the clear establishment of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) as laid out in *Quality, Choice and Aspiration* (DCSF, 2010); and the ongoing support for the Connexions service since its creation in 2001. As Beckett and Struthers (2011) acknowledge, “there is a need to tap the concerns confronting practitioners working with disadvantaged pupils” (p17) to combat the growing recognition that ‘troubled’ families cost the taxpayer disproportionately.

In *Youth Matters* (DFES, 2005), a key policy document of the New Labour administration, the government wanted “young people to have more influence over what is being provided in each locality (and) should have more opportunities to be involved in the planning and delivery of services and more opportunities to express their views” (p7). This, the document argues, is to encourage active citizenship, i.e. to engage young people in the workings of the society in which they live. In its focus on young people in custodial surroundings, this study explores the opportunities for expression for those who are socially excluded.

1.2 The study

1.2.1 A biography of the research question

My initial interest in pursuing a doctoral study based within a secure context developed over a number of years whilst working in a part-time capacity in a Secure Training Centre. Over this period I became increasingly interested in how the young people who were incarcerated expressed their ideas, or in many cases did not express ideas effectively. My view chimed with that of Rogowski who argued that “the views of young people, particularly young offenders themselves, like all marginalized groups, are rarely heard though they certainly deserve to be” (2006, p42). I wanted to find means by which young people could explore their ideas as part of a useful programme and vent their frustrations towards their lack of being heard and their disempowerment in their incarcerated setting. In this study, by taking a critically ethnographic approach to building a close relationship with the participants and by providing opportunities for ideas to be expressed in a variety of unusual ways, it was possible to build a platform for useful and productive dialogue with young people who might otherwise be disengaged. The ethnographic perspective offered a lack of hierarchy that meant that this study could be based primarily on establishing a shared ethos of trust and on addressing power dynamics between adult and young person.

The research venue for this study was Beech Meadow Secure Training Centre. This is a secure custodial unit for vulnerable young people in their teenage years. The constantly changing nature of this institution fascinated and engaged me and I was continually excited at the prospect of working with the young people within its walls. These were teenagers who often surprised me and offered me many lessons about life too. It was out of a sense of sincere interest and a genuine aspiration to help the young people at Beech Meadow that I wanted to conduct this particular research study.

1.2.2 The national context and the institution

The political context for the introduction of Secure Training Centres was a complex mix of a punitive sense of control in policies, combined with a wider promotion of social justice. Various policy initiatives furthered the ability of courts to impose more severe sanctions. This is especially evident from 1993, when the prison system in the United Kingdom underwent a radical shift with the introduction of the Secure Training Order, an approach encapsulated by the then Home Secretary, Michael Howard, in his argument that “Prison works. It ensures that we are protected from murderers, muggers and rapists – and it makes many who are tempted to commit crime think twice” (cited in Davies et al., 1998, p310). In the latter days of the Conservative administration, the movement to a more control-led view of justice had begun.

The New Labour administration brought with it a “rhetoric of social justice” (Gewirtz, 2000, p320). Measures introduced were engineered to deal with the progressively rising trend of prisoner numbers which reached a peak of 85,201 in May 2010 (Greenwood, 2010). Pitts (2003) explains how these measures included a variety of preventative interventions that were linked with police final warnings, referral orders, reparation orders, action plan orders and supervision orders (p55). Further measures were introduced in the Criminal Justice Act of 1991, such as the creation of Youth Offending Teams, the suspension of *doli incapax* in 1998 and the development of the ASSET assessment model, each of which sought to address increasing individual ‘needs’ (Smith, 2005). The justice system shifted significantly at this period. As a result of “the unfavorable economic and social climate from the 1990s, the Bulger case, and political opportunism” New Labour were inspired to “proclaim a punitive youth justice policy” (Cristiaens and Nuytiens, 2009, p139). It is this policy level dialectic

alongside the ongoing tensions and negotiations that exist within institutions that had a direct impact on practice within institutions on a day-to-day basis.

Although The Howard League for Penal Reform noted how England and Wales detain more children than any other country in Western Europe, with approximately 3000 held at any one time and 10,000 passing through the secure estate each year (2008, p7), the trend towards more severe control measures was a phenomenon that developed across the continent.

Although in some European nations such as Finland, the government and press have sought to divert attention away from youth crime (Pitts and Kuula, 2006), more frequently Western European juvenile justice systems have become more punitive over recent decades (Cristiaens and Nuytiens, 2009; Goldson and Muncie, 2006; Goldson, 2002). The alarm in Belgium, stimulated by the death of a boy in Brussels Central Station, led directly to a reduction in the transfer age to their adult courts. At a similar time, the United Kingdom encountered its own anxiety with the death of young Jamie Bulger, which stimulated the already developing public concern in the United Kingdom to develop into an “emerging moral panic” (Smith, 2009, p253).

As the decade progressed, public concern over the burgeoning prison population and the consequent overfull prisons developed. There was what Brown (1998) described as an “explosion of panic concerning the young” (p155) fuelled by the media, the public and politicians. This influenced both policy and practice within the youth justice system sometimes based on a caricature of young people and their actions (Smith, 2009, p252). At this point, senior police officers started discussing the ‘pre-pubescent super-predator’ (Pitts, 2003, p49).

To underline the public mood, the Daily Mirror ran a famous headline – ‘Devil Child’, for which the sensational and critical nature of the subtext, ‘Credulous psychiatrists, pornographic videos and why no-one can truly comprehend the mystery of evil’ (Glover, Daily Mail, March 11th 2010) suggested that a popular demand for greater penalties was on the rise. This leaning can also be seen in the considerable public criticism of Children’s Commissioner, Dr Maggie Atkinson, in the popular press, following the comments expressing her desire to raise the age of criminal responsibility to twelve years of age (Thomson and Sylvester, 2010). This type of criticism is what Czerniawski describes as “a

tabloid media disproportionately constructing and demonising law breaking as violent, sub-human or parasitic” (2015, p3-4).

The context for the creation of the Secure Training Centres is, however, not straightforward. In policy terms, the movement towards more severe penalties is clear. However, public statements and the avowed “accountability through punishment and the protection of society; an emphasis on restorative justice and a preference for diversion” (Hazel, 2008, p5) also gave a sense of recognition that the reduction of crime necessitates working with offenders. Martin Narey, the former Chief Inspector of Prisons, for example, espoused the benefits of stability, remedial and vocational education, self respect and responsibility in personal relationships. (Narey, cited by Centre for Crime and Justice Studies, 1999). Therefore, the tension between these two apparently opposite trends needed to be resolved.

By the 1990s, the period in which Secure Training Centres were discussed, authorised and initiated, politicians were looking for an alternative to traditional models of public policy – and this extended into the field of Youth Justice. On the one hand, there was the effort to employ effective management systems and impose severe punishments through the civil law (ASBOs, supervision and dispersal orders) and welfare sanctions (Cooker, 2009). Conversely, there was an emphasis on prevention and reducing social exclusion, more characteristic of the welfarist era (Pitts, 2003).

Policy changes began to take place which partly reflected a philosophical resolve to develop a more integrated model of welfare support across the public sector and which partly reflected a profound social anxiety, especially stimulated by the Bulger murder. An awareness of these apparently contradictory national policy changes is crucial to an understanding of why Secure Training Centres exist.

A Secure Training Centre (STC) is a custodial institution, run by private contractors and answerable to the Youth Justice Board, that was introduced by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, itself an extension of the Prison Act 1952. Provision was made for five institutions to be created, the first of which was in Medway, Kent, opened in April 1998. Notably, STCs were not to be subject to legislation that protected children, notably the Children’s Act 1989 (Howard League for Penal Reform, 2005). Alongside Youth Offender

Institutions (YOIs) and Secure Children's Homes, these formed the secure estate for young people. However, distinct from the YOIs, their purpose was to be more education focused as they were smaller in size with a higher staff to young offender ratio (Stone, 2012). In theory, young people were to be detained at an STC for not less than six months and not more than two years. There are currently four STCs within the United Kingdom, three of which are sub-contracted out to 'Rebound Education, Care and Development', a division of the private company G4S. The stated aim of these centres is to educate and rehabilitate the young people in their care as "education and rehabilitation underpins the whole regime within STCs" (G4S, 2009). From its opening in August 2004 until November 2009, the centre in which I worked looked after both genders. In November 2009, it became a unit for boys only.

The provision was intended for persistent young offenders at a variety of ages. For boys, the age brackets were 12-14 or 15-17, if additionally classed as "vulnerable". For girls, the age brackets were 12-15 as well as girls 16-17 classified as "vulnerable". A young person would be defined as vulnerable by the Courts if they suffered from either structural or innate vulnerability where structural vulnerability referred to conditions relating to poverty or social injustice. Innate vulnerability referred more to the specific incidents for that child, such as family fracture, emotional neglect, bereavement or permanent separation from a parent, rejection or neglect by the parents, impermanence of home or from physical/sexual abuse (Goldson, 2002; Bateman, 2004).

It was hoped that the centres, with a strong emphasis on trying to reduce the risk of reoffending, would provide new opportunities for residents. To respond to the needs of these young people, the age profile of staff was given particular attention. Recruitment of either staff in their twenties or staff in their forties was favoured to offer, respectively, either a mutual connection or a parental figure (Youth Justice Board, 2012, p24). These additional opportunities would include a more bespoke educational provision, supported by additional services to provide behavioural, social and emotional support. When evaluating Medway STC in 2000, Home Office minister Boateng suggested that "For many this will be an early opportunity to turn their lives around" (cited in Hagell et al., 2000).

The track record of STCs, however, was not entirely successful. The early stages of the STCs were challenging as the units struggled to deliver positive outcomes and after two

tragic deaths of young people in STC custody nationally, even the unit I worked in was threatened with closure. In terms of re-offending rates, 11% of children discharged were arrested for a further offence within seven days whilst 52% were similarly arrested within seven weeks and 67% had been arrested within twenty weeks of release (Goldson, 2005, p82). Nor are STCs a cost-effective option as provision of places in an STC is expensive at between £4000-5000 per week depending on the individual's needs (Moore, in Goldson, 2000). More recently, the Ministry of Justice has argued in its proposals for Secure Colleges that establishing Secure Colleges will "enable us to withdraw from some of the most expensive youth custodial provision" (Ministry of Justice, 2014, p5), especially the "costly STC provision" (p10).

By the same token, the provision of services at Beech Meadow was also not always successful. The turnover of staff from Director to Secure Care Officer level at various points led to national news reports highlighting the centre's failure. In May 2008 the YJB ascribed the inability of Beech Meadow STC to operate at more than 50% capacity to failings by G4S and issued rectification notices. The position since has much improved, with rectification notices being lifted in March 2009; an Ofsted rating for overall delivery of "Good" in June 2009 followed by "Outstanding" in December of that same year (Ofsted, 2009). The reasons for this improvement in performance are various, but one critical factor is the retention of sufficient colleagues who can develop strong personal rapport with the young people.

Within the centre the accommodation is organized into small units of up to eight trainees. Each trainee has his own single bedroom which is locked at 9pm each evening. The facilities available to the trainee within their bedroom depend largely on the reward regime they are on: for example, some trainees may have their own CD player or television if they have earned enough points. At other times, trainees have access to a small communal kitchen, plus various living room areas which have benching and comfortable sofas. Televisions, DVD players and consoles are available for entertainment. There is also a communal telephone. Explicitly:

the aim is to create a living environment that helps address the cycle of offending behaviour, and one that is consistent with the needs of developing adolescents. (G4S, 2009).

Each day trainees are escorted to the education/teaching wing; to the sporting facilities for activities; to the dining hall for meal times; and to the dedicated health care centre where nursing staff are available should they be unwell.

During the period that Secure Training Centres were conceived, rising prison numbers and media speculation led to a succession of policies enshrined in documents such as *Misspent Youth* (Audit Commission, 1996) and *No More Excuses* (Home Office, 1997). These policies allowed for both a development of powers for a variety of agencies and a wider package of support available to young offenders. The ongoing overhaul of the youth justice system included the creation of the Youth Justice Board itself and with it, the introduction of Youth Offending Teams, together with various examples of criminal legislation. Such legislation included the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act of 1994 (Home Office, 1994) and the Crime and Disorder Act of 1998 (Home Office, 1998). Michael Howard had changed the 1933 Children and Young People's Act to permit the revealing of young people's names in court if it was perceived to be in the public interest and in 1998 Jack Straw abandoned the principle of 'Doli incapax' (literally, meaning 'incapable of crime'. Arguably, both Home Secretaries could have been acting out the desire to respond to public outrage as well as helping the young people in question. The Crime and Disorder Act of 1998 had created a set of judicial mechanisms that encompassed reprimands and final warnings, and developed Youth Court powers. In 1999 reparation orders were introduced. In 2001, a local child curfew, the child safety order and the parenting order were also introduced. Collectively, these policy decisions represent a demonstrable shift to create more capacity within the secure estate, to ensure greater consistency for people passing through the judicial processes and to offer agencies more mechanisms by which to curb anti-social behaviour. In the face of a public demand for stronger custodial sentencing and a concomitant increase in the number of such sentences being handed down, Secure Training Centres represented a possible solution to the dilemma of how to deal most effectively with youth crime.

1.2.3 The theoretical background

This is a critically ethnographic piece of research exploring the voices of young people. It is located within the wider ethnographic tradition (Heath, 1983; Walford, 2007; Toner, 2009; Ross et al., 2009). It is heavily indebted to, and adapts the five-stage critical framework established by Carspecken (1996, p43).

The study combines critical ethnography with the broader, multi-modal, social-semiotic approaches of Kress (2001, 2004) and Rogers (2004). Combining these approaches aims to provide a comprehensive account of the situations encountered within this study.

The study is underpinned by an interdisciplinary perspective based on the constructivist philosophies of Foucault. A Foucauldian approach enables an understanding of the disciplinary institution as a place in which particular power relationships underpinned by differing constructions of knowledge, are inscribed and contested. In his discussion of correctional change, Cohen (1983) argues that a major correctional change took place around the eighteenth century, a change that moved away from physical punishment involving public infliction of pain, to the mind replacing the body as the object of penal repression; the development of centralized state apparatus; the increasing differentiation of prisoners into separate types and an increasing separation of those prisoners within the secure environment itself (Cohen, 1983, p102-103).

This shift is famously discussed by Foucault at the beginning of *Discipline and Punish* where the evolution of the prison from an institution that inflicts physical pain to the more ‘civilized’ treatments that focus on mental punishment is highlighted. Foucault (1980), identified the shift to punishment by physical means to punishment by a more mental form when authorities moved from imposing an “exemplary punishment” to “the imposition of surveillance” (p38). From the point of this shift, “the prison was linked from its beginning to a project for the transformation of individuals...the prison was meant to be an instrument comparable with – and no less perfect than – the school...” (P39-40). Foucault sees the prison as a tool that is employed by authorities to reform individuals, however inadequate its realization, as the “failure of the project was immediate, and was realised virtually from the start” (p40). For Foucault, prison effectively professionalises the criminal, an opinion expressed recently by the Justice Secretary Kenneth Clarke regarding the need to “shut the revolving door of crime and reoffending” (Clarke, June 2010), accusing the current system of being a warehouse for prisoner development. The view that the prison can school crime underlines the point that prisoners learn throughout their incarcerated experiences. If learning can take place, work that encourages engagement with positive role models becomes crucial.

In parallel with the Foucauldian analysis, a central aim of my study was to explore power differentials, and to explore both the development of trusting networks (Coleman, 1988; Russell, L., 2005, 2013; Smyth, 2011; Schmidt, 2010) and investigate Student Voice practices, where Fielding (1999, 2001), Rudduck and Flutter (2003), and Fielding and Rudduck (2002) all identify the power dimensions that can be associated with student voice work.

Ignoring young offenders' voices can represent a lost opportunity as Clark, Boorman and Nind (2011) point out that for "young people who have experienced exclusion, encouraging voice entails significant responsibility for action" (p769). If talking represents a path towards self-recognition, then it is particularly apposite to explore talk for those who are incarcerated. This is especially the case when research suggests that mental health issues are common in prisons. It is suggested, for example, that 90% of Dutch male juvenile offenders suffer from at least one psychiatric disorder, whilst in Denmark 36% met the criteria for mental disorder (Kohlet et al., 2009). In Belgium, the medical-psychological reports indicate that "half of the transferred youths deny, minimize or justify their criminal behaviour and lack empathy with the victim", displaying character traits that are "immature, dangerous, aggressive, mistrustful and spoilt" (Cristiaens and Nuytiens, 2009, p134).

It is also apparent that many of the prisoners within the United Kingdom's own prisons present learning disabilities with over two thirds having difficulties expressing themselves in prison, reading information and completing forms (Talbot, 2010). As the Children's Rights Alliance for England (2003) highlight, nearly half of all young offenders in custody have literacy and numeracy levels below that of an average eleven year old with over 25% equivalent to a seven year old. Over half have been in care. One in three girls and one in twenty boys report sexual abuse and 85% show signs of a personality disorder. 40% of boys and 66% of girls have symptoms of anxiety, depression, fatigue and concentration problems (2003, p6). The report also recommended that it be made easier for young people to discuss issues relevant to their mental well-being. This is particularly relevant to my current study where the use of technology makes it easier for young people to overcome barriers in sharing views – either through speech or through text. If facilitating the expression of voice can be linked to lowering barriers and promoting responsible behaviour, it could be of profound significance to society in terms of encouraging engagement by released young people.

1.3 The structure of the thesis

The second chapter in this thesis establishes a conceptual and theoretical framework that influences relationships and behaviours within a prison environment, all of which underpins the later discussion of the interrelationship between power, trust and voice in a secure training institution. The chapter examines in some detail the issues of power diffusion and dynamics, drawing particularly on the work of Foucault. Following this, chapter two considers internal rules of behavior including the language that inmates use as a tool to reinforce group solidarity and the significance of language and discourse as a control mechanism. The chapter examines the concept of trust and links it to the practical creation of a trusting environment where issues of identity can be expressed within a secure institution. The concept of socially constructed collective trust is raised as a model for this study. I next focus on the concept of masculinity within the secure estate and its relationship to the development and expression of voice. The final part of the chapter turns to voice itself. It links the concepts of power dynamics and mutual trust with the potential for effective voice.

Chapter three focuses on the research design and methodology of the study. It provides a theoretical setting for the approach taken to carrying out the research as well as setting out some of the practical elements of the research. The chapter begins with a discussion of the ontological assumptions that underpin the study and then sets out its epistemological standpoint. It places the research firmly within the qualitative paradigm. The positioning of the study as a piece of critical ethnography with significant features of practitioner research is then reviewed leading to an outline of the researcher standpoint and history. The chapter then turns to more practical issues of research location and participant selection, providing pen-portraits of the participants. Access and ethical issues are then discussed followed by details of the varied methods of data-collection used in the study and the rationale for their use. Data analysis methods are then reviewed in the light of Carspecken's five-stage model before the chapter finally links back to the relevance of a Foucauldian analysis of power relationships.

Chapter four begins the explication and interpretation of the data provided by the study. It firstly undertakes a critical evaluation of the institutional documentation intended to guide the management of the centre before considering the establishment of the research environment and examining the data flowing from the multi-modal methods employed and from a series of semi-structured group interviews.

Chapter five offers a number of critical and analytical reflections on the study. It begins by considering the positioning both of the study and of the researcher before proceeding to a critical reflection on the study's data collection methods. It then turns to a consideration of a central element of the study's theoretical underpinning, namely the relationship between resistance and power and their influence on the liberation of voice in a custodial environment. The penultimate section draws on the Carspecken model of systems analysis to offer a critical reflection on the concept of masculinity, harnessing Foucauldian concepts in so doing. Within that context, this chapter wishes to reflect on how successful this study has been. Finally, concluding remarks are offered.

Chapter six contains a discussion of the central issues arising from the research and proposes a response to the research questions. The chapter links with the body of existing literature and proposes that within specific, well-defined parameters, the concept of voice, whilst challenging, is both workable and valuable within the secure estate. The chapter demonstrates the significant development shown by participants in their ability to express and report upon their experiences within the institution and deals specifically with the impact of participatory methods and technology on such development. Conclusions are drawn about the role of institutional documentation in positioning the experiences of the trainees. The commitment to respect and voice within policy guidelines and the pragmatism essential to meeting the challenges of running a secure institution are explored. Finally, the chapter offers several recommendations, areas for further research and concluding remarks. This summary is offered in the full recognition that the recommendations flow from a singular set of experiences in a unique context, and therefore have no claim to be representative of patterns across the secure estate.

CHAPTER 2: EXPLORING POWER, TRUST AND VOICE WITHIN A CUSTODIAL ENVIRONMENT

2.1 Chapter introduction and overview

This chapter sets out a conceptual and theoretical framework underpinning relationships and behaviours within a prison environment. This provides the foundation for my subsequent discussion of the interrelationship between power, trust and voice in a secure training institution. The chapter examines in some detail the issues of power imbalances and dynamics drawing particularly on the work of Foucault.

The chapter then moves on to consider internal rules of behaviour, both formal and informal, and specifically, the use of language. This focuses not only on the language that inmates use as a tool to reinforce group solidarity but also on the significance of language and discourse as a control mechanism. If, as I argue, prison relationships, prison behaviour and the 'growth' of inmates are all influenced by power imbalances, and if language is one external identifier of such imbalances, the development of trust is an equally important factor. The chapter therefore goes on to examine the concept of trust and to link it to the practical creation of a trusting environment in a secure institution. The concept of socially constructed collective trust is raised as a model for this study. I next examine the concept of masculinity within the secure estate in relation to its effect on the development and expression of voice

The final part of the chapter turns to voice itself. It links the concepts of power imbalances and mutual trust with the potential for effective voice. Various definitions and concepts of voice are examined and the experiences of voice in a secure environment, its strengths and weaknesses, its successes and failures, are considered. Together the analyses within this chapter provide the foundations for my study.

2.2 Notions and models of power

Notions of power and authority are broad and expansive. As Wolff (1996) suggests, ever since philosophy began, critical thinkers have been discussing the nature of power. Our

particular focus will be on the on models of power that are connected specifically to social control, whilst also analyzing the specific mechanisms by which people can be controlled within an institution. By ‘social control’ I follow Berger’s understanding of its compass as how a society brings its recalcitrant members back into line (Berger, 1963). The “Zero-sum” view of power (Parsons, 1965), whereby power is exerted to a lesser and greater extent by both individuals and social groupings and where its use is often directed towards advantage, usually over other people, is pertinent here. It reminds us that power can be held unevenly and inequitably.

A model that is fundamental to Western notions of power structures is that established by Weber. Weber identifies three particular types of authority, classified as firstly a traditional model which appeals to customs and tradition. Secondly, as a charismatic type of authority where influence resides in the personal magnetism of the leader, and thirdly a legal-rational model which appeals to compliant rule-followers (Parkin, 2002, p77). These models coincide respectively with three broad types of affects– empathy, inspiration and susceptibility to rational argument - and provide a significant reference point from which I began to explore the dynamics of power within my own experience. The nature of the environment dictated that it was important to find ways of interacting positively and successfully with trainees. Weber’s model offered a notion that was plausible: that any authority figure in my secure institution had to be skilled enough to offer charismatic leadership as neither compliant rule-following nor appeals to the customs and tradition of a society from which the young people were effectively alienated was likely to be successful on its own. Here, there was a limitation of possibilities, but also of the imposition of power on individuals’ views of themselves. In such a setting, student ‘voice’ represented a powerful medium for a possible emancipatory experience.

In continuing to build a conceptual framework for this study, I turn to the radically different perspectives offered by Foucault. For the purposes of this study, the way in which Foucault analyses power is particularly significant, especially in relation to groups of people who may be perceived as disempowered. It is for this reason that I will dedicate some time here to examining his views. As part of a broader discussion, Foucault’s perceptions of crime, the nature of discourse and concepts of ethical behaviour will be focused on.

Foucault argues for multiple realities and may therefore be labelled as a poststructuralist (Watson, 2000). This is consistent with my ontological and epistemological standpoint, which eschews the forcing of a dominant interpretative approach, such as Feminism or Marxism, onto either researcher or participant. As a critical ethnographer interested in exploring the multiple perspectives and multiple discourses of individuals without imposing pre-conceived meanings, a Foucauldian approach resonates.

Post-structuralism can be seen as a set of principles for researching the production of knowledge itself. Therefore, what is important to such an approach is the actual workings, relations and technologies of power. Foucault's exploration of post-structural thought is his interest, not in discourse for its own merit, but rather, in how certain discourses become more dominant than others in society. In simple terms, Foucault favours localized, micro-relationships over macro-social theories (such as Marxism, psychoanalysis or Feminism) which imposed a certain way of thinking and therefore "proved a hindrance to research" (1980, p81). Foucault's thinking thereby shares common ground with critical ethnographers who explore "neutrality and taken-for-granted assumptions by bringing to light underlying and obscure operations of power and control" (Madison, 2004, p5). At this juncture, a measure of caution should be offered. Foucault's body of work is not easy to master, or to categorise. Foucault himself defied convention, slipping effortlessly between various subject areas in his search to unmask systems of power. His work engages not only with the social theories of this time, but also strives to develop his own categories of understanding, such as 'discourse', in an effort to redefine and expand our comprehension of knowledge.

In relation to this study, Foucault provides an insightful conceptual framework through the way in which he explores the relationship between power, discipline, discourse and knowledge where discourse refers to the ways of constructing knowledge and social practice. The especial focus on the individual leads to a greater understanding of how the subject is not necessarily a dominated figure bereft of power: rather, the subject exists as a social actor in their own right involved in a complex and shifting dynamic web. The understanding that individuals are continually in the process of constructing themselves through what Lazaroiu (2013) refers to as technologies of the self and ethical self-constitution is fundamental to this study. It is this dynamic situation where social actors explore their own circumstance through dialogues that this study is interested in, addressing the question of how boys, situated within a secure institution, report these experiences.

Foucault's conceptual understanding of the individual's ability to manipulate power at various levels is very relevant to this study as exemplified in the daily interactions between officers and young people. His innovation is in his perception of the individual as potentially more than a disempowered figure without access to resources. Foucault was interested in how wider social practices could be affected by changes in the behaviour of individuals, recognising a crucial dependency on changes in the 'mechanisms of power' not only at state level but "on a much more minute and everyday level" (1980, p139). For Foucault, power is everywhere, "exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of non-egalitarian and mobile relations" (1980, p94). Under this view, and in the context of this study, the young offenders with whom I worked, despite their position as being victimized and disenfranchised, are not bereft of power.

Foucault identifies three distinct types of power. These are, respectively, disciplinary power, pastoral power and bio-power and in the context of this study, it is the first of these, the concept of disciplinary power that is highly pertinent. The discussion of how the 18th Century was a turning point away from torture towards a disciplinary model that used more subtle modes of surveillance (such as the presentation of Bentham's Panopticon) is very relevant demonstrating how the civilization of societies led to the hiding of punishment and its 'humanisation', shifting the focus from retribution to a 'gentler', more mental form. Foucault's exploration of institutional bodies such as prisons, schools and hospitals identified them as places that were docile, and therefore may be "subjected, used, transformed and improved" (1977, p136). In the context of this study, it is, as Foucault recognised, the 'docility' of individuals that may be awakened by exploring the power dynamics of localized relationships.

In order to conceive of power as the ability to render docile, it is necessary to understand it as a manipulation than can take a series of forms (Fitzsimons, 2007), or as Foucault suggests, to conceive of it as a "multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their organisation" (1977, p194). Under this model, power circulates. As Hammersley and Atkinson explain (2007, p12-13), for Foucault, power is exercised in a 'capillary' fashion. Regimes of truth are created in different societies and different contexts. What is true and false is constituted through the exercise of power. This study explores the regime of truth within the context of the secure estate – the imposition of authority and the challenges to it.

Power, therefore is a function of circumstance, context and timing and it is the concept of the socialization of power, of how individuals develop roles and identity within specific environments that Foucault adds to our conceptual framework. When Foucault establishes that genealogy's task is to identify an historical ontology of ourselves "in relation to truth through which we constitute ourselves as subjects of knowledge...in relation to a field of power through which we constitute ourselves as subjects acting on others (and) in relation to ethics through which we constitute ourselves as moral agents" (Foucault, in Rabinow, 1984, p351) he firmly acknowledges the potential of any individual figure to establish a particular identity in a particular context.

This is a positive, radical view of power; "power produces, it produces reality, it produces domains of truth and rituals of truth" (Foucault, 1977, p194). In the act of generating new truths and new realities for the individual, something is created. By recognizing that power is not simply a unitary oppressive force that can be used to dominate, but is more like a series of knotted struggles (During, 1992), it is possible to accept that individuals are free to exercise choice. An understanding of those knotted struggles that occur on such a frequent basis in a secure institution could help to ensure a degree of liberation for those who are incarcerated.

The relevance of the Foucauldian model to my study resides in its ability to explicate how young people who have officially been deemed as both deviant and vulnerable can be simultaneously disempowered due to their incarceration, and empowered with close friendship circles and by exercising dominance over their secure care officers. Such inter-relationships exemplify Foucault's concept of power as an ongoing and dynamic process of consistently negotiating meanings through ongoing human interactions. As Wuthnow et al. (1984) assert, individuals exert control through cultural practices extending from personal relations to the institutional centres of power (p176). Such notions of power fit easily with Hymes' (1994) notions of "communicative competence" where success or failure in a given social situation is a function of the effective use of the rules governing a particular social environment. Power, social cohesion and discourse are intimately connected, each through access, competence and trust. Accordingly, my research actively sought to reduce the rituals of power that inhibit the growth and development of trusting relationships and negatively impact the expression of thoughts and views. I aimed to construct my own localized micro-climate within which power was more equitably shared, where the young people sharing trust could feel safe, and with this trust, experience a measure of freedom in expressing identity.

Foucault develops his concept of power by equating it with knowledge where power itself produces knowledge. In relation to this study, the knowledge is of the self. I tried to encourage the trainees to share their perceptions of the world by linking individual actions with the norms, routines and expectations that are commonplace within society. As Hall (2001) suggests, to understand this circulation of power and knowledge, one has to explore the individual actions that lead to typically performed rituals. We know that Foucault recognises that some discourses become dominant over others, and that when this happens it is those individuals who can adopt normalized identities that can take most advantage. It is important to recognise that power and knowledge are intimately connected and entwined and that all fields of knowledge are constituted within power relations and all power relations constitute a field of power (Watson, 2000).

It is this sense of a flow between power and knowledge that suggests the exploration of the discourse patterns that surround each power interaction – it is the knowledge of how to act and communicate in a given social situation that brings empowerment. This reservoir can ebb and flow. It is by understanding the relationship between power and knowledge that insights can be gained into how discourses and ideas come to hold more power and truth over others at moments in time (Satka and Skehill, 2012). In the context of the secure estate, to understand how potentially very violent cultures can develop, could be incredibly important.

As suggested briefly earlier, the discourse practices that Foucault refers to have a very specific meaning within the context of his body of work. Specifically, the term refers to ‘knowledge’, how individual subjectivity is shaped by the stories that society has adopted and how these stories affect and structure people’s understanding of their own place in that society. In essence, discourse is a structured framework of socially, culturally and historically determined meanings.

These discourses are used to explore “the relationship between what we do, what we are obliged to do, what we are allowed to do, what we are forbidden to do...and what we are allowed, forbidden or obliged to say” (Foucault, 1980, p8). It is the exploration of the day-to-day dynamics of power relations that links Foucault to discourse practices. For Foucault, power and discourse practices are intimately combined. ‘Disciplinary power’ consists in a set of practices (for example, simple utterances and writings as well as a wider knowledge of social practices and actions), that offer power through social interactions. The individual

subject resides within a particular discourse and is subject to its patterns, rules and conventions. The significance of this point is that by exploring the prevailing discourse of the time, researchers can gain insight into the assumptions that society makes. As a critical ethnographer, it is through exploring these assumptions that one can further empower individuals within specific contexts. In the context of this study, the engagement in dialogue with a marginalized group, it was hoped, would provide opportunities for participants to reflect on their own existence within their own milieus.

At this stage, it is important to take note of Foucault's (1980) theories of 'delinquency' and the relationship of the prison to the younger offender. Just as the prison fails older offenders, so too it fails many more juvenile offenders through the misuse of power:

The prison cannot fail to produce delinquents. It does so by the very type of existence that it imposes on its inmates...the prison should educate its inmates...The prison also produces delinquents by imposing violent constraints on its inmates; it is supposed to apply the law, and to teach respect for it; but all of its functioning operates in the form of an abuse of power. (Foucault, cited in Rabinow, 1984, p227)

Foucault's arguments in *Discipline and Punish* (1977) are that prison itself causes delinquency, leaving the offender prone to repeat offending. By bringing young offenders together, the prison "makes possible, even encourages," (p228) the organisation of a milieu of delinquents, loyal to one another, ready to aid and abet any future criminal act." (p228). He also argues that the "prison indirectly produces delinquents by throwing the inmate's family into destitution." (p230). Whilst these views may be depressing, they also offer insight into how, through the artificial establishment of a new society, a whole new discourse of expectations, routines and knowledge can be formed. This point certainly underlines the importance of the work that is done within the secure environment to promote a more positive, constructive discourse.

Finally, in this section, it should be noted that Foucault is not without his critics. In particular, Merquior (1991) identifies how he does not distinguish between categories of prisoners, how he underplays the notion that people may act due to old traditions and how he tends to ignore the impact of religion on people's behaviour, effectively generating "a systematic reduction of all social processes to largely unspecified patterns of domination"

(p115). Other writers discuss prisons in the context of appropriate sentencing policies, whilst commentators such as Emsley (2005), criticize Foucault's lack of concern with the individuals who choose to commit crime.

To mistake the extent to which individuals take an active role in wielding power is unfortunate and a weakness in his writing. Elmsley further criticizes the way in which Foucault lends too much emphasis to the violence of the earlier punishment regimes that lack relevance to current penal practice and policy (p18). Although this study adopts a Foucauldian perspective in terms of understanding the power dynamics within an institution, it should be noted that his is not the only voice and that 'justice' remains a controversial area.

These may be valid criticisms, but in my experience, behaviour within a custodial context is very often driven by relationships where domination is a significant factor. Consequently, a Foucauldian conceptual framework of power and discourse remains appropriate. In my view it is quite clear that the insights that Foucault has offered researchers have challenged previous ways of thinking about social policy. Furthermore, his view of power within a variety of settings allows critical researchers to generate insights into communities which, in official terms, are deemed disempowered, but which nevertheless manifest power relations in different ways.

Consequently, I was personally persuaded of the need to explore the various micro-power interactions that contributed to the overall more significant movements – movements which could be particularly acute given the often fractured relationships within the culture of the secure estate. For me, it was very important to be aware of the iterative process of power circulation, whereby inequality and power stratification is “a process rather than a fixed structure somehow of everyday life, but a process based on some fundamental material conditions for getting the resources necessary to survive and prosper” (Heller, 2011, p38). It was precisely my concern with the individuals, as individuals within their environments, as potential subjects of growth that led me to this study. Under a Foucauldian perspective, the recognition of identity, of self and the recognition of power structures are key areas for growth.

2.3 Language and power within a custodial environment

This section continues to focus on how power can be situated within a custodial environment, as a tool that enables both prisoners and officers to exert influence and control, specifically through the use of language. Language within an institution can be of profound influence in exercising control and is of central concern to ethnographers in general (Little, 1982; Benaquisto and Freed, 1996; Hargreaves et al., 1975). In this section different ways of exercising power through language usage are explored against the background of the Foucauldian framework of this study which sought to identify how power can be redistributed on a micro-level. Power can be and is exerted over young people in the expression of thoughts and feelings of both other adults and young people themselves. This point reflects a wider concern about how power structures within dialogue are established and can be manipulated (Edelman, 1974; Edelsky, 1981; Fairclough, 1997, 2001).

In considering the degree to which young people's voices may be freely expressed within the constraints of a secure environment, the interpersonal and inter-relational effects of language are central. The use of language is a behaviour wherein beliefs, norms and expectations reside. Language is an outward expression of inwardly held beliefs, norms and expectations, manifested through behaviour/utterances. Enforcement of such behaviour may be direct or indirect. Foucault makes a point in relation to the Panopticon, where he suggests that even if there no one in the central tower, the mere belief that someone is there serves to internalize imprisonment and reinforce self-policing. Here, behaviour is influenced by externally generated or prompted beliefs.

Other commentators who discuss prison rules include Benaquisto and Freed (1996) who explore rules about how to behave within prison; Little (1990) who explores the rules of young men in prison in particular, and even Hargreaves et al. (1975) who explores the perceptions of rules in classrooms by young people. Becker (1966) adds his voice in identifying "deviance as the failure to obey group rules" recognizing that any "society has its own groups, each with its own set of rules" (1966, p7-8). The importance, therefore, of accepted rules becomes central – their acceptance, reinforcement or rejection manifested through language selection. Some of these behaviours are the legal or official behaviours; some are promoted by inmates themselves. Such important distinction may be reflected in

the observation that the repercussions for breaking informal rules can be more severe than those for breaking prison rules. The incarcerated can be self-policing within self-defined, internalised normative values, such as not informing on other prisoners. Inmates can act either as a unified grouping based on normative values or pragmatic necessity, or more frequently by sub-sets, based on duration of sentence length or ethnic origin, for example. These rules include the use of constantly evolving verbal and non-verbal language cues. For this study, the clear significance of the existence of such rules lies in the fact that without a working knowledge of their operation any ‘outsider’ is immediately perceived as such and is classified as deviant. That is to say, on occasion group norms may become more powerful than, institutional norms. The importance to the researcher of being familiar with the specific context is paramount: without an ingrained understanding of the environment, the likelihood of useful research being generated is diminished.

Morris and Morris (1963) explore the rules of the prison in a seminal text, *Pentonville*. In their discussion of the institution, they explore the distribution of power that this researcher had certainly witnessed, both in the officer hierarchy and amongst the ‘captives’. The prison is no different to other social situations in exhibiting “all the qualities of mass society, the uniformity of basic values, standardisation in consumption patterns, and power which is concentrated in a bureaucratic organisation beyond the scope of influence by the individual.” (p220). Beyond this superficial veneer, however, one soon discovers that there is much conflict amongst individuals on both sides of the cell door, and that because “prisoners are not as inhibited as officers are... the myth that ‘prisoners run the prison’ is reinforced” (p216) – a myth which was claimed by many young people during my time within the STC.

The inmates also develop codes for self-protection as they form “defensive alliances as well as reciprocal supports against the deprivations of imprisonment” (p224). Language is one such code of behaviour. An argot has evolved that recognises the status of individuals within the prison, such as referring to unclean prisoners as “slags”, or ascribing titles to sentence length, an example of which is a three months sentence being referred to as a “carpet” due to its short nature (i.e. one can soon walk over a carpet). Equally, “swearing is in fact part of the normal pattern of relationships in the prison” (p257). These patterns are significant to my own study because, if Morris and Morris are correct in positing “a pattern of covert

communication – a secret language of signs and gestures” (p220), then any study of voice and language must give weight to its influence and effectiveness.

The existence of argot is similarly a characteristic of particular institutions and is seminally described in Stephenson and Scarpitti (1968). Argot itself is the existence of an internal vocabulary set within an institution that allows users to keep thoughts private from outsiders who are not aware of the specific terminology. This is thus an exclusive language, a language that delineates the insider against the outsider (according to degrees of knowledge and power). It is the construction of a liminal space for language. In Stephenson and Scarpitti’s work in a secure “therapeutic correctional” centre (p384), the use of argot consistently suggested solidarity amongst inmates, promoted an exclusive identity and even acted to veil expressions of hostility (p384). Stephenson and Scarpitti identified ninety separate terms. They identified inmate argot as representing varied and mixed attitudes to the official prison system, frequently in conflict with the official goals of the administrative authority (p385). Given the similarity between Stephenson and Scarpitti’s centre (i.e. a mandatory, albeit non-residential unit for teenage boys), and the Secure Training Centre that was my own research setting, the findings of this study reinforce the necessity to be aware of the possible impact of argot on my own discussions and my own need to learn from it.

Other writers also identify the use of argot in the secure context. Fleisher (1972) argues that argot usage, or the “‘Joint-talk’ (that) is the argot used in prisons among inmates” (p213) is a commonplace but highly complex structure to learn and use effectively. The theme of ‘possessing’ language and communication as a power mechanism is one that is continued by Goffman (1957) who, in his exploration of asylums, identifies a range of control mechanisms. He argues that the control of language is the equivalent of physical control because just “as the individual can be required to hold his body in a humiliating pose, so he may have to provide humiliating verbal responses” through “verbal acts of deference, such as ‘Sir’” or having to “beg, importune or humbly ask for little things such as a cigarette” (1968, p31). Consequently, an “‘institutional lingo’ develops through which inmates describe the events that are crucial” (p55). An example of this that I experienced was “linking” where this term suggests when two trainees are boyfriend/girlfriend – they’re not allowed physical contact so ‘link’ through the fence. The knowledge of this argot is in itself a powerful tool.

The use of language to control others via the creation of an argot, often with the purpose of preventing outsiders (such as prison officials) from understanding the messages that are being expressed, is commonplace. Mann (2005) compiled a broad selection of such “Prison Slang”, such as the use of the phrase “bacon bonce” (p5) to refer to a sex offender or “bandsman” to refer to an “escapee who wears a suit with yellow stripes running down the trousers” (p6). Without a familiarity for the peculiar “lingo”, any individual is likely to be at a disadvantage when participating in that particular institution. It is for this reason that my own positioning as a long serving adult allowed me a greater understanding in the field than an inexperienced colleague might have enjoyed.

The role of language in defining and maintaining power dynamics within social interactions is similarly illustrated through the work of critical discourse analysts such as Wodak (1996), Fairclough (2001) and van Dijk (1993). Fairclough describes these “sociolinguistic conventions” as incorporating differences of power and giving rise to particular relations of power in themselves (2001, p1). Without an understanding of these power dynamics, the comprehension of interaction and interactants becomes more inaccessible—especially in a context such as a prison, where power structures are starkly defined. However, other examples abound: Emerson (2008) points out that both the Judge and the Court officials have the right to break typical social conversational conventions, such as being allowed to stare directly at people. Further common examples of social situations that demand a set of language conventions include the classroom and the doctor’s surgery, where interactants need to demonstrate their language competencies by adhering to certain rules. Examples include the selection of an appropriately direct expression or the use of deferential language. Social conventions embody power differentials – and language reflects this, both in a secure context and more widely in society.

Mayr (2004) explores such control. Her text is especially relevant as it is a study of language in a prison educational setting exploring how power, domination and hegemony are consolidated through language practices. Following in the critical tradition of Fairclough, Mayr argues that prison services worldwide are more concerned with control than with rehabilitation (p27) – and that language use is one of the tools used to control. Although there are occasions when power allows individuals to trump social conventions, such as when a judge can stare at a defendant, Mayr focuses on the significance of language in controlling

others. In particular, through the discourse analysis of the cognitive skills programme in which she took part, Mayr goes beyond other commentators in identifying argot as a control feature. Across a range of social situations, Mayr identifies power imbalances. She explores turn-taking; topic selection; the use of interruption; enforcing explicitness and the formulation of sentences. In these she identifies situations where even in a cognitive skills programme that is intended to rehabilitate, there were examples of an “unequal encounter”, a face-to-face discourse where relations between participants are asymmetrical (p92).

Through the forced feedbacks and overlapping speech, Mayr cites many examples where the officer gains control of the interaction through language manipulation on a micro-level rather than through the ‘right’ of being in the powerful position of being the officer. This language manipulation can be seen as a reflection of broader social patterning. Mayr recognises that discourse is ideologically invented, producing and reproducing unequal power relations. It serves to divert attention from macro-issues of social change on to the individual offender’s cognitive deficits (p179). This language patterning links directly with this study’s analytical framework of exploring the workings of power through discourse on a micro level.

Even though one is aware of power inequalities within language structures, and further aware that for some individuals the institutional rules may not be rational, legitimate or relevant, nonetheless a set of rules does exist. It is important to recognise that one means for the reinforcement of such rules is through an effective manipulation of language. For the prison worker, Little (1982) offers a salutary warning: when officials “try to use prison lingo they are nearly always a point of ridicule” (p216). Thus a conundrum: how is it possible to communicate effectively with the young people without subjecting them (or being subjected) to social boundaries, thereby failing entirely and losing credibility. In this regard, I am reassured by Little’s comment that “context is the key to the emotion attached to the statement” (p208) as this reminds me of the value there is in establishing trust in a rehabilitative setting.

2.4 Enacting trust in challenging educational contexts

In this section the concept of trust is defined by drawing on literature relating especially to trust within educative environments. However, the concept of trust is slippery. Schmidt

(2010), when discussing Social Capital in schools and their districts, noted that there were numerous definitions of trust. It is, in the words of Czerniawski, “a problematic, complex and contested subject” (2011, p277) with different types and models.

Hoy and Kupersmith (1985) offer a definition of trust as a generalized expectancy that the word, promise or statements of others can be relied upon. Since this definition there have been various models of trust proposed that take into account the roles of various actors. Forsyth et al. (2011) establish five key criteria for trust then offer their own definition that includes these five qualities:

In sum, trust is a state in which individual and groups are willing to make themselves vulnerable to others and take risks with confidence that others will respond to their actions in positive ways, that is, with benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness. (2011, p19-20)

It is this broad definition of trust that will be adopted in this study as it embraces the sense of vulnerability that is particularly pertinent to vulnerable young offenders. This is something O’Neill would recognize, having observed in the 2002 Reith Lectures both the all-pervading need for trust throughout professions and institutions and its concomitant challenges of risk and disappointment (O’Neill, 2002). Trust exposes vulnerabilities, something prisoners may understandably wish to avoid. However, Smyth (2010) recognises that notwithstanding the dangers of adverse outcomes, the “most crucial ingredient in working with young people is trust” (p169).

Schneider, in her foreword to Forsyth et al. (2011), even suggests that trust emerges as the “lubricant for strengthening relationships among teachers, students, administrators, and parents” (Schneider, 2011, p11). The worrying comment that Smyth and Fasoli offer in this light is that there is “a growing deficit of trust in schools” currently (2007, p274). In the context of a research environment where there are many vulnerable young people who have had their own trust abused, building an environment where trust can be offered is both profoundly challenging and profoundly important.

The work of Robert Putnam (2000, 2015) also helps to contextualise the concept of trust and to foreground the particular difficulties of engendering trust within a contemporary, potentially adversarial, social situation. In plotting an intergenerational decline in shared

social activity and in civic participation, whether in religion, politics or leisure pursuits, Putnam identifies a diminution in trust both for authority and in interpersonal social situations. There is a growth in cynicism and scepticism in public affairs reflected in social and interpersonal relationships where social involvement has diminished and social-capital is not being created. The overwhelmingly sceptical views of a group of socially deprived young people in contemporary USA typified his findings: “You can’t be too careful in dealing with people” (2015, p219-220). It is against such a background of mistrust and an absence of shared social capital that the current study attempts to operationalise a series of social and interpersonal activities with the potential to engender trust, promote the beginnings of social capital development and encourage “readiness to be exposed to significant others”.

One key study of trust is that completed by Coleman (1988). Coleman adopts Bourdieu’s notions of Social Capital (2006) in order to explore how various types of business thrive, identifying how important this form of capital is. Under this view, Social Capital involves obligations, expectations and, importantly, trust (p102). For Coleman, trustworthiness itself becomes a component of social capital which can be harnessed or squandered in individual discourses.

A further study of trust within a business context is that of Fukuyama (1995), whose seminal work explores how businesses and economies manipulate trust. One pertinent lesson from Fukuyama’s study is that there is “usually an inverse relationship between rules and trust: the more people depend on rules to regulate their interactions, the less they trust each other, and vice versa” (1995, p224). This is significant in terms of my study as a prison is typically an institution governed by very strict rules. In this regard, my role as someone who could straddle the inside/outside dichotomy was salient. Fukuyama and Coleman illustrate how trust is inextricably linked with power stratification, a relationship that exists equally within educational contexts. Bryk and Schneider (2002) argue for a form of Relational Trust whereby “the social exchanges of schooling (are) organized around a distinct set of role relationships” (2002, p20). By everyone playing their own part effectively, by achieving “synchrony”, the education establishment can thrive and relational trust is built. For Bryk and Schneider:

Relational trust represents an intermediate case between the material and instrumental exchanges at work in contractual trust and the unquestioning beliefs operative in organic trust. (2002, p21)

Bryk and Schneider go on to outline key qualities of relational trust (respect, competence, personal regard for others) which are of significance in a secure environment. They offer a model of trust that draws on the broader model of social capital. It recognizes micro-power dynamics in that “the power base held by each individual directly affects the nature of relational trust in any given role set” (2002, p26). In this sense, therefore, this model is of value in recognising the significance of the micro-power dynamic.

However, I tend to follow the very similar notion of ‘Collective trust’ as advocated by Forsyth et al. Although there are similarities between the notions of relational and collective trust, Bryk and Schneider’s model relies more heavily on individuals’ knowing their place within a particular system. Given my research environment where the incarcerated people may either not know or not be prepared to accept their place within the prison system, or society at large, this potentially undermined the model of relational trust. I therefore prefer to adopt the model of collective trust whereby “collective trust is socially constructed out of talk and nonverbal interactions among group members (p24). It is “a stable group property rooted in the shared perceptions and affect about the trustworthiness of another group or individual that emerges over time out of multiple social exchanges within the group” (p22).

Using this model I was able to acknowledge the importance of power stratification, i.e. maintaining of the concept of social capital and the exploration of how a group develops over a period of time, by exploring the dialogue. It also provided an analytical framework that permitted a broader view of the ongoing trends rather than be skewed by the impact of changes in the attitude of one young person within a numerically small group. The attitudinal shifts of the young people were common, and in many ways, quite understandable, given the context of the research environment.

For a researcher, balancing issues of trust can be a sensitive business. Russell (2005) discusses the difficult balance of trust between students and teachers in ethnography fieldwork. On the one hand, Russell understood that trust between researcher and participant was a crucial foundation to learning, observing and recording. Nevertheless, on the other hand he recognised the threats to objectivity from excessive intimacy and over-identification:

“the boundary of trust and rapport should be delicately balanced” (p192). The position I found myself in as a part insider, part outsider, offered an ideal vantage point in terms of maintaining this difficult balance.

Such balancing becomes all the more challenging when researching with children, and especially vulnerable young children whose life experiences are likely to have been unhappy. Barley and Bath (2014) highlight the importance of the “relationship of trust” and how especially when working with ‘hard-to-reach’ groups it “helps to create a safe research environment where the child is able to express their true opinion without fear” (p184). Given the extent to which both Maitland and Sluder (1996), and O’Donnell and Edgar (1999) describe the prevalence of fear within the prison environment, it becomes imperative to build trusting relationships without which there is minimal chance of honest expressions.

Waterhouse (2011) concurs, arguing that successful “research methods for capturing student voice...is predicated on positive, trustful relationships” (p295). Campbell (2013) argues that trust is more likely to be achieved by exploring the identities of the young people, but by addressing these it “becomes possible for professionals to gain the trust of young people and build up empathetic and meaningful relationships based on mutual respect” (p68). Various researchers working with offenders, such as Abrams et al. (2008, 2012), Brayford and Holtom (2010), Carter and Pycroft (2010) and Karp (2010) demonstrate that under the right conditions and with appropriate challenge, trust can be developed over time. In straightforward terms the suggestion is that young people will be more willing to offer their views when trust is established. This view is endorsed by Drake et al. (2014) who argue that we can secure an “authentic voice”, but that there needs to be “genuinely dyadic relations of trust and confidence” to do this (p29). The Howard League for Penal Reform make a very clear point: that when young people do talk, they talk about bullying, fear in prison, their own vulnerabilities and the need for more protection (2007, p13). Given these findings, it becomes a moral responsibility to create the appropriate conditions for those outpourings. By building trusting relationships and engaging with the participants’ concerns, this study, is ideally placed to listen and then to respond to the voice of the young people.

2.4.1 Building on trust to develop student voice

The notion of student voice is wide and varied. Some view it as a moral imperative, others see it as an integral part of what it means to be human, having one’s opinions taken into

account, having the right to be heard, having a right to participate in a democratic culture (on a micro- or macro- level), having the right to actively effect change. Student voice is a contested term for which, according to Whitty et al. (2005), much of the academic literature “takes the form of advocacy rather than evaluation” (p10). As Chadderdon (2011) argues, it needs to be seen as a complex, shifting and fluid notion, which is interpreted and frameworked in many different way. For example, Batchelor defines the concept of student voice by breaking it down into various elements which he describes as “an epistemological voice, or a voice for knowing, a practical voice, or a voice for doing, and an ontological voice, or a voice for being and becoming” (2006, p777).

Similarly, Walker divides student voice into five differing types of voices: informing, involving, consulting, collaborating and empowering (2008, p8). Bragg (2008), in her critical review of the literature in the field, argues that there are three kinds of voice: an “Authoritative” voice that is a representation of a larger audience; a “Critical” voice that challenges stereotypes; and a “Therapeutic” voice that supports or validates the individual speaker’s own experiences. Bragg even suggests that in a modern context we could add a fourth type of voice: a “Consumer” voice that accepts the notion that young people are consumers of goods with their own incomes and expenditure patterns.

Fielding (2001) offers a broader assessment. This interpretation involves listening to young people and offering a range of opportunities and personal experiences. For Fielding, the student voice movement in education is not only “what it means to be a citizen, but also (of) what it means to be and become a person.” (2001, p137). He argues from a standpoint that I share – that work around student voice is important because personal development can be facilitated through the transference of power from the teacher to the young people. In envisaging a partnership of mutuality and respect where there can be a shared set of ideals, it matches the aspirations of my own study. He argues for a “collegiality” between both parties – indeed, a “radical collegiality” of openness and reciprocity “indicative of a much more flexible, dialogic form of democratic practice” (p130). Klein (2003) similarly focuses on education’s democratic imperative arguing that “children’s participation in how they learn and the environment in which they do so is a vital component of education in its wider, less measurable sense” (p1). The construction of education for the ‘whole person’ is developed further by Batchelor, for whom the issue of student voice includes engaging “in a quest for self-meaning” (2006, p800) and for self-discovery. Here, student voice is regarded as a means

towards maturation and selfhood; a means through which individuals become aware of their powers and responsibilities.

For Gunter and Thomson (2007), operating outside of the secure estate, student voice is the means to address their concern for the masses of young people who are ignored. They highlight the necessity for hearing the voices of the 54,000 students who are out of school each day. Whilst there is a clear recognition that “student voice is not automatically authentic and is certainly not pure” (p184), the importance of addressing the issues that are pertinent to the young people is clear to them. This echoes Batchelor’s concern that the needs of the individual be taken into account. His belief is that “voice has to be developed within the situated realpolitik of real lives in specific institutions” (p184). Particularly useful for my study, and the challenging environment in which it took place, was Gunter and Thompson’s focus on the logistical, practical considerations for the introduction of student voice, rather than on the moral or ideological considerations.

Others see the definition of student voice as broader still. For example, the suggestion by Whitty et al. that the definition of pupil voice could usefully be extended to include taking an active interest in events and developing a “positive sense of belonging” (2005, p24) and that it must include “some power and influence to be passed to pupils” (p26), gestures towards voice being more than democratic expression: it must be the catalyst for some practical effect. Drawing on Seale (2010), student voice must derive active empowerment and agency, from listening to students’ views, communicating those views with the intention of effecting changed circumstances and treating students as equal partners.

By Seale’s own admission, there is a lack of consensus and some might be happy to accept a relatively functional definition, such as that provided by Hargreaves (cited by Walker, 2008, p2):

How students come to play a more active role in their education...as a direct result of their [educators] becoming more attentive, in sustained or routine ways, to what students want to say about their experience of learning.

It is clear that there are competing definitions. In my view, the locus of power is pivotal. For both Fielding and Gunter and Thompson, engaging young people so that they express their views, of itself, is insufficient: there needs to be a commensurate shift of political power to

those young people so that changes that they would request can be enacted – however minor. In my analysis, I build on these views. Although it is important to shift power so that relevant changes can be made, it remains crucial simply to give young people the opportunity to express themselves. Through this ring-fenced social space, they have the opportunity to express views and to reflect on who they are. Ironically, the argument of this study is that it is the opportunity to reflect on self that is more radical and potentially more beneficial than the desired shift of power to control aspects of the institution that Fielding calls for.

The power to express their thoughts and the opportunity to work with adults in authentic dialogic partnership, promotes the development of young people as learners and as human beings and its central characteristics of dialogic interaction and rebalancing of power relationships were at the heart of my own study, manifested for example in the suppression of outward symbols of power and in the putative expansion of choice and agency.

2.4.2 Voice and masculinity

Any discussion of the role or effectiveness of student voice within a secure institution is critically incomplete without an assessment of its heavily gendered environment. I was painfully aware of the presentations of masculinity that can thrive. It is known that when working with vulnerable young men, even outside prison, concepts of masculinity can lead to problematic behaviours such as involvement in violence and misuse of alcohol (Campbell, 2013). As Cesaroni and Aliv argue, “masculinities are often constructed, maintained and restructured according to particular social networks in a given environment” (2010, p303). Although Abrams et al. identify that there are only a few studies that explore masculinity within juvenile facilities (2012, p70), we do know more widely that taking vulnerable young men and adding the prison context may contribute to deteriorating behaviour. This is particularly acute given how the placing of young men in custody can “often define status and becomes a threat to manhood” (Maitland and Sluder, 1996, p24). The Howard League for Penal Reform (2011) establishes that “it is unsurprising” that young offenders “have a collective identity of difference and social exclusion” where prison does little more than to “bring these children and young people together and reinforce their negative self-perceptions” (p10). Therefore, the environment in which I was working, by definition, would bring together a cohort of young men with unhappy self-perceptions. The acuteness of this situation is all the greater given how “vulnerability attracts predation”, how “fear invites

exploitation” and how the “youngest offenders were most prone to violent encounters with fellow inmates, disproportionately resistant to authority, and sensitive to ‘disrespect’ from prison staff” (Toch, 1998, p172). In an environment inhabited predominantly by young and vulnerable offenders, these conditions lend themselves, certainly in Toch’s view, to the “stance of hyper-masculinity” (p173).

Sim (1994) emphasises the extreme nature of young offenders’ institutions when discussing the “culture of masculinity” (p103). By discussing the hegemonic masculinity and use of violence in normal prisoners as distinct from the “dominant and often uncontrolled masculinity” of the young offender’s institution where “violence and domination” are part of the normal routine, Sim highlights the extent of the challenge in winning the trust of the young people in this study.

It is so important to recognize the significance of the prison context, an “ultra-masculine world where nobody talks about masculinity”, one which “facilitates and accentuates enactments of hegemonic masculinity” (Sabo and Kupers, 2001). The concept of ‘hyper-masculinity’, and its near cousin of ‘hegemonic masculinity’, were, therefore, key to understanding some of the behaviours witnessed within the secure estate generally. In competitive, fierce conditions, “inmates believe it is necessary to present a hyper-masculine public façade” that involves violence, association with other prisoners and inmate stratification, even if such outward manifestations conflict with “a more nuanced private self-identity” (Karp, 2010, p66). Stripped of elements that made their life secure, offenders come to prison under profound pressure to fit into a particular grouping, built on status and peer group respect and underpinned by a masculinity of physical strength and behavioural aggression. Power, position and influence are a function of ‘macho’ credentials and adherence to a hegemonic masculinity that involves opposition to authority, loyalty to peers, overt toughness, jargon and a code of honour (Jewkes, 2002, p51). It also rests on what Messerschmidt (1993) expresses as “heterosexual intercourse as the hallmark of one’s identity” (p115). Position, status and ultimately survival are built on such identity particularly in young offenders’ institutions which as Jewkes remarks, in endorsing Toch and Sim, “are particularly notorious for the bullying that takes place” (p48).

The potential consequences of not adhering to the masculine stereotype should not be underestimated. Where there is a “hierarchy of domination” (Kupers, 2001, p115) and in an

extreme environment, it is likely that any signs of weakness will lead to victimisation. As Kupers highlights, “weaklings are subject to beatings and sodomy” (p114), so the “only way to survive is to conform to the rigid hyper-masculine posturing of the prison culture”. The horrific consequences of failure to adhere to a particular identity in the short term continue in the longer term. Even when young people have left custody, in the case of Beal’s study (2014), the past identity of being an offender still trumps other identities. At this point, one is left despairing that even after release, the acquired identity will lead only to ongoing delinquency. The point is powerfully made that “it is crucial to construct an alternative identity...in order to desist from offending behaviour” (Beal, 2014, p74). Equally, Abrams and Anderson-Nathe argue for expressions of masculinity that do not involve the association with criminality criminal activities and social groupings (2012, p71). It would be a real achievement if this study, through its use of dialogue, agency and empowerment were able to contribute to a reconstruction of identity and ultimately to reduced recidivism.

Encouragingly, we also know that masculinities are potentially “subject to change” where “hegemonic patterns of masculinity are both engaged with and contested” (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005, p839). Whilst this study absolutely acknowledges that the “identities of these children and young people cannot be reconstructed from scratch” (Howard League for Penal Reform, 2011, p12), it was still important to attempt to build more positive outlooks by “open(ing) up a space of enunciation for young people” (Hattam and Smyth, 2003, p394). Abrams et al. (2012) argue passionately for an exploration of masculinity within prisons thereby initiating a process that “can support young men in finding a sense of power and self-worth...in creating new identities in which a man can include more than the conventional topics of competition, aggression, power, and repudiation of the feminine” (p135). It is one of the arguments of this study that, through the opportunity to express ideas and thoughts, an alternative identity can be forged. In this regard, and even in a hyper-masculine environment, student voice offers a vehicle for young offenders to explore, re-evaluate and express their identities, to begin the re-coding of their existence that Foucault identifies (1977).

2.4.3 The expression of young offenders’ voices

It is quite clear that, given the appropriate forums, young people in the secure estate can express articulate views that can inform others about the quality of their lives. The recent report, published by the Youth Justice Board (2012), gave a clear insight into the lives of

young people. From views on food size to the effectiveness of education, to the importance of higher staff ratios, views were wide ranging. Perhaps tellingly for this study, only one third of young people in STCs considered that the establishment was the best place for them to be (Youth Justice Board, 2012, p6), although 71% did consider relationships with staff to be good. This report is profoundly encouraging in terms of an explicit example of young people being offered a formalized, officially sanctioned and published report on their views.

During the period of this research, the exploration of voice and communication skills was an important area of concern for the Youth Justice Board. In the April 2010 edition of 'YJ: The Magazine for Youth Justice' the majority of articles focused on either student voice activities or the use of restorative justice within the juvenile custodial environment. Articles such as 'Young Londoners tell it how it is' (p3); 'The voices of young people' (p4) and 'Talking therapy' (p12) indicated the centrality of this concern to develop the communication skills of young people. A more developed example of this is the comment by Ibrahim (2010), senior policy adviser at the Youth Justice Board, that:

Restorative processes enable victims to have their say and to talk about the full impact of a crime on their lives...the young people who offend can talk about why they committed the crime. (p8)

Whilst there is a danger here of conflating work on restorative justice with work on student voice, there is a common feature of developing dialogue that links the two areas. Such a view is given voice to by O'Connor, who argued that "giving an inmate the opportunity to position himself agentively in his own past can have an impact in the formation of a future self, perhaps a self more modelled on a positive construction." (1994, p56). The encouragement of student voice can act as a 'talking cure,' it empowers a liminal space in which past, present and future can be reflected and acted on. It may well provide a means by which the student can reflect upon a past, understand it and thereby re-construct a future. It may well serve as a tool for objectifying the lived past and thus taking an active responsibility for one's future through taking charge of (subjectifying) the thread joining past, present, and future. Talking serves as a dialogical tool in the sense of providing a distance that permits perspective to be gained by the young person.

The opportunity for voice to be expressed is important to current practice within the Youth Justice Service through the use of 'Asset' (an assessment whereby a set of questions are

explored in order to assess the risk of a prisoner). The 2007 report produced by 'The Derwent Initiative' (a charity, established in 1993, that tries to deal with the issues connected to sexual offending) recognised the potential value of the 'What do you think' section in the 'Asset' risk assessment program suggesting that it gave the opportunity to express feelings of anxiety at a time of stress for the individual concerned. Ellis (2012) also argues that, in assessment, it is possible to understand individual actions by encouraging young people to express ideas about their pathways through life. Equally, Case and Haines (2009) are powerful advocates of exploring the young offender's perspective more thoroughly. They argue that even within the use of the 'Asset' programme there has been a marginalization and even neglect of young people's qualitative perspective. They also regret the lack of investigation and understanding of young people's differing constructions of risk, thereby denying young people the opportunity to reflect on their past experiences and change for the future (p.269).

Case and Haines's argument that the failure to explore young people's assessment of risk casts doubt over the measurement of risk factors is a persuasive one. By not fully exploring the risk that the young people think that they themselves pose, they deny those young people the opportunity to reflect on their past experiences and change for the future. When Case and Haines argue for "the rights of children and young people to participate in and contribute to the processes by which they are defined and which inform the way they are treated" (2009, p305), they are aligned with the participative ethos of my own study.

It is clear that current policy in the youth justice sector has harnessed the views of an intellectual tradition that has developed over eighty years: a tradition of exploring the views of those who are connected to the prison regime. In attempting to elicit these views, there is a clear policy expectation that through the process of communicating, the young people will become more fulfilled members of society. As a point of principle, all those connected with the prison regime are asked to contribute to this process of communication, although the process of learning for the incarcerated is as *receivers* rather than *givers* (i.e. they are beneficiaries of a paternalism that takes their views into account, but acts *for them*). As part of this process, we should be aware that young people themselves can be disingenuous in telling you what they think you want to hear. When listening to young offenders' voices, it is important to be aware that, potentially, one might be being manipulated. This sentiment is

echoed by Murray, the correctional worker of *The Time-Game* (Mannocchio and Dunn, 1970):

You never know quite where you're at with them because they're so busy making you feel good...Maybe I'm just going for a con that the inmates are putting on me. (p66)

Sadly, we also should be conscious that, due to the severity of experiences that young offenders have typically had to endure, “even in the most propitious circumstances, the effects of hearing and acting on authentic voice will not necessarily improve the prospects for the young person” (Drake et al., 2014, p29). But that isn't to say we won't try.

2.5 Concluding remarks:

In this chapter I have introduced the key strands that combine to influence relationships and behaviour in a prison environment: namely, power, trust, masculinity and voice.

I have examined Foucauldian notions of power, in particular the view that power circulates through all social relationships at micro-level as well as at the macro level – power as an ongoing and dynamic process of consistently negotiating meanings through ongoing human interactions. The function of power in the creation of knowledge has been considered alongside Foucault's perception of power as both coercive and enabling at all levels of human and societal interaction; power as a positive force producing “domains of truth” (1977, p194) embodied and reflected in social interaction and specifically in the use of language.

The second strand, namely building and enacting trust in a challenging educational environment has been examined from a theoretical perspective. The concept of relational trust has been identified as a useful departure point for considering interpersonal relations in a prison environment but the rather fuller concept of collective trust resonates as appropriate for the social situation central to this study – trust that is ‘socially constructed out of talk and non-verbal interactions amongst group members’ (Bryk and Schneider, 2002, p24).

I have also looked at the concept of masculinity in a young offenders' institution recognising its constructed social nature in an enclosed environment and its potential influence on the behaviours and attitudes of trainees in a “hierarchy of domination” (Kupers, 2001, p115)

Finally, I have examined the concept of voice for young offenders. Voice may have many functions in an environment optimised by minimal power imbalances and robust collective trust. It may function as part of a process of restorative justice which itself may have an impact ‘in the formation of a future self’ (O’Connor, 1994, p56). It may also, at its best, serve an ontological/developmental function – ‘a voice for being and becoming’ (Batchelor, 2006, p777).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Chapter introduction and overview

This chapter focuses on the research design and methodology of the study. It provides a theoretical setting for the approach taken to carrying out the research as well as setting out some of the practical elements of the research as it focuses on the three research questions;

The chapter begins with a discussion of the ontological assumptions that underpin the study and then sets out its epistemological standpoint. The positioning of the study as a piece of critical ethnography that harnesses aspects of practitioner research is reviewed, leading to an analysis of the researcher's standpoint and history.

The chapter then turns to more practical issues of research location and participant selection, providing pen-portraits of the participants. Access and ethical issues are then discussed followed by details of the varied methods of data-collection used in the study and the rationale for their use. Data analysis methods are then reviewed in the light of Carspecken's five-stage model before the chapter finally links back to the relevance of a Foucauldian analysis of power relationships.

3.2 Methodology

Underpinning the methodological approach to any research are the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the researcher. It is these that guide the selection of methodology and research methods (Guba and Lincoln, 1994) and which impact on the description, understanding and interpretation of research outcomes.

3.2.1 Ontological assumptions:

Ontology in its broad definition is the theory of the nature of existence (Carspecken, 1996, p20). In the context of this social ethnographic study I would follow Hollway et al. (2007, p37) in defining it more narrowly as the theory of the person – seeing the person, the participant in the research, as a socially-constructed, situated, contingent identity. That is to say, an identity that is impacted by social interaction, that is specific to its setting (social, historical, geographic) and whose characteristics are contingent rather than absolute. As my research follows a critically ethnographic approach, drawing directly on the expressed opinions and emotions of participants, a further ontological assumption must be that my

construction of human beings must include their ability to reflect on and verbalise their emotional states. Such ontological assumptions highlight the socially interactive nature of existence and impact on epistemological assumptions, the interpretation of outcomes and the centrality of the researcher's own preconceptions.

This study adopts a constructionist ontological position which implies that the participant in the research is seen as a socially-constructed, situated, contingent identity. Individuals do lead lives in concrete situations that delimit the boundaries of meaning for them – meaning is constructed as individuals socially interpret their worlds. Their contingent identity is impacted by social interaction that is specific to its setting. The belief that people can alter their identity in a particular context, such as prison, allows for both negative and positive opportunities. It is central, therefore, to our research strategy to understand that interactants will have subjective perceptions of the situation and that the researcher too will have his own subjective standpoint.

3.2.2 Epistemological assumptions:

Epistemology is concerned with the way that knowledge about the world can be gained and accessed. The epistemological foundation for this study is that whilst the world is knowable, it is socially-constructed and knowledge is historically, geographically and socially located. Human action is meaningful and it is possible to understand both people and their actions, but only in their interwoven social contexts. They are mutually interactive and the world is the sum of their constantly changing meanings. Action and reaction are the opposite poles of this dyadic movement. Without engaging in dialogue and participating with people, without sharing their experiences as they live them in the context of their cultures, personalities and social stratifications, and without recognizing their truths, it is impossible to make knowledge claims. Hence, this study attempts to develop an intimate understanding of the participants, based on a combination of participant observation, multi-modal text production, digital dialogue and informal, semi-structured interviews.

Critical epistemology is especially concerned with the presentation of beliefs and truths and the underlying power structures that maintain these 'truths'. As a critical researcher, I follow Carspecken in recognizing that "power corrupts knowledge" (1996, p21). What Carspecken is here suggesting is that 'truth' is a social construct differently created in interactions between different individuals with different experiences and different standpoints; that

different individuals can present different versions of the same event, potentially to suit their own ends and that one's endowments (powers) will be reflected in what is accepted as the truth. It addresses the way in which cultural constructions and the weight of social capital orchestrate the social acceptances of truth. An example of this orchestration in this study might be how each of the trainees might see me differently according to my different clothing – the truth of who I am and what I represent is influenced by their cultural constructions of teachers and the way in which I try to establish power relationships.

To recognise that this process exists and persists, it is important for me as a researcher to not only recognise my own biases in ongoing dialogues, but to explicitly state a commitment to “fundamental value orientations...democracy, equality, and human empowerment” (Carspecken, 1996, p21). In this way, the study should benefit the young people who participate in it.

3.2.3 The qualitative paradigm:

This study works within the qualitative research paradigm. In doing so, the research offers strategies that emphasise the subjective views of the participants where “the central endeavour...is to understand the subjective world of human experience” (Cohen et al., 2000, p22). By adopting an inductive view of the relationship between theory and research (praxis) one can engage in a process of continuous, iterative redefinition, one outcome of which may be that the final research question may differ markedly from that which prompted the original research.

By contrast, quantitative research tends to suggest itself to a positivistic notion of a quantity of evidence that will lend itself to the discovery of objective truths, whilst qualitative research focuses on the narratives of participants in its search for meaning. Whilst quantitative research holds an objective notion of truth as something that exists independently of the subject, for qualitative researchers, the truth is a social construct; it is woven, interpreted, constructed, reconstructed and essentially contested. Such was the case in this particular study.

3.2.4 Critical Ethnography

From amongst the various strategies of enquiry appropriate to qualitative research, ethnography was considered the most appropriate due to the nature of the institution and the

participants within it. As the participants were significantly 'removed' from my own sphere of existence (physically through their incarceration; socially through their ages and different upbringings; emotionally through their vulnerable status) it was important to understand their perspectives in context. Ethnography as a process offered a way to do this. In this, my study followed Timmerman and Tavory's argument that ethnography "allows entering the lifeworld of others and observing how they make sense of the world" (2007, p497).

My approach to research is reinforced by Hammersley who identifies that ethnography is an approach that "usually involves fairly lengthy contact, through participant observation in relevant settings, and/or through relatively open-ended interviews designed to understand people's perspectives" (2006, p4). It was important for me to be a part of my society and surroundings, something endorsed by Walford's assertion that for "most ethnographers, participant observation is at the centre of the process of generating data" (2007, p145). He highlights how there "needs to be long-term engagement, the use of multiple research methods and the generation of rich data" (2009, p272). In this research study, all of these criteria are present.

This study vigorously agrees with Smyth (2006) in arguing for the especially appropriate nature of ethnography for schooling when looking at groups whose "viewpoints have been ignored, denigrated or marginalized" (p33). This study completely endorses the call to construct a more robust understanding of how schooling is experienced by the most vulnerable group of students (p34). Based on their research, the Youth Justice Board identify that the existence of difficult relationships with teachers is one of the four key barriers to engagement, alongside a lack of achievement, bullying and a lack of interest in school (Youth Justice Board, 2006). The use of ethnography to develop relationships seems entirely apposite.

It should be noted that engagement as a feature of the study was always mediated through the nature of the teacher-student relationship, the periodic nature of the contact and the fact of participant incarceration. When participants returned to their secure accommodation at the end of a contact session, the researcher was free to go home. Ultimately, I could never therefore be seen as an equal participant as there was still distance between myself and the trainees. This, however, did ensure that the young people were central to the process and allowed my considered observation of their changing appreciations. The most exciting

defining feature that Walford offers, however, is his comment that the research community should be “extending the nature of what is to be counted as ethnography (so it) is seen as a democratic process where everyone can join in and all voices should be heard” (2009, p275). In this sense, this was an authentic ethnography.

Within this chapter I have already referred to the ‘critical’ nature of the epistemology underlying the study. In this context the term ‘critical’ imposes an engagement to not only recognizing social and power relations, but actively supporting alienated or disempowered minority groups. Typically (e.g. Thomas 1993, Carspecken 1996, Olsen and Morrison 2005, Fairclough 2001, Rogers 2004), the term ‘critical’ is taken to mean a “commitment to democracy, to re-skilling, to resisting current structures and to empowerment” (Kanpol, 1994, p31). Critical epistemologists also share the ontological comprehension that knowledge itself cannot be neutral - it is socially constructed within and by both micro- and macro-power relationships. It is important, therefore, for both participants and observers to be able to reflect on the events as they pass.

In this shared outlook of exploring power and social relations, the roots of critical theory can be found in Western Marxism (Kanpol, 1994, p27) and has since developed significantly to examine different aspects of power dynamics. Current schools of critical theorists include, among others, ‘Critical Discourse Analysis’ (Gee, 2010); ‘Critical Pedagogy’ (Freire, 1996); and ‘Critical Ethnography’ (Carspecken 1996). Despite having a shared concern with empowerment at their core, these schools of thought emphasise slightly different aspects in their analysis of power. For Critical Pedagogists who follow the work of Freire and Habermas, there is a commitment to exploring the education system so that individuals can recognise their own position as oppressed. Freire in particular “gives priority to communicative relations and ‘love’ rather than conflict in pedagogical and social relations” (Morrow and Torres, p28). It is this lack of focus on conflict that led me to look for alternative approaches.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offered a possible approach that I could have adopted. This is because it tends to explore a wider range of social interactions, each pivoting about Habermas’ claim that language is “a medium of domination and social force (that) serves to legitimise relations of organized power” (Wodak, 2001, p2). CDA itself can be split into

three main orientations, following the three most significant proponents of the approach: Fairclough, Gee and Kress (McLaren, in Darder et al., 2003).

My own position is to borrow from Kress (2004) who harnesses a broader, multimodal approach to data which offers the opportunity to “understand how actions are made meaningful and social in situ” (Wohlwend, 2004, p243). In Kress’ definition, a “multimodal social semiotic approach provides a richer perspective on the many means involved in making meaning and learning: on forms and shapes of knowledge” (Kress, 2004, p208). Kress will be used in exploring the collages, the images and the media that the young people created, which will be discussed later. Kress offers a critical approach which is particularly apposite when spoken language is *not* the primary method of communication.

Within the study I have chosen to refer to the terms ‘critical ethnography’ and ‘student voice’ without capitalization. This is more than a stylistic whim: rather it is intended to reflect Halliday’s point that in ‘the light of the role of language in social processes, a sociolinguistic perspective does not readily accommodate strong boundaries’ (Halliday, 1978 in Maybin, ed., 1994, p42). Using capitals to denote the features of student voice would suggest clear definitions and boundaries, which in my view is unhelpful. In the context of this study, it is profoundly important to recognize that something which is significant in the prison context around sharing ideas might not be deemed significant in a different educational environment. The lack of capital letters also acknowledges how in the last decade the paradigm debate has transformed into a “tripartite view of research” (Syminds and Gorard, 2010, p121) where researchers should acknowledge the multitude of ways in which paradigmatic approaches may be combined to produce research conclusions of greater validity and reliability. It is because of the cross-germination of ideas across paradigms and across the ‘critical’ schools of thought that I chose not to use capital letters to describe my approach. Such capitalization would suggest divisions where at times there is none.

3.2.5 Practitioner research

Against this background, and in a desire to further underpin the analytical foundations of the study, my approach was to harness aspects of practitioner research. Practitioner research is an approach which allows the public service worker, in this case a teacher, the opportunity to

explore their own practice. It facilitates and encourages reflection on practice to improve outcomes for the young people one is working with.

Practitioner research has several characteristic features. Firstly, that the teacher researches their own classroom and the work in it. Secondly, that there exists a cycle of practice, reflection and systematic improvements and finally, that there is a collaborative ownership of the research process by the participants within the study, including the teacher. This approach is one which is very close to action research where those involved in social activities explore their own workplaces and practices (Kemmis, 1998), but is subtly different in that practitioners can be wider-ranging in their use of methods. This is very useful for this study.

From my perspective as a teacher-researcher, the emphasis on collaboration, on working with the trainees rather than conducting research on trainees (Campbell and Groundwater Smith, 2007) was also a powerful reason for adopting this approach. For my study to be successful, it needed to have the support of not only the institution authorities, but also the young people themselves. One feature of this model of research was that in its focus on the classroom, it ensured that the purpose of the study was to explore the perspectives of the young people involved. In this sense it was learner-centred and offered the possibility to “make a vital contribution to the collective, collaborative endeavour of enquiring about and improving teaching and learning practices.” (Bartlett and Burton, 2004, p2)

In summary, this study adopts a multi-faceted approach to its enquiry. It is ethnographic insofar as it involves significant immersion into the daily lives of the participants. It is certainly critical in its challenging of perceived political power orthodoxies. But it also draws on the foundations of practitioner research centred on practice and joint reflection within the practitioner’s workplace. These approaches are not mutually exclusive. Rather they combine to provide a robust theoretical and practical underpinning for a detailed, intimate study of one aspect of the participants’ daily lives.

3.3 Researcher standpoint and reflexivity

As a critical ethnographer, with an aspiration to improve the lot of disadvantaged communities, I share with Thomas the premise that “the structure and content of culture make life unnecessarily more nasty, brutish, and short for some people” (Thomas, 1993, p33). My

starting point was to explore realistic situations of social deprivation by grounding my findings in the data that emanated from the shared experiences of participants. These experiences were shared with me as researcher through discussions, observations, documents and dialogues, with the researcher interpreting and filtering the participants' views – this is the “realist narrative” (Van Maanen, 1988, p45) that offers a ‘thick’ set of data to interpret.

My desire was to research the possible benefits of multi-modal expressive opportunities for incarcerated trainees. Grounding these desires was my wish to make a difference in the lives of those with whom I worked. This desire was of itself “an intervention that already carries a payload of meaning that will shape the knowledge produced from the research” (Hollway 2007a, p4).

The issue of power imbalances was an example of such researcher-led influences. Within a formally hierarchical prison context, where existing unequal power relationships are deeply embedded, I moved to equalize power relationships. Thus, I was positively oriented towards a redistribution of power through encouraging others to take charge of their possibilities. Such a process could only happen by gaining the trust of those disadvantaged communities that might in turn allow the critical ethnographer to explore the “invisible realm of meanings that stratify people and distribute power and resources in subtle ways” (Thomas, 1993, p34). For critical thinkers, the ontological assumption is that there are structures that, when explored, can reveal aspects of social existence.

3.4 Research Design

3.4.1 The genesis of the research design

I started work at Beech Meadow Secure Training Centre in September 2004 in the part-time capacity of an ‘Activities’ teacher initially for two evenings a week and providing supply cover for literacy and P.E. In addition to my direct contact with trainees at the centre I led training sessions for the teachers and was one of the official members of the centre’s advisory panel under the auspices of the official Youth Justice Board Monitor. In 2008, when the management of the Centre changed, I became responsible for the delivery of an outdoor pursuits award scheme the Centre. It was through the activities completed as part of the scheme that I conducted this research study.

Over five years I formed good bonds with both the trainees within the institution, and the adult secure training officers (SCOs), immersing myself in the life of the institution – for example taking on an extended placement ‘shadowing’ some of the secure care officers. I hoped to “get something of the experience” (Stake, 2010, p4) as “genuine understanding is only possible if one adopts the posture of experiencing the other as someone who really has something to say” (Schwandt, in Piper and Stronach, 2004, p38).

Although I acknowledge Wegener’s view that neither insider nor outsider positions are “stable categories” for either researcher or participants (2014, p165), during my period of employment at the centre I found myself in a unique position of straddling the divide of being both an ‘insider’ and an ‘outsider’. Insofar as I was employed by the centre I was an insider bearing the trappings of working within the system. But, in my role as researcher, I was also an insider - someone who has lived in familiarity with the group being researched prior to the research project (Griffith, 1998). Based on my own experience, I was unaware of anyone in a similar position within the centre. I was someone who could be trusted beyond what Bottery (2003) describes as “role trust” (trust based purely on the role one is employed in). I had certainly developed to “practice trust” (based on the experience of co-operative working) or even to the sharing of goals in “identificatory trust”.

In a secure training institution where the trainees can be anxious and mistrusting, trust, at any level, presents a genuine difficulty. Trainees are known to ‘test’ new staff in the centre through physical or verbal challenges until they feel that they can trust the new adult entrant. Pitts (1999) makes the point very clearly that work with young offenders can “turn us inside out and split us down the middle” (p83), not least because some young people “will test the boundaries of the professional relationship very vigorously” (p96). For Pitts, the frequency of the ‘wind-up’ reflects that it is “one of the most effective tools available to young people in a relatively powerless position” (p84). It generates a temporary reversal of power imbalances and opens the teacher to unexpected scrutiny. Such are some of the challenges of working in such an environment.

As Nilan (2002) points out, there “are some difficult and risky fieldwork settings in which it is improbable that the researcher who is very much an outsider will be able to collect useful data” (2002, p380). To echo Nilan’s point, there was risk on every occasion that I entered the centre and on frequent occasions there would be genuinely frightening confrontations. Many

of the trainees within the centre, with convictions for gravely serious offences, were capable of intimidating behaviour. This made life within the centre very difficult for many adults at times, myself included. It required courage and a calm perspective to be effective. As Humphrey (2012) asserts, the “most risk laden projects are solo insider ethnographies, particularly if they are conducted during a period of transition or turbulence” (2012, p582). The threats within the centre were present throughout the experience. However, I had passed my ‘induction’ and was known by various trainees and adults within the centre as someone who could be trusted.

My firm belief is that my status supported me throughout my research: my position within the institution and in relation to the participants allowed me a unique perspective on life within the centre. Crewe and Jewkes (2011) note how most prison research is actually conducted by doctoral students as this offers relative freedoms, including that of potentially being an insider (2011, p508). It was my positioning as a trusted insider that I was able to harness, benefiting from a richer and more comprehensive understanding than that achievable by an outsider, simply by virtue of my close and lengthy involvement (Bridges, 2009). My positioning allowed me access beyond the literal and metaphorical gatekeepers, to gain the perspectives of the participants and yet to maintain a certain perspective of my own. In this position I follow Humphrey’s (2012) argument that it is the “juxtaposition of insiderhood and outsiderhood (that) can foster the development of theoretical understanding” (2012, p583).

But notwithstanding any progress made in developing trusting relations with my cohort of inmate participants, I remained, from an institutional perspective, a relative outsider – a part-time employee delivering contact for a few hours a week. As an institutional outsider one is unlikely to know intimately how the regime functions in ethos or practicalities - a risk for example in terms of the security of confidential data. This had the potential to cause difficulties when seeking permission to access the field. There were other disadvantages to being an outsider – for example only being able to access the trainees at certain times and occasionally finding young people had left the centre without my knowledge.

My position as a part-time rather than full-time teacher also had the potential downside of inhibiting my immersion in the institution but at the same time it was paradoxically beneficial to my research, allowing me the luxury of being able to take time to reflect on situations and to retain a degree of perspective on the institution and its workings. Being able to ‘escape’

allowed me to avoid the unique intense emotional challenges that Ramluggen et al. (2010, p70) identify.

It was my unique position as a trusted individual occupying the territory between insider and outsider that brought definite advantages to my position as researcher. The personal bonds and recognition of professional competence engendered trust from a variety of parties (trainees, secure care officers, teaching colleagues, senior management colleagues and Youth Justice Board representation) central to my study. It represented a liminal space between the perspectives of the outsider and the insider – offering potential for insight and placing me in a special position from which to conduct research.

3.4.2 Locating the research – selecting the institution and the participants

As a critical ethnographer it was important to locate this research in a venue where there was the potential to explore, support and empower a disadvantaged community. The selection of a secure environment was entirely suitable in this regard. Beech Meadow was also appropriate in that, fortuitously, it happened to be located close to my home and I was asked to consider working there via an acquaintance who already had contacts at the centre and knew me as a teacher at a local secondary school. Although consideration was given to exploring other institutions, the fact that gaining access would be even more challenging compared to a place where I was known meant that the decision to research in Beech Meadow seemed to be a sensible one.

Due to the variable conditions within this venue, akin to other secure environments, the selection of a secure venue meant that other choices were more limited. Consequently, this study does not claim that its data source was scientifically selected to provide the views of a representative sample that could be confidently generalized across a relevant population. The data source can best be described as a convenience sample and bears its accompanying disadvantages (Cohen et al., 2000, p102). This style of sampling is typical of sampling when trying to work with hard to reach populations as Abrams identifies when discussing young people in custody where “a host of circumstances often force researchers to operate with samples of available subjects” (Abrams, 2010, p542).

The participants in the research were ‘selected’ only insofar as they formed part of my allocated grouping. They were all vulnerable young adults between the ages of 13 and 16

who had been sentenced to a term in an STC for serious crimes or because the courts had remanded them in custody. They all had in common the fact that they were allowed to participate in my programme because their behaviour had allowed them to access a rewards tier that permitted certain additional rights and privileges. Within the confines of the centre, these were more trusted trainees.

3.4.3 The young people involved in the study

The study focused on the lives of eight teenage males between the ages of thirteen and sixteen who were incarcerated either following conviction for serious crimes or held on remand, pending trial.

Opportunities were created to see the participants on at least a twice weekly basis, in the evenings, as part of their endeavours towards the accreditation for the outdoor pursuits scheme. In addition, there were frequent occasions when I would see the young people in other contexts, such as a charity day, football tournaments and being invited to their residential units to discuss how they felt their activities programme was going, to discuss any homework set by teachers that they needed help with and even just to play board games.

Prior to the study I had worked with most of these boys in a variety of contexts. One of these contexts was as a temporary teacher through the holiday breaks from my other teaching role. When I acted as a temporary teacher I often found that I would be asked to do additional work with the young people (both by adult teachers, secure care officers or by the young people themselves) in order to help them prepare for English examinations, to do some intense one-to-one work or as a lead practitioner in the study base where I worked with catch-up reading/literacy programmes. It was often the case that if a young person was refusing to come to school, I would be asked to work with them on their residential units. These teaching activities led to a commonly-held perception that I was “sound” and I would not be subjected to the torrent of abuse that other colleagues could be. The other key context in which I worked with some of these young people was as an activities leader – playing football, helping to organize fun-days (e.g. a ‘village fete’) and supporting an earlier version of the outdoor pursuits programme at the centre.

Appendix A offers a thumbnail sketch of the young people who participated in this study. The trainees are introduced in alphabetical order, by their pseudonym. It should be noted

that, whilst this section offers a sense of their character, including aspects of personality and background, this does not extend, nor should it, to a detailed discussion of the reasons for their incarceration. Not only would this potentially jeopardize their anonymity, but it has no bearing on this research. Foucault's stress on histories as narrative accounts may lead one to expect that the young people might, of their own volition, have raised the topic of their own pasts. However, the fact that most of the activities undertaken were group based, instigated a group dynamic and identity that appeared to push personal histories into the background. It is also a point of principle that these young people were being given a fresh start at the centre. Ascribing to the centre's ideals, I was not there as a judge, but as a facilitator and as a researcher who might aid their exploration of growth. Details of histories are included only insofar as they illuminate.

3.5 Ethical conduct

For any researcher involved in research of childhood behaviour, appropriate ethical standards are critical for the participants concerned and the wider reputation of educational researchers. In recent year there has been an increasing focus on ethical issues due to a variety of factors, including legislative change, the changing nature of research funding and the development of new technologies (Brooks, te Riele and Maguire, 2014, p4). This study absolutely follows Brooks et al. in arguing that "conducting research ethically is important in itself" (2014, p4). For this study, this is especially the case where one is working not only with children, but children who have been removed from their home environment and, in legal terms, are seen as 'vulnerable'. This study recognizes that acting ethically can be fraught with dilemmas for the duration of the research; at times, there is no one clear-cut option that a researcher can take. Ethical decisions may have to be taken 'in-situ', mid-research. The section below explores some of those dilemmas.

3.5.1 Understanding of ethical conduct

It is possible to explore notions of ethical conduct in detail, exploring the history of ethics and its growing importance i.e. what Haggerty described as 'ethics creep' (2004). This may be significant in that what may once have been seen as ethical may be no longer. This cultural shift is important to acknowledge given the proliferation of digital, visual and online media of today's society where researchers are faced with new dilemmas. For the purposes of this academic study, it was felt important to follow the guidelines set down by the British

Educational Research Association. Whilst there have been various and ongoing incarnations of these guidelines, the version followed by myself considered that all educational research should be conducted within an ethic of respect for the person, knowledge, democratic values, the quality of educational research and academic freedom. (BERA, 2011). In following these ethical guidelines, I ensured that all participants agreed voluntarily to be part of the study and all information rendered anonymous.

3.5.2 Access to the field

The difficulties of accessing any secure environment are well documented (Travers, 2009) but gaining permission to research in this centre was an especially protracted process involving a fluid set of research criteria and regular changes in gateway personnel, particularly the arrival of a new Director of the Centre in summer, 2008. The concerns of a part-time employee who wanted to conduct academic research were not immediately high on the priority list of a management team at a centre with pressing managerial and organisational issues.

However, gaining access to the field is essential to the process of research. This particular research project with its elevated risk levels ensured that the initial process of gatekeeping was rigorous at both university and centre level. Several meetings were had with various colleagues of progressively senior levels within the centre, including of both interim and substantive Directors (the equivalent of a Governor) whereby the purpose of the research and safeguards were discussed and agreed. I have no doubt that my experience of working at the centre over several years built a credibility, which, when allied with the formal letter from my university supervisor, improved the likelihood of access. The centre itself had to refer to the Youth Justice Board to confirm the decision to grant access, reflective of the anxiety connected to researching within the secure establishment.

At the level of research ethical committee, The University of East London's ethical board granted permission to research following my application in March 2009. As part of this process, queries were raised in particular about the ethical nature of the work. In terms of this initial hurdle, the demands were significant.

Initially consent was given, subject to:

- a) The consent of the Youth Justice Board;

- b) The consent of a representative parent figure;
- c) Adherence to establishment guidelines for dissemination of information outside the centre itself.

Further conversations and meetings with line managers took place over subsequent months with further conditions added by the institution and the YJB itself. These criteria included:

- a) Ensuring the anonymity of the young people involved;
- b) Destroying the data once it had been used for the sole purpose of completing this thesis;
- c) Not disrupting the day-to-day routine of the trainees or the centre as a whole;
- d) Not publishing the thesis for three years post completion.

The final criterion to ensure official approval was to secure parental support. I followed the example of Dubberley and Parry (2009) which asked the named adult representative of a young person to act as an informed parent. I adopted this approach by asking the Head of Security to send an informative permission letter to the representatives of young people in my study (Appendix B). This letter explained the study and gave my contact details. In this way I built in another layer of quasi-parental permission, where it would otherwise have been profoundly challenging, even impossible, to ensure actual parental acknowledgement. In the situated reality of this study, I took the view that the state had effectively taken on parenting duties. As long as the potential benefits and disadvantages were explained appropriately, as indeed they were, this would be more ethical than simply letting a valuable research opportunity evaporate whilst waiting for parental letters to arrive. At this point I was satisfied that the official criteria had been adhered to.

Despite my privileged position as a trusted member of the institution, the protracted process of gaining consent from both the centre authorities and the ethical permission from the university reflects how challenging an environment the secure estate is in which to work and research. I believe that as someone who had a recognised and trusted status, I was offered permission to research where others might not have been.

The decision then became whether the young people involved in the study were sufficiently mature themselves to understand and consent to the research, as discussed in the next sub-

section. It would be profoundly important to keep negotiating that access with the trainees to ensure ongoing legitimacy.

3.5.3 Informed consent

In gaining the informed consent of the participants in the study, I was conscious of various challenges. Brooks, te Riele and Maguire (2014) note the significance of three key aspects in assessing informed consent. These three are that (a) the participant should have adequate knowledge of the research; (b) that consent can be withdrawn without penalty and that (c) the participant is sufficiently competent to make the decision. It is my firm belief that these three areas were adhered to, and this sub-section explores these three aspects.

In terms of ensuring sufficiently adequate information was understood by the trainees. I personally provided an information sheet that explained the purposes of the research in relatively simple terms (Appendix C). The young people were certainly made aware both in writing and orally that their participation would be written about as part of a university course. Furthermore, as a result of their work, we would be looking at their views in the ultimate hope of improving the quality of their lives and of others in a similar position. As already explained, a briefing letter (Appendix B) had been offered to the key workers via the senior colleagues responsible for security so the young people had another voice to turn to for explanation.

Looking back, I wonder now if, despite this information being clearly provided to officers and discussed with young people from time-to-time, whether either party could fully appreciate the significance of a research degree at a university. That is to say, I wonder if for busy officers, many of whom had not accessed university themselves and many of whom were on changing shift patterns with competing priorities, enough time had been spent explaining face-to-face what the research involved. Equally, I wonder if, despite explanations with the trainees, enough work was done in discussing what a university was and what research even constituted. Perhaps such reflections are part of the doctoral experience.

In terms of the withdrawal of consent, I was enthusiastic about adopting the approach taken by Renold et al. (2008) who discussed the problems of informed consent with young people

in care. Renold et al. raised the concern that signing forms potentially “imposes quite a rigid power hierarchy between researcher (talking: active) and participant (giving: passive)” (2008, p429) and that one should be “acutely aware of the ethics of generating ever more surveillance on an increasingly ‘over-surveilled’ social group” (2008, p431). I reassured the participants that they could withdraw their permission at any time and that they would not be penalised i.e. they could continue with the award programme. I made these verbal assurances on several occasions to ensure ongoing support and remind myself of my own ethical obligations.

As stated, on the first day I offered the trainees two pieces of paper: one explained the structure of the award while the other explained the purpose of my research (Appendix C). I requested that the first sheet was initialed and dated to join the course, whilst if they were happy to participate in the study they could initial and date the second sheet. I wanted them to initial the sheet as opposed to a full signature as this clearly indicated a level of agreement without imposing a formal legalistic structure that might be intimidating (and betoken a hierarchical power structure). Therefore, both oral and written forms of consent were offered at regular intervals throughout the project. Not all trainees offered their consent and yet continued with the outdoor scheme and were not disadvantaged in any way. This is testament to the ethical standards of this work.

The withdrawal of consent by a minority also suggests that the trainees did have the capacity to make informed decisions. This study recognizes that these young people were of mid/late secondary schooling age. Whilst they were vulnerable, that did not necessarily reflect a learning disability or other condition that would preclude them from making appropriate decisions. In fact, these young people had been processed by a custodial system where they would have been given opportunity to express themselves in a far less supportive fashion, yet would have been expected to justify actions. They had not been sectioned under the Mental Health act. In other aspects of their lives within the centre, the young people were offered comparable decisions to make e.g. which lessons to study for as part of a course options package. It is the argument of this study that by offering the opportunity to make decisions about their lives, this opportunity offers them agency in their lives. On release date, these young people will have agency over their lives in a less restrictive fashion than when incarcerated. The process of offering opportunities to make decisions is, of itself, ethical.

3.5.4 Rewarding participants

Following Brooks, te Riele and Maguire (2014), it is clear that there are three ways of rewarding participants for their input. These are by offering incentives, offering advice and by inviting participants to become fully involved in all stages of a project. It may be considered by some that this project did indeed offer an incentive to trainees. This is because, by offering a snack of cake/biscuit half way through the session, I was in effect ‘buying’ participation from particularly hungry, vulnerable trainees. This may be one interpretation. However, I do not think that it would represent the reality. True, I do think that this may have been one of the reason for participation, but I do not think that harm occurred as a result of such provision, as reflected in the precedent set by Toner et al. in their study of very small focus groups in providing a light refreshment. It was not as if sugary or caffeinated drinks had been provided that might have resulted in outlandish behavior. Secondly, and more significantly, the provision of a biscuit refreshment was something that I offered in my other mainstream sector job where I also co-ordinated the same outdoor pursuits award. I offered to the trainees nothing that I did not offer to mainstream learners.

It is the argument of this study that, in this particular context, the provision of biscuits represented a touch of caring and humanity rather than a cynical attempt to manipulate young people into participation.

3.5.5 Security of information

When obtaining any information on individuals, it is important to follow the law on data security. There are seven principles connected to data retention as provided by the Information Commissioner’s office (2015). This study abided by all of those principles. It is worth identifying that the seventh principle, that of information security, should be mentioned. Given the nature of the information written about, it has been important to keep the information on a password protected computer, based within a locked cupboard in my

house. The computer always had fully updated internet protection installed. When data transfer occurred, it was by exchange of external hard drive. Given that others were not accessing the information as I was the sole user, security measures existed on the computer and the physical safety of the computer was ensured, risk of improper use was minimized appropriately.

3.6 The impact of pilot research

The pilot study had been introduced several months prior to the main study. In the pilot I worked with five participants, primarily to practice interviewing techniques to see which style might generate the most useful data, and also to practice with various different technologies. The point of the pilot study was primarily to work out which methodological techniques would be most appropriate in the research setting.

There were various benefits arising from the pilot study, beyond issues of technological expertise. For example, the pilot study offered a crucial insight into interviewing style. An attempt was made to conduct semi-structured individual interviews with the participants by asking them if it was possible to arrange a time to visit them in their own shared residential units. Four of the five trainees seemed to resent this request, something which was surprising as trainees were usually keen to see adults come to visit them in their accommodation units. Upon discussing this with a supporting Secure Care Officer, she too was unsure, although she questioned the individual nature of the interviews, asking why this needed to happen. She queried “Why couldn’t they all just have a chat together?” On reflection, it became apparent that the request for an individual and relatively formal interview appointment may have brought back echoes of previous threatening legal experiences, such as police or court interviews. In these cases the individuals may, understandably, have lacked confidence or felt fear. I decided, therefore, that a more semi-structured, less formal approach to interviews was appropriate.

The other significant methodological issue that I encountered in my pilot study was associated with the obtaining of informed consent from the trainees themselves. In this regard I was very conscious of my responsibilities as a trusted adult; as a responsible teacher and as an ethical researcher. I was particularly aware of university regulations and recommended scripts to provide to obtain written and informed consent. Mindful of these concerns I presented a recommended document to the young people, who immediately

became anxious about it. The criticism was vocal, with several demands to read it through to them and consequential queries whether the document was some legal confession “or something”. It was immediately apparent that the boys’ literacy skills were limited. The credibility of the entire pilot project was put in jeopardy at that point. Far from obtaining informed consent, the profound danger was of an en masse resignation. In this circumstance I withdrew the written declarations and verbally explained what I hoped to do. In the longer run I made the decision that I would provide my own written consent form in a more appropriate format.

3.7 Data collection: research tools and implementation

The choice of data-collection methods in this study was influenced by a number of factors. Most importantly, my epistemological stance led me to identify methods that would allow the participants to share their perceptions of life in ways with which they were most comfortable. On a more practical level, methods were chosen carefully to minimise the disruptions of prison existence and to maximise the engagement of the participants with whom I was working. I had to accommodate the practical needs of the participants (such as phone-calls to parents or changing release dates), whilst also responding appropriately to the changing moods and behaviours of the young people over an eighteen week programme. The challenge involved in this context was profound, a point reinforced by Ramluggen et al. (2010) who also discuss environments where the difficulties of undertaking research might seem insurmountable.

For information, a timetable of the research methods used is placed in appendix D. A timetable of the activities that the group completed is in appendix E.

It has been argued that the use of conventional qualitative research methods in demanding environments often prove inadequate. This is because there is the potential for participants to feel ignored or frustrated, to be reluctant to be interviewed and to be unresponsive to questionnaires. Traditional approaches may even impose an unwelcome passivity on participants or alienate the young person by recalling one-to-one dialogues in earlier, more confrontational situations (Clarke et al., 2011; Finlay et al., 2010; Ross et al., 2009). The reluctance around questionnaires was something that in my own work in the secure environment I found to be readily identifiable. Given that “quality evidence of what works to reduce recidivism among adjudicated adolescents is limited” (Abrams and Anderson-

Nathe, 2012, p567), it is the view of this study that it is ethical to work with young people in terms that they understand. As Russell (2013) has argued, the varied experience and backgrounds of vulnerable young people demands that the ethnographer be flexible and open to the use of multiple methods (p56). This ethical decision both benefits society at large through research, and more importantly, it has the potential to profoundly benefit the young people themselves.

In my own study, participation was encouraged in a number of ways. There was certainly a focus on ensuring physical indications of authority were adapted to reduce power differentials between adults and trainees. This included moving all the tables to a central square in order to allow a community feel to the group, along the lines of a 'circle-time' activity and careful consideration of my own dress-code to wear a t-shirt that was distinct from the Secure Care Officers, physically hide keys and, wherever possible, not to collect a radio on entry to the building. Adopting this dress-code was a deliberate decision, the rationale for which was echoed by one respondent in The Howard League for Penal Reform's study on day to day experiences (2010). In this study, one respondent saw the biggest barrier to effective working between young people and adults as the uniforms worn, as he associated uniforms with a gang culture that itself represented power and control (p17) By reducing obvious physical signs of power, the hope was to generate a more personable atmosphere. Following Toner's work with very small focus groups that engaged with disenfranchised women, I provided biscuits for a pleasant break and "seating was around a table" (2009, p183) in order to generate a convivial atmosphere. In addition, there was a careful consideration of my own language patterns – deliberately avoiding deferential terms such as "Sir" as often as possible and preferring to make use of first names.

The research design that flowed from these understandings was a participatory, multi-method and multi-modal approach within a critical ethnographic study aimed at maximizing participant engagement. The framework consisted of:

- (a) Participant observation leading to a collection of field-notes;
- (b) Semi-structured group interviews between myself and trainees;
- (c) Digital conversations between myself and trainees;
- (d) The provision of multi-modal opportunities to express ideas.

This framework was supported by a literature review of several key institutional documents that related to the training of new staff. This material offered a context that contained the core messages relating to values within the institution, which is explored later.

3.8 Data generation and capture

In the following section, the various methods of data collection are described. Table one, below, summarises those methods:

Table one: summary of data collection methods

Data collection method:	Comments:
Field notes, generated through participant observation (see Appendix M).	Field notes were generated after every session, not actually whilst activities were going on. On leaving the centre, five key words would be written to act as an aide-memoire, with a fuller write up on return home.
Semi-structured group interviews	Sixteen semi-structured interviews, including one group interview and fifteen individual interviews.
Digital conversations (see Appendix L).	Use of ‘Zing!’ software as a platform to create ten shared conversations between the facilitator (myself) and several trainees at once.
Multi-modal text production, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Post-it notes; ○ Collages (Appendices I and J); ○ T-shirt designs (Appendix K). 	Use of various media to create post-it walls, collage and t-shirt designs.
Institutional documents:	These various texts offered an institutional view on perceived best practice within the environment from both the perspectives of

<p>1) <i>An inclusive approach to 'Teaching and Learning</i> (CfBT, 2007) – for coded extract see Appendix H.</p> <p>2) STC training manual (G4S, 2008);</p> <p>3) A contextual guide to working with minority ethnic groups (G4S, 2007);</p> <p>4) The 2007 Annual Report for Education within the centre (CfBT, 2007b);</p> <p>5) A review of a survey that explored the young people's view of teaching and learning within the centre (RHMR, 2007).</p>	<p>both the education provider and the overall secure care contractor.</p>
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3.8.1 Participant observation

I was immersed in the trainees' world, albeit having recognised that this was within a framework that would never allow me to become a fully-integrated member of their group. I was much more than a peripheral observer. I had the opportunity to gather live data from live situations as part of what Cohen et al. (2000, p305) refer to as "the context of programmes". The opportunity to take an iterative approach, both to the collection of data and the subsequent analysis, allowed findings to be grounded in the social activity they purported to explain (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

In this context, my own behaviour raised challenges. It was clear that my choices of how to speak, behave, dress and move were liable to be significant. As Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) recognise "personal appearance can be a salient consideration...especially where an initial period of gaining trust is necessary" (2007, p66). My experiences within the centre, both positive and negative, led me to adapt to the expectations that were demanded of me - I recognized that, for example, swinging the keys would not be an appropriate way to conduct myself.

A further challenge related to how to record observations. In this study, the creation of field notes from my daily observations was of paramount importance. I hoped that they would serve “the crucial role of connecting researchers and their subjects in the writing of an ethnographic report.” (Wolfinger, 2002, p92), and that they would reflect “reality from the viewpoint of someone ‘inside’ the case study” (Yin, 2003, p94). I needed not only to manage and document the research stages (Morrison, in Coleman and Briggs, 2002) but also to harness my own proximity to the participants through unobtrusive recording. Proximity does of course bring its own dangers – the risk of the participant observer ‘going native’ and becoming a supporter of the group (Yin, 2003). However, the dual-function of my position as part-insider, part-outsider mitigated this risk.

Fieldnotes were written up after I returned home from the evening sessions, between one and two hours after the actual event. The immediate writing up upon returning home meant that this risk of loss of detail was minimized and was outweighed by the significant benefits of the proximal relationship and the generation of trust that I sought to maximize. Although there is a danger that any delay in writing up fieldnotes may contribute to the loss of the observer’s objectivity (Wolfinger, 2002, p85), I always tried to review conversations, body language and emotions ‘in my mind’s eye,’ as a reflexive cross-checking of the notes that I made.

3.8.2 Semi-structured group interviews

Interviews were a significant part of my data collection. It was clearly important to create the opportunity for participants to tell their stories for, as Cohen et al. suggest “Interviews enable participants – be they interviewers or interviewees – to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view” (2005, p267). This was the outcome that I wished to achieve from the interview programme within my study, seeking to understand the world from the participant’s perspective (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) and building on extensive prior observation to give structure and shape to the interview (Carspecken, 1996). The sense of the “interview”, though, has to be defined. These interviews were not formal, as Bassegy argues all interviews are (1999, p81), but rather, represented informal conversations. I wanted to avoid placing participants in an uncomfortable situation. Almost all of the interviews were on a group basis rather than one-to-one meetings. Given that the participants were all held in the centre for

offences, I did not want to cause injury or stress by forcing them into a position of a formal interview that might have been reminiscent of legal contexts.

Both the face to face group and personal interviews I took part in, however, may be characterised as sixteen semi-structured interviews. I preferred the semi-structured interview as it “is geared to allowing the people the freedom to respond in any way they choose” (Layder, 1993, p41). My guided discussions used relatively open-ended questions to prompt conversations, conducive to a more relaxed tone. But, notwithstanding informality, even semi-structured interviews retain a power structure as the research interview is not a conversation between equal partners” (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p3). It rests on the dominant position of the interviewer in introducing the topic of the interview and mapping the route of the ‘conversation’ (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009).

The potential problem of a power imbalance was mitigated by the taking of several steps to minimize formality. The overall tone or mood was kept calm, not least by the simple expedient of providing cakes – a rare treat within the confines of the centre. The discussions were set up around a table with chairs in a circle to avoid a direct confrontation of any kind, or to represent any seating as hierarchical positioning, a tactic endorsed in Ritchie and Rigano’s study in 2001. I was quite deliberate in taking nothing more than bullet point notes using key words, and then reading back to the trainees what my understanding of their statements was. This gave the original respondent a chance to adapt his response, and in turn for other trainees to contribute too after a moment’s reflection. In addition, if officers wanted to make contributions they were welcome to – partly because I valued their responses, partly because the officers often made excellent role models for discursive participation. By mitigating the power structures in these ways, more insightful information came to light.

There were ongoing interviews throughout the course of the programme, plus one final discussion which provided a more in depth opportunity to summarise how successful participants felt the course was overall, and specifically, how useful technology had been in this venture. When I knew that trainees were leaving us, I would visit them for a final interview in their own house units before they departed.

To re-iterate, data was captured from the interviews by my noting down what seemed to be the most salient points on an A5 notepad. I added additional information upon my return my home after each session. As highlighted earlier, due to ethical issues it was inappropriate to

electronically record the interviews and therefore a process of transcription was not necessary.

3.8.3 Digital conversations

This study harnesses technology as part of the research design through the use of wireless keyboards, together with a patented software package called *Zingthing 3.6* that acts as an “On-line Facilitation Course” (Findlay, 2005). The user of these keyboards is offered a means of communication using text in either a physically real environment or a virtual on-line scenario. Zing digital keyboards were employed because they were more likely to appeal to our young participants and therefore offered a greater promise for data capture, than more traditional approaches, such as questionnaires, or interviews (Finlay et al., 2010).

The actual practice of how my study used the keyboards is relatively simple. Each user was issued with a wireless keyboard that could project a signal into a USB hub placed in the socket of the lead computer. That computer itself was linked to a projector so that everything that was on the computer screen was projected up onto the wall for all to see. With one person (myself) facilitating, it was possible to orchestrate a text-based conversation reflecting whatever themes the facilitator chose to adopt. Users could adopt their own nicknames for projection onto the screen, draft their comments and then add their contribution to the communal discussion.

Using the *Zingthing* software and wireless, users had the opportunity to construct their own on-screen conversation. This represented an opportunity to bridge an “epistemic gap” (Fielding, 2004, p299-300) connected to traditional research - “research ...within a world increasingly saturated by multi-media technologies” (Coffey et al., 2006, p15). For younger people the use of technology was particularly appealing as it provided an effective, alternative vehicle for facilitating expression – a central aim of the study. My study’s adoption of current technology was firmly part of an “ethnographic and participatory” approach (Ross et al., 2009, p608) to use technology to engage with younger people, many of whom may be difficult to reach (Bragg, 2008; Kist, 2008; Nic Gabhainn and Sixsmith, 2006; Ross et al., 2009). For a researcher from a critical perspective, it is important to consider the use of new media to express ideas and views as profoundly useful.

3.8.4 Production of multi-modal texts

In order to maximize the engagement and participation of the community with whom I was working, I considered it necessary to go beyond conventional data-gathering methods. I selected four main ways of providing opportunities to express ideas.

The first of these strategies was the use of a post-it note 'wall'. For the majority of the time, trainees had access to post-it notes which they could share if they felt the desire. Therefore, as each session developed the young people had the opportunity to place a post-it note on the wall which I would then collect at the end. The use of the post-it note as a text type was a significant choice in that by being brief they demanded minimal literacy resources thereby giving increased accessibility to participants. This is a critical point amongst prisoners, more than two thirds of whom suggested that they had difficulties in reading prison information, filling in forms and expressing themselves (Talbot, 2010, p36).

A second related strategy was the distribution of tissue paper as part of one of our sessions. The novelty of being offered as much paper as they wanted to take acted as a bridge to engagement, leading to the task being revealed of asking the participants to write down a positive quality about themselves on each piece of paper.

The third strategy was through the creation of collage. In this activity, participants were allowed to print-out a photograph of themselves and stick it into the centre of a piece of A3 paper. Around the outside of this centred photograph the participant stuck images from a selection of magazines that had been provided to them. In addition, they were allowed to write whichever slogans seemed appropriate to those images. By the end of the session, the opportunity for creating a piece of artistic work that in some way represented how they felt about themselves had been explored.

Finally, the participants were offered the opportunity to creatively design t-shirts and subsequently wear these t-shirts to sessions. In the original instance, plain white t-shirts plus coloured fabric pens were provided with the instruction of designing a t-shirt that they would be prepared to wear. The only restrictions on the design of these t-shirts were that they had to include the award scheme logo somewhere on the shirt and that STC rules were not broken, with an especial emphasis on not having offensive images/words on display. The participants

were free to add images, phrases and design that reflected their mood, attitude to the programme and wider identity.

By affording the participants extended opportunities to use artistic expression my study followed both Gussak (2007) and Persons (2009) who identified that the impact of artistic projects with offenders can, amongst other things, “address identity issues, the need for security (and) the need for freedom and fun” (Persons, 2009, p451). Collectively, these methods offered the opportunity to express thoughts – both about their immediate activities and about their wider perceptions of themselves.

The legitimacy for the approach of bracketing participatory methods together under the singular concept of multi-modal texts can be found in relatively recent research. Cremin et al. (2011) used a variety of visual methods to emancipate the voices of pupils. In their study of young people in care Renold et al.’s (2008) methods involved car conversations, visual and written diaries and collages to form an overall visual and participatory approach that engaged disaffected and vulnerable youngsters. Brady (2007) had a similar concern for extending participation by defining ‘participatory practice’ as “a means through which the voices of children and young people are heard” (p32). Holland (2009) also advocated the need for “in-depth creative engagement” (p227) when working with small numbers. In all of these studies, plus similar studies by Finlay (2010) and Clarke et al. (2011) the approach taken to engaging difficult to reach young people was to harness visual, participatory methods. My study builds on these studies by using similar approaches to offer young people within secure accommodation the chance to express insight about their lives.

3.8.5 Institutional documents

The analysis of a series of documents produced by the institution offered insight into how the incarcerated young people should be treated. The five documents which I looked closely at were as follows: (1) The main education handbook: *An inclusive approach to ‘Teaching and Learning* (CfBT, 2007); (2) The main STC training manual (G4S, 2008); (3) A contextual guide to working with minority ethnic groups (G4S, 2007); (4) The 2007 Annual Report for Education within the centre (CfBT, 2007b); (5) A review of a survey that explored the young people’s view of teaching and learning within the centre (RHMR, 2007).

It was important to look at these documents in particular, which represented exemplary guides to new staff, based on best practice and reviews of practice. Given that the nature of the environment made it difficult to obtain more than monological data, these five texts provided an ideal means by which to explore the messages and values communicated to staff and incarcerated individuals within the centre.

3.9 Data Analysis

The processing of my research data owed much to Carspecken's five-stage model. In this next section an outline is provided of the research approach that this study adopted, substantially based upon Carspecken's model, albeit with some minor amendments that will also be explored.

Carspecken provides a five stage model for conducting critical ethnography. The first stage of this model is designed to offer an opportunity to collect data from the field, as unobtrusively as possible. Carspecken recommends that in order to reduce intrusion, the initial phase should involve the collection of monological rather than dialogical data. Stage two involves the development of a Preliminary Reconstructive Analysis (1996, p93) helping researchers to clarify their impressions of meaning, to allow others to challenge those meanings, to provide additional material and to support later validity claims. This initial meaning reconstruction involved a detailed reading of collected data in an effort to identify possible patterns and develop a series of codes.

There is a relatively unusual approach to the coding of data that is congruent with reconstructive analysis. It involves beginning with low-level coding that is primarily objective in nature, such as physical practices within their context and the frequency of participant speech acts. In this study, my coding method consisted of opening Word on my computer on a split-screen basis with two files open at once. As I read through the data and found something significant, I would specify the code on the blank screen. This led to a series of low level codes. These are objective low level codes that offer adjuncts to meaning reconstruction. They act as supplements to the primary record and aid the process of reconstructive analysis.

By exploring possible meanings, the lower set of codes then allowed for the formulation of higher level codings that were more abstract in nature. In this I followed Charmaz's (2006)

discussion of moving to a more focused coding approach by using the most significant codes to sift through the previous lower level codes. As a constructivist, I was particularly interested in how the trainees discussed their situations. However, given the multiplicity of possible meanings, it was my interpretation of the higher level codes that took precedence. The full list of codes can be found in Appendix F.

The constructivist epistemology of this thesis suggests that “for all kinds of truth claims it is the consent given by a group of people...that validates the claim” (Carspecken, p21). Therefore, the higher level codes could only be validated after discussion with individuals at the centre. Following this, I discussed the codes with my senior colleague within the centre in order to ensure a degree of peer checking, which itself brought up some areas for discussion. Once these areas had been resolved to a mutual satisfaction, the coding ideas were discussed latterly with the participants.

The third stage of critical ethnographic research in the Carspecken model focuses on the generation of dialogical data, primarily through semi-structured interviews. We know that a “central purpose of stage three is to democratize the research process (by giving) participants a voice in the research process” (p155) by acting as a facilitator within the interviews. The sense of trying to establish a safe and supportive environment for the participants to discuss ideas was appealing to the ethical approach to this study.

The interviews offered opportunities to the young people involved to express their views. In addition, the opportunity to discuss developing ‘meaning fields’, (i.e. meanings open to a range of interpretations) with my immediate line manager was a useful point at which to explore possible interpretations on a fortnightly basis. There was also the opportunity to substantiate with trainees the “meaning fields” that I, as an individual researcher, had generated but were not yet confirmed. To facilitate this, the interview programme was expanded to consist of twelve semi-structured individual interviews with individuals, three semi-structured sectional group interviews and one overall group interview.

In one sense, this stage had been operating from the initial phases of this study as both the digital dialogues and the multi-modal strategies offered opportunities for expression. With the introduction of the semi-structured interviews, the availability of means by which to communicate ideas was broadened. The use of interviews permitted the creation of data which was both complementary to, and guided by, the data which was already recorded.

Based on the initial reconstructive analysis that came from the earlier research, it was possible to explore and develop themes which had emerged from earlier data.

Stages four and five in Carspecken's terminology shift the focus from the exploration of particular sites or social groupings to discovering system relations requiring a conceptual framework through which systems can be grasped. More specifically, stage four is intended to offer the opportunity to explore "particular system relations by examining several related sites" (p195), that is to say, sites related to the principal research venue. This might be accomplished through dialogue with other teachers, observing similar classrooms or meeting with parents. By looking for "cultural isomorphisms" between the sites, it is possible to identify which behaviours are unique to the research group in question and which behaviours are symptomatic of a wider culture. In the case of my research, it was appropriate to look at the differing behaviours within the overall context of the secure centre, for example, how behaviours changed between an indoor and outdoor setting. In turn, stage five offers the opportunity to look at the findings in the light of existing macro-level social theories (1996, p195-202). It was at this point that abstractions could be drawn.

3.10 Utilising a Foucauldian framework

The focus of this thesis on power dynamics, trusting relationships and the opportunities to express a voice, lends itself to a Foucauldian framework. This study explores the social world by exploring the micro-physics of power.

As noted earlier, Foucault provides a profoundly insightful conceptual framework through the way in which he explores the relationship between power, discipline, discourse and knowledge. The focus on the individual leads to a greater understanding of how the subject is not necessarily a dominated disempowered figure. In my data analysis, I was particularly aware of identifying dynamic situations where social actors explore their own circumstance their own identities and their perceptions of the extent of their own relational power.

The analysis of data harnessed Foucault's "analytics of power" that classifies power-events according to five criteria (which were classifications between groups; enquiries into power's objectives; analysis of power's means; examination of institutional spaces such as the legal system; and the exploration of techniques/strategies used to exercise power). This framework renders it much easier to see individuals as having access to power.

The relevance of Foucault's model to this study is significant in that it helps to explain how young people institutionally deemed as both deviant and vulnerable can live a life that is simultaneously disempowered due to their incarceration but empowered with close friendship circles, strategies to realise medium- to long-term goals, and on occasion, dominance over institutional figures. For Foucault, power is an ongoing and dynamic process of consistently negotiating meanings through ongoing human interactions, something which my data analysis tried to explore.

This view of power within a variety of settings allows critical researchers to generate insights into communities which in official terms may appear to be disempowered but which are powerful in different ways. I was personally persuaded of the need to explore the various micro-power interactions that contributed to the overall more significant movements – movements which could be particularly acute given the often fractured relationships within the culture of the secure estate. For me, it was very important to be aware of the iterative process of power circulation, whereby inequality and power stratification is “a process rather than a fixed structure somehow of everyday life, but a process based on some fundamental material conditions for getting the resources necessary to survive and prosper” (Heller, 2011, p38). It was precisely my concern with the individuals, as individuals within their environments, not as individuals to be systematically judged, but as potential subjects of growth, which meant that ultimately Foucault's thoughts proved persuasive for me. By exploring the data identified in this study in the context of a post-structural, Foucauldian perspective, it is possible to develop insight into how discourse can be a resource in itself that can be harnessed, how power on a day-to-day level can be manipulated, and how knowledge and power are entwined. By situating my own data analysis within these larger structures, more articulate and complex insights can be offered.

3.11 Concluding remarks

This study presents a number of challenges that are reflected both in its methodology and in its practicalities. In this chapter I have set out my ontological and epistemological principles as they relate to the study and have reflected on the degree to which it may reasonably be defined as a critical ethnography together with the implications of that definition. I have explained why a qualitative approach to the research, attempting to elicit thick, rich

descriptions of participants' life experiences was considered essential. I have also made clear the researcher standpoint adopted and have given some background to my own arrival at the study.

It is the argument of this study that this research is ethical. As explained in the sub-sections referring to research methods, I was conscientious in avoiding processes that might echo prior experiences with solicitors, police or courtrooms. At times, this meant that recording information was not easy: for example, it was not appropriate to use interviews across a table using a microphone, a point endorsed by Adams and Pike and Adams (2012) when exploring Higher Education e-learning in prisons when they argue that they had to use field notes as “a recording machine would not be acceptable in a prison setting” (2008, p6).

Hill et al. (2004) goes so far as to argue that one of the main reasons why these young people are so marginalized is that their “authentic” voice, their real views, are not listened to. This is a position echoed by Aldridge who argues that it is “certainly the case that vulnerable people can, potentially, be excluded from conventional social research...if methods used are not appropriate or sufficiently adaptable...if researchers are not willing to step outside the boundaries of their conventional methodological fields, there remains the real possibility that vulnerable individuals and groups will be overlooked or considered ‘too-difficult’ (Aldridge, 2014, p114).

The approach to this study is built on the critically ethnographic premise that by eliciting, encouraging and exploring the authentic, personal views of participants, the research might offer an understanding of how disempowered young people might be given a voice within the regulatory expectations of the secure estate. In particular it may offer insights into whether, and if so, how, participants begin to hear their own voice as important, as powerful; as songs that should not be ignored. The power dynamics of incarceration are significant within the secure estate and merit exploration in the context of considering their relationship to the emancipation of muffled voices.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 Chapter introduction and overview:

This chapter presents the findings of this study, arguing that the concept of voice can be workable within the secure training centre notwithstanding occasional episodes of challenging behaviour when frustration and anger can displace discussion and dialogue. In these latter circumstances the radical passing of power that Fielding (2001) describes becomes impossible as the necessity for control in the secure sector takes precedence. If the expression of voice is about the quest for self-meaning (Batchelor, 2006) and trying to establish a positive sense of belonging (Whitty et al., 2005), then there were occasions on which this happened. If the expression of voice is more to do with playing an active role in education (Hargreaves, 1967), this occurred sporadically. By offering the young people opportunities to express themselves, dialogues that reflected their identity as individuals, as trainees and as a cohesive group became apparent.

4.2 Data generated from institutional documentation:

The first data source to be utilized and analysed was the relevant formal documentation governing the centre. This provides an insight into the way in which the executive perceives best practice and allows an opportunity to explore the relationships and practices within the institution. Specifically, by studying these documents, it is possible to explore how language contributes to and reinforces significant and forceful power imbalances within the secure environment. As Fairclough (2001) has said, understanding the importance of language in dominating others, alongside an increasing consciousness of language patterns, “is the first step to emancipation” (p1).

Several of the Beech Meadow internal documents seemed pertinent to this study. Some of the documents were issued by the education provider, most notably a ‘toolkit’ manual highlighting effective practice and aimed principally at teachers and support assistants (CfBT, 2007). The education provider also generated other interesting literature, including an annual report for all stakeholders, and questionnaire surveys of trainees’ attitudes towards education. I was also passed a practice training manual for new secure officers (G4S, 2008). By exploring these documents collectively, using critical discourse analysis, it was possible to

question the embedded institutional values of both the education and the security providers and to examine their visions of effective practice.

The first of these documents, the ‘toolkit’, published by the education provider, offered “invaluable guidance for practitioners and managers” (p9). In the introductory paragraph it states that the guide is designed “not simply to be read, but to be used – to support, develop and inspire good practice” (p9). Such an early statement of position represents a power structure in itself – the creation of formal rules by which the officers must behave, in order to keep the structure of the institution intact.

The text presents itself as an authority on how to lead education in the centre. The tone is markedly formal and frequently refers to educational terms, or acronyms, demanding a certain level of subject knowledge from the presumed readership of teachers. In the important third chapter, the “Summary of good teaching and learning practice”, there are references to terms such as “Individual Learning Plan” (p12) and “LLN curriculum” (p14). Five distinct acronyms are used (YOI, ILP, SMART, LLN, SENCO) which demand prior knowledge. The choice of vocabulary and terminology demands a degree of seriousness, professionalism and exclusivity.

Tone is further established through the choice of verbs. My analysis of chapter three, for example, shows that in the “Summary of good teaching and learning practice”, there are thirty-six separate pieces of advice. All of this advice is in the form of bullet points, portraying an informative and authoritative text. Advice is given in the form of factual statement on fifteen occasions. Within these fifteen examples, there are examples of “need to” (e.g. “Teachers need to understand learners’ motivations” p12) or “must” (e.g. “Learning resources must be relevant and up to date” p13). Two such statements are actually repeated. This use of factual statement occurs through the main body of the text and is repeated as captions next to pictures and tables. Guidance is direct, and authoritative. This text is a clear example of the creation of group rules. Whilst Little (1990) and Benaquisto and Freed (1996) write about such rules for the incarcerated, this text represents the creation of the structure of prison authority – not for prisoners but for the officers.

On a further twelve occasions the use of the modal verb “should” offers clear directives about procedure. The use of this verb is seen in sentences such as “Procedures should be in place

for recognizing poor punctuality” (p14) and builds on the direct sense of authority generated from the fifteen factual statements.

There are three occasions when the reader is told to “aim” for particular targets (p13) but it is on only three occasions that the reader is told that ideas “can” help, whilst only once is the verb “might” used. The fact that there are fewer of these more ‘flexible’ verbs suggests a declarative, authoritative structure that informs and directs behaviour.

The choice of grammatical structure can also be examined through the consistent use of the sentence composition that uses Subject-Verb-Object, such as “Teachers need to know how to handle young people:” (p25). This SVO structure normally expresses processes to do with actions rather than events or participants (Fairclough, 2001, p101). The adoption of the SVO structure here reflects the desire of the text’s author for the teacher to behave in a very specific manner and may reflect a recognition of the practical dangers involved in not being an effective practitioner. The tone underscores the absolute need to demonstrate self-discipline in order to minimize risk. The creation of these norms for officers is significant and can be linked to the defensive codes that Morris and Morris (1963) discuss. As previously highlighted, Morris and Morris highlight that defensive codes are developed to allow prisoners to build up alliances with other prisoners. The patterning of language that occurs within this instructional text has the potential to lead officers to do the same. Consistency of vocabulary and behaviour will generate a shared ethos.

The formality of the document is reflected in the flatness and formality of its prose. There is, perhaps unsurprisingly, a lack of metaphor. Euphemism is restricted to describing the potential emotions of the young people based within the centre. By restricting the use of more figurative language, the text is seen as a clearly direct, informative manual. The authors use either the term “learners” or “young people” to refer to the incarcerated individual. At no point are the young people referred to as “trainees”, which is surprising given how commonly the terminology was deployed verbally within the centre itself. On no occasions are the young people referred to using the negative terminology of ‘prisoners’ or ‘criminals’. A mild euphemism is used when referring to young people as the text suggests consistently that they may “carry some anger and frustration”. The use of the term “some” here is important in quantifying the extent of the emotional trauma. The text also notes that young people “in custody are often worried about leaving custody” (p15). The choice of the term “worried”

suggests that the emotions involved, although present, are relatively minor. It is also significant that grammatically, the young people are the passive agents in the sentence structure. For example, the text notes that the “pressures of custody often leave learners arriving in classroom with some anger and frustration” (p15). The officers, therefore, become the central figures in determining what actions occur in the centre. By implicitly accepting that the locus of power rests with the adult, notions of “capillaries of power” are minimised.

The onus that is placed on the adult to lead action is maintained throughout. The text suggests consistently and unequivocally that respect is key: what “young people want above all is respect” and that respect is “reciprocal: if young people are treated with respect, they will treat tutors with respect” (p13). The text suggests that the responsibility to begin to build relationships rests with the adult. i.e. “to interact with learners ‘on their level’” (p27). In content, vocabulary and grammatical terms, the text suggests that the young person deserves support rather than condemnation, and that the extent of their anger may be relatively limited. In comparison, when referring to the teachers, the text is much more directive. In Foucauldian terms, this essentially assumes that the prisoners have been rendered docile by the institution. It is the adult’s responsibility to build the relationship through engagement so that, through the individual actions of relationship building, new rituals are embedded within the culture of the institution.

Such rituals develop more widely than simple informal relationship building. An entire chapter is devoted to “Capturing young people’s voices”, arguing that “Listening to learners’ voices is central to personalized learning” (CfBT, 2007b, p21). In discussing student voice practices, this document outlines the necessity of listening to young people for the purposes of Ofsted inspection, for statutory requirements and for purposes of personalized learning. That is to say, formal rituals of listening to young people are developed, alongside the individual building of networks. The chapter begins without the same sense of command as chapter three. This is because in this chapter more information is being offered from the then Department for Education and Skills (e.g. statutory requirements concerning delivery frameworks, p22), from the authors themselves (e.g. the key principles of this approach, p21) and from young people themselves whose opinions are summarized as generally reflecting a positive attitude towards education and learning, (p23). More information is presented under the themes of testing, induction, curriculum, levels of work and relationships (for example,

see appendix G). The fact that so much information is presented to the reader in this way may be interpreted as a reflection of an anticipated lack of knowledge in the readership and possibly a desire by the operator of the institution to ensure all aspects of provision are in place.

However, as the chapter develops a declarative tone re-appears. Of a seven page chapter, the last two pages deal with recommendations, with twenty bullet pointed suggestions made. On fifteen occasions, the modal verb “should” is used to guide practice. On a further three occasions, the texts instructs that “It is important that” (for example, p27) certain activities occur, whilst on the remaining two occasions information is offered. The message relating to ‘respect’ is re-iterated in the final bullet point of the chapter, with the powerful statement that “Respect is key: where teachers show respect it is likely to be reciprocated.” (p27).

It is also noteworthy that a Personalised Learning Approach (PLA) is central here and is stated to be important for “involving young people in the design and delivery of education” (p21). This PLA approach is broken down into constituent elements of raising standards, improving pedagogy and promoting inclusion. One of the key principles for the young people relates to “Having a say about their learning”, and it is noted as an example of best practice that at another STC on a monthly basis young people’s views on their education were taken into account through a forum and a questionnaire. These views can range across a number of specified topics, including assessment, curriculum and induction into the secure estate.

This chapter is particularly interesting because of various recommendations that some young people had already made relating to (a) arrival at the centre (b) induction (c) curriculum (d) the level of curriculum work, and (e) relationships with staff and teachers (2007b, p26). Throughout the areas of feedback provided by the young people, various themes were evident. These were concerned with clear communication between adult and trainees, respect being demonstrated, the provision of a wide curriculum choice and that adults should have high expectations of young people. It is clear that the centre was making a demonstrable commitment to listening to young people, and in doing so, establishing a set of discourse practices with a very specific set of meanings within this particular institution.

In Fairclough’s terms, the purpose of explaining a text is to place it within a social context; to identify how it is “determined by social structures” (p135). For this specific “toolkit”, it is

evident that the power relations at the institutional level very much govern how the social structures have been shaped. The expectations of the author of the “toolkit”, a representative of the governing authorities, are declared very expressively in terms of identifying what constitutes effective practice. There is a clear recognition that the young person should not be recognised as criminal; but rather as a troubled young person. Although the expressed aim is to establish understanding, the overt effect is rather to convey to those working within the secure estate a model and practice of power relations. ‘They’ are the ‘troubled’ young people, whilst ‘we’ are those charged with a moral obligation to look after them. The religious or familial analogy is hard to miss. However, it should also be recognised that this text encourages young people to speak, views them as people who need support and attempts to generate an educational landscape where they can thrive. In this sense, this ‘toolkit’ may offer potential to emancipate the young people by providing an official sanction, or even encouragement for the expression of voice.

This document did not stand in isolation. In the annual CfBT report for Education at the centre for 2006 (CfBT, 2007b) there is a section which established priorities for the coming year. There is a commitment to “Seeking out and responding to the learner voice and views of parents and carers” (2007a, p16). Alongside this commitment, CfBT had commissioned a survey of twenty-five trainees (www.rhmr.co.uk, 2007). Most of the twelve questions were on a Likert scale with space for additional comments with the final question inviting a lengthier response on any topic the trainee chose to write about. The questions focused on the quality of education provided at Beech Meadow such as the suitability of materials, teaching standards, the quality of marking and how the young people were treated. The findings of this survey suggested that by a ratio of 2:1 respondents were treated fairly and with respect, but that generally 50% of responses suggested negative information about how they were supported in their education. Two questionnaires were spoiled, with a further three questionnaires not fully completed. This ‘spoiling’ may imply that there was a lack of commitment from a small number of young people, but overall, it appears that the centre was making a commitment to the ideal of listening to young people – even if a significant minority of young people did not feel that this translated into day-to-day practice. Such spoiling of papers and apparent disenchantment reflects the fallacy inherent in the original teaching ‘toolkit’. The ‘toolkit’ clearly directs that the adult should lead, as the powerful figure but the survey identifies resistance from the young person, evidencing the notion of

power as a disparate force “exercised from innumerable points” (Foucault, 1980, p94). It is unclear whether ignoring such a point reflects a naivety on the part of the educational authors of the ‘toolkit’ or unwillingness to acknowledge the resources of all individuals within the scenario.

Commitment to the ethos of listening to the young people is also made by the security provider, G4S, which was responsible for the centre as a whole, as well as being the education provider. The Practice Guidance Manual is the equivalent document to the ‘toolkit’ explored earlier. In this manual the security provider establishes for both new and existing colleagues how they should conduct themselves on a day-to-day basis. The chapter headings include Child Protection Policy, Anti-bullying Policy and how to deal with complaints. It is intended as a means of offering “added advice and direction” (p2) alongside the ongoing policies, training and advice that the secure care provider offers. It is obligatory reading for secure officers and parallels the ‘toolkit’ as an authority on best practice.

The introduction to the manual typifies its authoritative stance. It leans towards a formal tone throughout, and can be illustrated by an analysis of the text’s grammatical choices. In the opening chapter which relates to Child Protection, nine areas of advice are offered. Out of these nine areas of guidance, four use the verb “is” to emphasise the action which must occur, e.g. “it is the duty of all staff to know how to recognize and respond to potential indicators of abuse” (p4). The term “must” is used on three occasions and a particular action “will” have to occur in one of the pieces of guidance. The term “may” and “could” are each used once only.

Such directness is repeated later in the manual. In the “Dress code” section there are twenty-seven separate pieces of guidance, sixteen of which use the direct instruction of “will not” or “is not”, as in “Cut-offs of any type are not permitted” (p24). On a further four occasions the use of “must” occurs, whilst on two occasions “should not” is used. On only one occasion is “may” employed. This text also employs a footnote in chapters two and three, where it is made clear that if the staff member is “in any doubt, ask a Supervisor”. The requirement for adult constancy in performance is direct.

Notwithstanding the rigour and pre-eminence of adult direction emphasised in the *Practice Guidance Manual* the importance of listening to young people to pre-empt otherwise confrontational situations is also emphasised. This includes organising counselling

programmes, a discussion about what can be told to a young person in times of criminal disclosure, and how to assist with a formal complaint by the young person. As part of the training manual, a supplement, a survey of *Children's Views on Restraint* (Morgan, 2012). is also issued to officers. The guide clearly offers theoretical commitment to listening to the views of young people – through the formal complaint structure, at a monthly trainee council or by bespoke provision tailored by officers to the needs of the young person. However, underlying this commitment is an explicit concern about the difficulties of preserving good order and not becoming overly familiar with young people.

This manual is generally a much simpler text to read than the education 'toolkit' partly because the vocabulary selection is more restricted without the reliance on technical terminology that was evident in the 'toolkit'. In the text as a whole, there are only three acronyms. A second reason is that the structure of each page relies almost exclusively on short, bullet pointed sentences, reflecting its nature as an instructional text. A third reason lies in its presentational formatting. The thirty-nine page text, presented on A4 in a treasury tagged binding style, is presented in a large font size. Some early chapters are only one page long. However, from chapter five onwards a different style of font is included, suggesting a variety of authors contributing to the text without any harmonization into a 'house-style'. In presentational terms, the font size becomes significantly smaller with more text on each page. There are, for example, 182 words on the first page of chapter one whereas on the first page of chapter five, where the shift occurs, there are 375 words in total.

Therefore, despite what appears at first glance to be the more accessible format of this training manual, it could be seen as more challenging for a reader, relying as it does on more dense text. Subtly different messages are suggested as one progresses from the early chapters to the second author in the later chapters. This is best exemplified when looking at how the young people within the centre are referred to. In the earlier sections the young people are either "Young people" (used 7 times) or "children" (used 8 times). At no point is "trainee" used. By contrast, in chapter nine (the extensive, six page chapter entitled "Good order and discipline") the most frequent term is that of "trainees" (used 18 times). There are thirteen examples of the term "young person", twelve of which are used when there is discussion of how to manage sexual contact as part of "Positive control". There are no examples of the use of the term 'children'. The clear shift in the terminology used when referring to the young

people in the centre could be perceived as inconsistent and confusing, or perhaps simply as an example of poor editorial drafting.

Such confusion could impact on the guidance and practice of reacting to the young people themselves. The key reference that appears in the introduction refers to how difficult working with “troublesome” young people can be, requiring “significant skill, patience and understanding” (p2). However, in the later chapters the extent of the issues for the young people is expressed more explicitly, describing “disturbed and damaged young people” (p39). Although in both examples the term “young people” is used, the use of different adjectives offers a clear indication as to how they should be treated. The directness of language and lack of euphemism when describing the actions or behaviour of the trainee population is notable. An example of this is the statement that “some young people may become sexually excited during an incident of physical contact, which may in the future cause an erection” (p39). In fact, this later section of the guidance manual offers explicit comment that “not all victims of abuse are unwilling victims” (p39); that “trainees are here due to a lack of self-control” (p33) and that “young people may actively seek physical contact” (p39). This commentary is peculiarly direct. It actively identifies the violence and hints at the confusion young people struggle with as part of the conflict between exhibiting an aggressive, overly hetero-sexual projection of masculinity and their more private identities (Karp 2010). For a training manual to suggest that not all victims are unwilling is direct and shocking. Although the manual offers very direct guidelines on how to deal with particular situations, there is an apparent inconsistency in how an officer should perceive the young person, along a continuum of victim and perpetrator. This confusion of the young person in their conflicted identities is mirrored by the inconsistency in the advice to adults about how to react to them.

There is a similar lack of cohesion between theoretical commitment and practical application acknowledged in both the education handbook referring to how “it can be difficult to engage young people who are often resistant to learning” (p11) and the centre’s own training manual suggesting that “managing young people in a secure setting requires significant skill, patience and understanding” (p2). In both of these cases these statements are prefatory comments early in the texts. They could be read as sensible comments on how challenging working in the sector can be, offering consolation should one’s experiences not run smoothly. However, they may also serve to deter colleagues from a positive belief in what could be achieved by implementing appropriate strategies. ‘Try, but be prepared to fail,’ seems to be implied. It is

in this confusion that the theoretical tension identified earlier, between building trust and rapport (Russell, 2005) becomes tangible. There is the need to be sympathetic and accommodate the vulnerabilities of damaged young people, whilst building trust, without letting the rapport develop too far to impact on the ability to impose a degree of control when required.

In terms of the values expressed, the *Practice Guidance* manual contrasts with the ‘toolkit’ where the young people are portrayed as less culpable and more willing to be engaged in positive practice. There may be different reasons for this tension. It may be due to the nature of the interpersonal interaction – the fact that the security provider has to physically intervene with young people in a way that teachers do not. This may in turn be reflected in a more ‘realistic’ view of behavioural patterns. Alternatively, it may be to do with the education provider’s trying to endorse a positive message across all of its establishments: a direct and positive approach, arguing strongly that young people can, in practice be successfully engaged. There may also be differing expectations of the different professionals within the secure estate, between educators and custodians. Further research into the expectations of different adult interactants would be a valuable and interesting exercise.

Alongside the commitments in this documentation, Beech Meadow ran a timetabled trainee council. This suggests a commitment to communicating effectively with young people. This is partly in order to maintain a calm environment where respectful relationships are reciprocated, but also in order to improve educational practice and support inclusion. This formal structure effectively creates a ritual within the centre that could be usefully compared to the education provider’s provision of the Personalized Learning Approach. In both cases, views were being sought on a more formal basis to improve provision. Such a ritual should be positively acknowledged, but addresses only the narrower aspects of student voice. In this forum it is difficult to see the development of Batchelor’s ontological voice helping to construct the ‘whole person’ (Batchelor, 2006) or the shifting of power in any significant fashion (Fielding, 1999; Fielding and Rudduck, 2002).

These institutional documents were highly relevant to my own positioning as a researcher. It was apparent that I would be operating in an environment which, in theory at least, supported and promoted effective student voice practices. The material offered a means by which to explore the values, structures and practices of the institution. However, some conflicting

messages within the policy/guidance itself, allied to the results of the questionnaire survey, indicated that the actual day-to-day instances of these practices may not be reflective of the policy commitment.

The institutional documentation is designed to establish consultative practices at both educational and custodial levels, however challenging that might be. For the education provider, the challenge is set most clearly for teachers. The suggestion is made in stark terms that young people can be engaged, and that the teacher's role is to lead such engagement. There is very little recognition of the challenges involved; it is the adult's responsibility to engender respect. The recognition that the young people want respect from adults is important. Effectively, this is a tacit recognition that young people can 'kick back' against a system in a negative fashion i.e. they can choose to show a lack of respect and not engage fully with disengaged adults. By contrast, there is explicit recognition of the power of the young people when they are seen as working positively, either as agents constructing their own education (Hargreaves et al., 1975), their own sense of belonging (Whitty, 2005) or self-meaning (Batchelor, 2006).

The sense from this teaching manual is that through high-quality practice, supporting young people who may be troubled or anxious, can result in positive outcomes but to be successful, teaching should be done in a particular way. In the didactic guidelines that the teaching guide offers, a parallel can be drawn with the rules by which secure accommodation is run, as discussed in the seminal text of *Pentonville* (Morris and Morris, 1963). There is tacit acknowledgement, through the frequent references to the concept of 'respect', that trust can be built. However, there is not the explicit recognition that this process can be very challenging in exposing an individual's vulnerabilities.

Within the documentation provided to the secure care officers the didactic guidelines about behaviour within a custodial environment reflect the rule-bound and controlling nature of prison existence. But the importance of listening to young people is recognized, particularly in tense or violent scenarios for the defusing of conflict. By the connection of listening to the building of relationships and consequently defusing conflict, the parallel can be drawn with Foucault's presentation of power and truth. As truths are constantly re-negotiated, the aim of discussing the crisis is for the angry young person to see other perceptions, i.e. the other

truths that may exist. Through discussion and sharing of perceived truths, the angry individual may be less willing to express destructive potential.

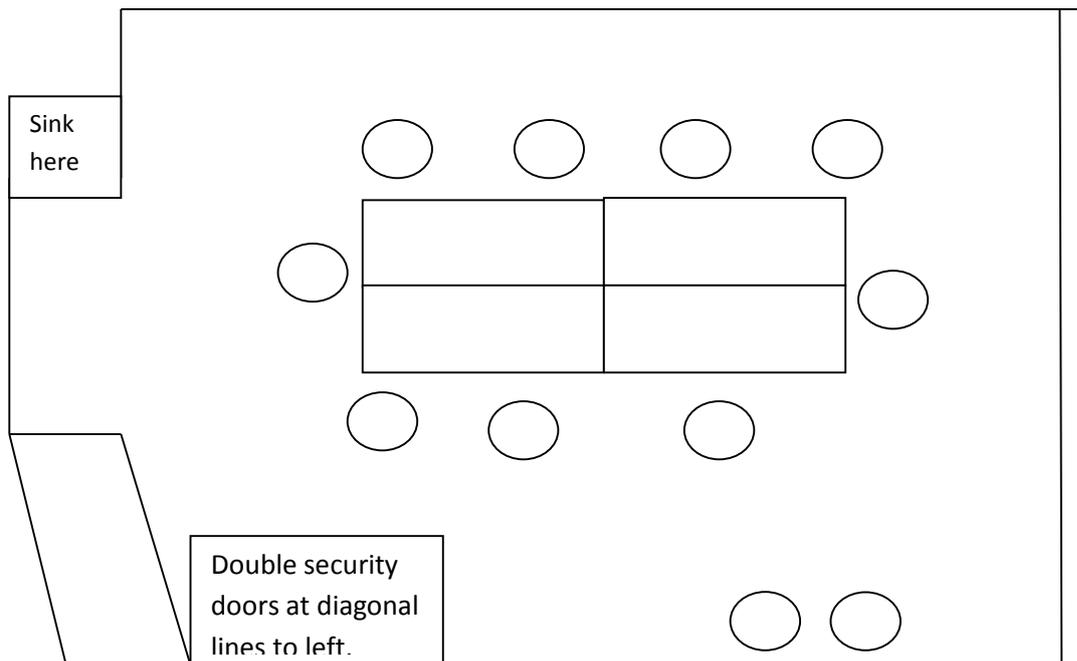
The documentation for secure care officers offers explicit recognition of the power dynamics that might exist, especially in relation to sexualized behaviour, alongside the comment that managing trainees can be profoundly challenging. This sense of the importance of individual relationships to deal with difficult scenarios where the adult may not be in control is far more reflective of Foucauldian thought. In essence, it explicitly acknowledges the existence of capillaries of power. However, between the two key training manuals, there is a distinct difference. Whilst the secure care guidance is still direct, and endorses the concept of listening to the views of young people to build rapport and trust, the tension between the education 'toolkit' and the custodial manual is identifiable. Potentially, this could lead to the teachers and the officers having a differing perception of how to interact with the young people.

4.3 Creating an environment conducive to expressing ideas:

Having given consideration to formal best practice recommendations through institutional documentation it was appropriate to set this against actual behaviour as evidenced through a series of multi-modal activities undertaken in an atmosphere that was calm, ordered yet simultaneously conducive to free expression. The initial meetings with the group were likely to set the tone for our interactions and in order to break away from a traditional teaching environment, I rearranged the tables into a central block so that we could all sit around the same table. The diagram of the room, as noted on my log, is overleaf.

The trainees and I sat around the table. The secure officers sat either close to the trainees, at the table, or at the side of the room a little distance apart. The number of officers could vary between one and three, depending on competing demands from across the centre. On most occasions one officer was present, with this changing when trainees needed moving across the centre.

Figure one: sketch of room layout on a typical session:



Other measures were also adopted to soften the atmosphere. For example, as an employee, I was obliged to carry a radio on my person. However, mindful of the comments of the participant in The Howard League for Penal Reform’s study (2010), referred to earlier, I turned my CB radio down to the lowest possible setting and hid it away under my t-shirt next to the keys. When each trainee arrived, I stood up to shake their hand and welcome them, introducing myself as “Tim” rather than as “Mr Cook” or “Sir”. My notes for the reactions of trainees read as follows:

Field notes connected to arrival of trainees (made after second session)

Arrival of trainees: a time consuming episode as trainees arrive separately or in twos from various places. Also, quite noisy as we also have the arrival of accompanying adults who then discuss which staff member should be allocated elsewhere.

Trainees seemed quite surprised to shake a hand – but very comfortable with the idea of using first names. In fairness, a lot of other teachers tend to use first names.

Almost all asked “Are you an officer?” – perhaps thrown by the award scheme t-shirt (not the normal SCO clothing) and the apparent absence of a radio. When other

officers say I'm "external" or "From the outside" – this seemed to engage them a little bit more (symptomatic of a frustration with adults from the centre?).

There was the issue of how to keep the young people occupied whilst we waited for others to arrive – an attempt to engage in conversation rather than actually getting on with tasks. First night – found cakes in box and immediately interested in what they have to do to get them...this certainly seemed to lend me some credibility. Second occasion, I'd laid them out and again they were asking. Muttered comment that I couldn't attribute to anyone specifically– "First fucker who's done that for us" – kind of a compliment!

My preliminary reconstructive analysis of these notes was that the combination of the factors described ensured that, at least in the short term, the young people were more prepared to engage. Although this by no means meant that I had become immediately accepted, the generalized expectancy (Hoy and Kuipersmith, 1985) was still in place. We had taken the first small step along the road of building mutual trust.

My analysis of this time was supported by a later comment in an interview with John, one of the trainees, who recalled the first time he saw me. He suggested that "I couldn't get it – ya ya know, the way the room was a bit changed and you were nice. I wasn't sure if you were taking the piss or not".

A similar comment was offered to me by one of the officers on the first evening, noted in a field-note, who employed similar scepticism in suggesting "I didn't know what the fuck what was going to happen in these sessions and didn't even want to frigging well come along!". However, that same officer went on to suggest that the altered physicality of the room stimulated an interest that meant "I was quite up for it by the end of the session". Such actions gave me a period of grace so that I could contemplate beginning other challenging activities.

4.4 Data from multi-modal sources: how do trainees report their experiences with multi-modal activities?

Having reduced some of the physical symbols of power, it was appropriate to develop the process of building trust. I hoped to do this, partly through the use of a multi-modal approach. This, as described previously, involves using more visual or participatory methods in order to engage people who may be deterred by more traditional methods of generating texts as part of a research process (Cremin et al., 2011; Holland et al., 1998; Renold et al., 2008).

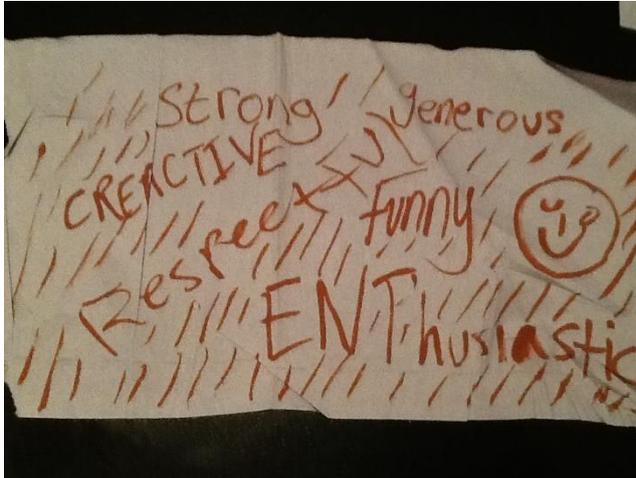
4.4.1 Tissue paper activities

The earliest of these was the tissue paper activity where participants were invited to write a positive adjective about themselves on each sheet of tissue paper that they had taken. The chosen descriptors seemed to indicate a consensus on what kind of people they wanted to be, the most frequent three adjectives being strong, funny and respectful. Other adjectives included positive qualities around high work levels, loyalty and being caring. One trainee (Harry) chose to illustrate his sheet with images of physical fitness. This collection of words and images links directly to projections of identity, discussed earlier.

The use of the adjective 'strong' alongside images of physical fitness projects an assertive, physically strong masculinity. More intriguingly, the adjectives connected to loyalty and being caring may jar with an external aggressive hyper-masculinity. It is worth reflecting on two points. Firstly, there is the methodological point that some trainees had already aggressively ripped up the paper by this point, therefore skewing the already small sample size. Secondly, cognizant of the fear in prisons that Maitland and Sluder (1996), Toch (1998) and O'Donnell and Edgar (1999) identify, the value placed on protective friendship by trainees is significant. It is acknowledged that "not all inmates are able to conform to the superordinate version of masculinity" (Jewkes, 2005, p55) and it could be posited that those who did not rip up may be in that particular bracket of prisoner. Therefore, for those who did not respond aggressively by ripping up the paper, the selection of words alludes to something powerful. Maitland and Sluder (1996) identified that amongst the five key indicators of general wellbeing for inmates, the importance of a secure network of friends was identified as the third most important. Chosen vocabulary such as "respect" and "generous" reflect pro-

social tendencies that may support the development of a mutually supportive network of friends.

Figure two: example of tissue paper exercise



These words and images both reflect a starting point for analysis. Whilst offering relatively little by themselves, showing at most a consistent set of expressive values, more importantly they provided a context that could be explored latterly with the trainees. In a very limited form, this exercise represented “a space of enunciation for young people” (Hattam and Smyth, 2003, p394), even what might be seen as working towards a re-coding of existence that Foucault (1977) argues is a key feature within carceral regimes.

4.4.2 Activities with collage

A second way in which reporting experience was made appropriate for the trainees was through the use of collage, an activity which was completed much later in the course. The analysis of the collages endorsed the view that the trainees were potentially content to share self-perceptions. In two of the individual collages the young people chose to fix a Polaroid photograph of themselves in the centre of an A3 sheet. Then, cut-out images from magazines were stuck in a circle around the central image, further supplemented by writing their choice of words. An example from James is given below:

Figure three: James' collage



As Croghan et al. (2008) argue, ‘combining verbal and visual forms of self-presentation allows individuals more scope for presenting complex, ambiguous and contradictory versions of the self’ (p355). This ambiguity at times is apparent in the various collages.

In considering the collages that were produced it is important to highlight one methodological/procedural issue. The collages were created from materials I had supplied and the various photographs, wording and positioning are described by me as researcher. Through my provision of materials and even through my very presence at the activity, I had some influence on the creation of the collages. This influence was minimized by allowing the trainees the final selection of images.

Several of the images relate to a self-presentation as a typically masculine, strong individual. Such masculine identity may be associated with the prison environment where, as Toch (1998) argues, for prisoners, the use of force is inevitable. For prisoners, especially young prisoners who are “most prone to violent encounters (and) ...disproportionately resistant to authority” (p172), there is a need to present oneself as ‘hyper-masculine’. Many researchers (e.g. Jewkes, 2005; Karp, 2010; Cesaroni and Aliv, 2010) describe the characteristics of hyper-masculinity, arguing that this includes positioning of oneself as a stoical, rugged individual, heterosexual, and physically powerful.

For Jewkes, this is a learnt response to “the imperatives of the criminal inmate culture” (2005, p45). This is especially the case in younger offender institutions where bullying of vulnerable young people is “notorious” and where for “most inmates, peer group respect,

inmate status, and access to scarce resources all rest on a reputation for aggressiveness and physical strength” (2005, p46). It is in this light that this collage has several aspects that are interesting in terms of James’ projection of identity.

The collection of images places the individual at the centre. Although the central image is blurred to protect identity, it is evident that the young man in question has taken an assertive stance, looking directly at the camera. The hard jaw line with no smile suggests intimidation. This sense of physicality is augmented by the arms’ positioning. Placed at the side in pockets, with the shoulders ‘square on’, the stance suggests a level of confrontation, and could be interpreted as “how youthful offenders resist their own incarceration” (Cesaroni and Aliv, 2010, p305).

The surrounding images are sports related, with stereotypical images of male success through sport. The German athlete, for example, suggests all the traits of a physically strong, successful adult male – even the sunglasses have a certain style about them. Complementing the images of triathletes celebrating and cyclists riding quickly and with aggression is a picture of a water bottle with the phrase “Energy” written alongside. James is associating himself with these powerful images, eschewing images to do with television, technology or current news that were also offered to him. Notably, James chose not to include any of his peers in the photograph; perhaps reflecting the desire to present himself as an individual, someone who could ‘look after himself’ rather than someone at the centre of a social network. The danger of forming friendship bonds, easily broken in an institution where people can move on quickly and unexpectedly may underpin such apparent self-reliance.

The selection of images builds on Steinberg’s argument that young offenders feel that they have to behave with toughness and bravado in sex-appropriate ways (Steinberg, 1999). In this, Steinberg is supported by Sim (1994) who argues that young offender institutions are places of a dominant and uncontrolled culture of masculinity. Whilst James’s choice of images does not reflect any sense of being uncontrolled, the choices could be taken as the projection of a self-image of forceful masculinity.

The vocabulary bore significant similarity to that which appeared in the tissue paper exercise. In this vocabulary, there is a desire to do well, and even a recognition that hard work can lead to success. The actual writing, in a graffiti style, suggests an energy in itself – albeit with an

urban challenge to authority and established law and order but James' selection of an overwhelmingly positive vocabulary was encouraging.

Ironically, in my dealings with James I found him to possess many other, lighter qualities such as humour and concern for others – but in this instance it seems that he wished to project what Karp describes as “a hyper-masculine public façade that may conflict with a more nuanced private self-identity” (2010, p66). James's desire to project a hyper-masculine identity may reflect the challenges involved in engendering trust and openness alongside a tacit recognition that at some point the young people would have to go back to their living areas and would not want to be ridiculed for comments made.

The other collage where the trainee chose to include a photograph of himself is below:



Figure four: Mo's collage

This collection of images again places the trainee at the heart of the poster. There are clear aspects of similarity, such as that both boys are wearing sporty style t-shirts. Mo looks directly at the camera, suggesting a strong degree of confidence, reinforced by the placement of the image at the very centre of the collage. The picture is unsmiling, with a piercing stare. The placement of the hands, on hips, shows off his strong arms, projecting an unashamed, unabashed strength of character and physicality. Collectively, this begs the question of whether he considers himself central to the activity programme and the people participating in its structures, and furthermore suggests that he has agency over a lot of the aspects that are around him. He too, in Cesaroni and Aliv's terms (2010), is resisting his incarceration: he is certainly no willing victim at this point. Knowing Mo, this was very much the case in day to

day life. The fact that he is seated perhaps adds an assuredness, a further confidence in this position that reflects a masculinity that is more hegemonic than hyper.

The surrounding images again relate to sporting success of various descriptions. Again there is both reference to the outdoor lifestyle with two pictures of dramatic scenes and to the projection of physical strength (e.g. Steinberg 1999, Sim 1995). However, in this collage the writing does not seem 'graffiti-like'. Given that graffiti tends to be oppositional, the absence of graffiti endorses the previously discussed sense of control from Mo. Perhaps it is that as the quasi group leader, he does not need to be so flagrant in trying to breach standard codes of etiquette to gain attention. It is through his own physical strength and emotional maturity that he is secure within the group, with the image of the successful winner as an underpinning motif.

Where these images depart from the previously cited definitions of masculinity is in the depiction of food. There is another example of a water bottle and the nutrition theme is developed with a healthy meal identified, building on the images from the previous collage. In the definitions of hyper-masculinity and hegemonic masculinity, physical power is evident. However, the healthy eating that leads to physical strength is not part of the standard definition. This now makes for an interesting point that may represent where the perception of identity intersects with the more tangible material deprivations that trainees endure. It is clear from The Howard League for Penal Reform's 2010 study into the lived experiences of incarcerated adolescents that the inferior quality and quantity of food is a profound issue. Whilst one's perception of identity is primarily a mental construct, pangs of hunger are physical – and in the two photograph collages, food is a common feature. When the young people were being offered the chance to reflect on an ideal state, the everyday physicality of incarceration intersects the projection of identity in an interesting way.

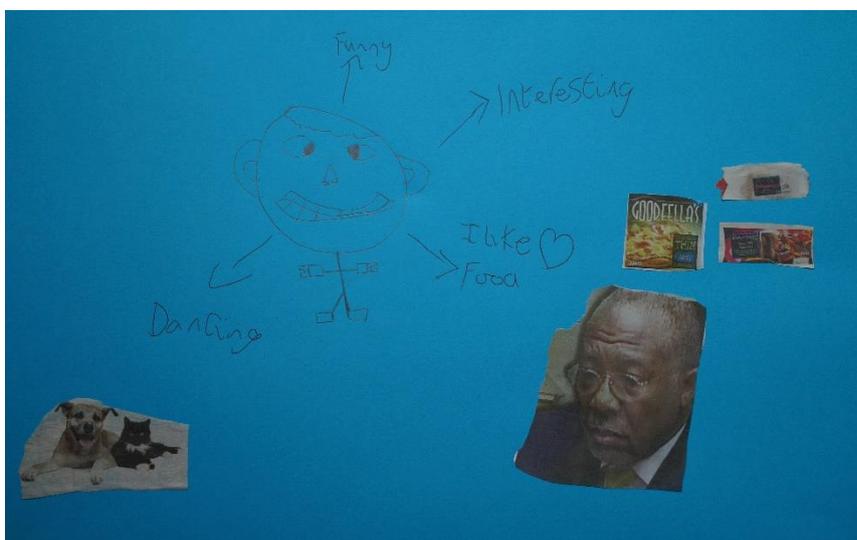
It is of note that having been given a range of magazines from which to choose (including sporting, television and computing selections), both trainees selected images that denoted power or success. The choices connected to computers, such as pictures of gamers, were entirely rejected. The majority of the images included winners of races; sports images that reflected endeavour, or food stuffs that might lead to success e.g. water bottles and healthy food. The social practice that emerged from both the collage and the tissue paper exercises is that trainees wanted to project positive images of themselves to others. The consistency of

this “situated meaning”, what Gee (1997, p80) refers to as “an image or pattern that we assemble ‘on the spot’, based on context and experience, was significant in determining how to continue engaging the young people. Where the young people were prepared to let themselves be photographed, and to literally stick that identity in the centre of a sheet, they were very clear in their aspirations. We have two aspects about which we are less clear. Firstly, the feelings of those who did not choose to place a photograph and stick it down. Secondly, the impact of my presence/selection of topic and magazines in their choices. Despite the offering of other magazines, with hindsight, the choices made may have reflected a wish to please me as part of a wider trusting relationship.

Four further collages of varying descriptions were created. None of these trainees chose to place their photographs in the centre of the image, preferring instead to draw likenesses of themselves. One of these images is below. In this image, although the central character remains in the centre of the paper, the drawing is in the style of a ‘stick-man’. The smile is noticeably menacing with a bizarre grimace, and the eyes are in the cross-eyed position. The relative size of the head draws attention to the face and away from the undefined body, accentuating the aggression and zaniness of the character. The tone is significantly different to that of the other collages seen so far – the aggression is undeniable.

Five images are stuck around the outside, in a more haphazard way than the other collages. Three of the images relate to food underscoring once more a key concern of trainees. This fact is emphasized by the comment “I like food”.

Figure five: Paul’s collage



One image is of a more elderly gentleman, dressed smartly in a suit, if looking a little tired. The images of the cat and dog sitting next to each other make up the image. The vocabulary attached to the image is positive with “Funny” and “interesting” being used. The more nebulous word “Darling” is written, near to the image of the happy cat and dog.

This collage potentially suggests the troubled and contradictory nature of some of the trainees in the centre. The institutional documentation already discussed, describes many of the young people as “troubled”, and the drawing of the individual with its aggression and narcotic insinuation certainly suggests this. However, this is juxtaposed against the selected cut-outs and vocabulary selection where it is possible to see the very needs-driven desires of Paul (food), alongside a deeper yearning for some type of happiness as reflected in an idealized stereotype of the family pets. In this example, it is clear that there is both a willingness to express ideas and a resistance to the task. I would argue that even when resistance is displayed, the opportunity to express emotions is cathartic in itself. It is these activities that provide what Beal (2014) describes as listening to young offenders to provide insight into their identity, giving them the opportunity to construct an alternative identity (p74).

In the remaining images (Appendices I and J), two of the pictures drawn could be seen to have some menace about them, such as a snarling expression. In the final image where a more traditional drawing had been created, the image bore little resemblance to the individual involved. I was not clear as to whether this was a projection of an idealized self, a sibling, or simply resistance to the task.

In all of these drawn images the attention to detail in the image is scant, but the vocabulary selection is more developed. In one image (Appendix I) the words are “happy”, “funny”, “I like food”, “swag” and “I like Sex”. In the other image with words (Appendix J) the selections are “Crazy”, “Happy”, “Basketball”, “Rap music”, “I like food”, “football”, “scootering”, “family” and “funny”. The first and most obvious trend, the emphasis on food, has already been highlighted in previous commentary. Such overt concern provides a real, practical opportunity for student voice to be heard and responded to. Gunter and Thompson (2007), argue for the importance of listening to young people’s practical requests, as a key ingredient of student voice practices.

The remaining collages continue the central themes already discussed; the hyper-masculine identity; the assertively heterosexual stance and elements of resistance. The vocabulary shared is a genuine reflection of the trainees' desires, aspects of their sense of self and their aspirations. As Greve et al. argue, if completing tasks such as this in order to raise esteem can be achieved it would be an "exceptionally important step towards more appropriate developmental correction in delinquent juveniles" (2001, p764). Where trainees were more reluctant to place their own photographed image, many factors may of course be at play. It is possible that in their slightly more menacing drawings and accompanying, more challenging vocabulary selections, they were wishing to project the more masculine identity (Karp, 2010; Cesaroni and Alvi, 2010) that might gain them more status within the secure environment.

One further possible reading to explain the use of drawn images rather than photographs is connected to the projection of identity. Where photographs were used, the trainees involved were more prepared to make themselves vulnerable. Their levels of trust for the project and for the others in the room were more developed, or their sense of self was more confident. Consequently, they were prepared to place themselves, metaphorically and literally, at the heart of the image, sharing their ambitions in so doing. For these trainees, the quest for self-meaning that Batchelor referred to is explicit, suggesting that being able to develop the concept of voice is workable in the secure context. Equally possible is simply that trainees were dis-engaging with the project and simply did not wish to share ideas. The reasons for this might be varied, and this fact reflects a limitation of this research.

4.4.3 T-shirt design activities

A third tool for continuing to engage the young people was through the design of t-shirts. I had provided t-shirts and fabric pens in order for trainees to design their own garments. I believe that this was interpreted as a very real sign of my listening to their concerns, endorsed by an interview comment from Mo that "It was cool being allowed to do something without someone breathing down ya' neck". The only criteria that they had to work with was that the scheme logo should be included somewhere on the garment alongside a set of initials or name, a reference to their residential unit plus any words that as individuals they wanted to include.. All of the trainees revelled in the activity, clearly enjoying themselves with laughter and bantering. An example of one such t-shirt is included below:

Figure six: exemplar t-shirt



This t-shirt, has been personalised using brightly coloured fabric pens. The potential for solidarity amongst trainees may be reflected in the fact that this t-shirt was designed by one trainee to be given away to another as a prize for a sponsored bike ride. Again, the positive image of the bike, representing a sporty lifestyle, appears. This is reminiscent of some of the images that appeared in the created collages.

Through this activity, the trainees progressed from identifying their own values expressed in the individual collage exercise to a willingness to externalise and share those values. Without exception, the trainees involved discussed what should go on the shirts and agreed that they would all do the same. Intervention from adults at this point was unwanted and unnecessary. The fact that the trainees reached a consensus was encouraging. Not only did they engage in a dialogue themselves, but they actually reached some appropriate parameters that they could all agree on, such as no references to home life or families. My own agency in setting an agenda was diminishing.

Significantly, the aspects that were put on the shirts, at least in part, reflected the values that were identified in earlier exercises. There was also the identification of their residential unit signifying a sense of sub-group loyalty. This desire to be part of the unit is significant, especially in the light of Earle's point that "asserting local identities operated as a way of anchoring belonging to somewhere external to the prison, helping...to resist" (2010, p147). My findings are a development of Earle's view. Where Earle found that offenders identified themselves with others from postcode areas prior to incarceration, my study found that identification could come from affiliation with a local identity actually within the institution

itself. The identification with a unit, and the social network within that physical unit, has a role by way of offering peer support – something that had previously been seen in the collages.

Due to the fact that an agreed list had been generated by the young people, the variation in what was on the shirts was more limited. However, further insight can be derived from the incidental designs that each individual had spontaneously added on. A collection of these images can be found in appendix K. In these images it is clear that with the exception of one image which mentions “swag” again, they are pro-social. One of the images is even a floral decoration whilst the word “Hi” appears twice. Where graffiti appears it is only to draw small and happy faces. In this particular set of images, an engaging and lively mood is offered, free from negativity. In one of the t-shirt designs, a gold star accompanies a positive slogan. It is, in my view, reasonable to interpret the t-shirt artwork as an external expression of group and individual identities.

Potentially, the limited space on the shirts might have limited the expression, or possibly my presence presented a barrier to entirely free design. However, I incline to the view that my purchase of the t-shirts helped the ongoing building of trust, reciprocated by the trainees’ recognition of appropriate behaviour. It provided a space for the expression of an aspect of identity, on a limited level for the individual and on a wider level for the team. As with other exercises, this activity demonstrated that the concept of voice is workable within the confines of a secure training unit. It is the choice and variety of medium that is crucial.

4.4.4 Activities with post-it notes

The remaining multi-modal data source to consider was the collection of post-it notes. This activity produced outcomes that were at odds with some of the results from other activities which may have been for reasons that are discussed below. Questions that elicited responses were “How are you doing today?”; “What have you learnt so far?”; “What treat would you prefer for next week?” and “What has been good today?” The overwhelming tone was pessimism, most obviously, the negativity of the responses. The hostility embodied in the responses to this question is significant, reflecting alienation and pessimism about existence within the institution.

Collectively, these comments were more negative than I had anticipated. I became concerned that this might become a self-perpetuating cycle and stopped using this post-it note activity. At this juncture, by shutting down the opportunity for the trainees to express their voices I recognized that working with voice was not always achievable in the secure environment. My own fears regarding a loss of power, exacerbated by my own consciousness that the secure officers present might have to intervene, led me to move away from this activity. I found my 'shutting down' of the activity to be personally challenging. The desire to allow expression to flourish conflicted with the need to censor unwanted behaviour.

It is difficult to assess why the post-it notes tended to be more negative. My own assessment echoed that of Nilan (2002) who, when researching in a risky scenario was plagued by "the constant sense that one ought to be more 'in control' of the situation than was really possible" (p363). Possibly, this negativity was a function of the fact that I was insufficiently in control or potentially it was that this was an exercise carried on in the early stages when trust and co-operation had not been built. A comment from the field notes of September 23rd corroborates these views:

Field Notes (23rd September):

Any other significant points?

This evening COULD have gone wrong but didn't – lots to watch over with different activities going on and Steven pushing to leave early (which reduced officer numbers, obviously, by one – as well). Am I sufficiently removed here? BUT trainees wanted me in the middle – almost to offer reassurance – lots of checking with me "Is this alright, Sir?".

Also – why do they insist still on using "Sir"? It's not my name...because we're in the education wing/associated with school/adult presence?

There is an irony in the fact that I, as a fervent advocate for allowing voice to flourish felt compelled to close down an avenue of communication when its product was negative and hostile. I had to accept that facilitating voice is on occasion about not being in control and risking not hearing positive things.

From my early multi-modal engagements with the young people in the centre and with the adults who cared for them it became clear that there was a tentative and sometimes reticent willingness to share ideas about the centre and the values that could be important within custodial life. Such reticence, as Brady (2007) suggests, may not be altogether surprising;

(when) children came from school and home environments which generally did not encourage them to take a lead, it was not always easy for them...to accept or understand a participatory model (p37)

Brady here blames broader social interactions for the reluctance to participate in a more interactive educative model. I recognize the concern with longer term barriers as I consider that the most significant reason for the tentative anxiety was the still limited amount of social capital with which I was endowed. Despite my apparently successful early attempts to build trust, the enterprise was still bound by perceptions of me as an adult within a system that exercised control and authority over the trainees. The trainees' resistance represented a rebalancing of control through micro-level capillaries of power. And resistance was to be expected – as Beal (2014) points out, previous offending identities are difficult to withdraw from. Amongst trainees there was an historic lack of trust and an undoubted unfamiliarity with being consulted and engaged through a participatory model of interaction and dialogue. These were barriers that still needed to be overcome.

4.5 Data generated from keyboard interactions

My analysis of power dynamics within the secure environment is based in part on the data from keyboard interactions where we generated a shared conversation. At all keyboard sessions at least one officer was present. Whilst acknowledging that as facilitator I set the agenda and used prompting questions, the use of keyboards was intended to share power as significantly as possible. It involved a greater degree of power sharing than the multi-modal interactions. This is because participants had significantly more control over the topic and length of their textual contributions. I ensured that the “interactional conventions” (Fairclough, 2001, p11) were more typical of spoken conversations rather than an interview governed by a questioner. However, this is juxtaposed against the need to maintain a direction for the dialogues: unfettered expression could have crossed the limits of appropriate order. The tension between expression and control is an ongoing one in the secure estate.

The initial keyboard interaction included six trainees. This was the first opportunity the young people had had to actually do some typing, so it was anticipated that some exploration would occur, with guidance needed from me. This session was particularly important to the credibility of the project, as if the officers present had taken a dim view of the proceedings, they might have easily asked me to not continue, or more feasibly reported any failings to more senior colleagues. Certainly, the initial hammering of keyboards occurred:

Extract from transcript one:

Mo	gghjjhjhjh
Paul	jhfghdg bhgvg
Luke	hgbyguytjygybb jolly good
Matthew	hi
<i>Lots of tapping/knocking the keyboards at this point –Mo trying to pick at the keys.</i>	
James	frfrtrgttytty wot the fuck
Tim	Guys, type in what you like at this point...
Mo	hddjhtjfh 66666666
Tim	It would be better to use words!

The anticipated challenges of working with the keyboards can be seen in these lines in that with some physical knocking, even vandalism of the keyboards, and swearing, there was clearly some resistance. At this point it is not utter resistance, given the welcoming “hi” of Matthew, but it does encourage one to reflect on this exercise using the framework of Foucault’s ‘capillaries of power’ and to conclude that the resistance to orthodox use of the keyboards was a practical exercise in redirecting and rebalancing power.

Further extract from transcript one:

Tim	How was school today
Paul	Shit
<i>Verbal admonishment from SCO</i>	
Tim	Nothing you guys want to share today
Mo	nah thtethatahetetytttte

Luke gtsgtytr gevrybtrruthuttu

Concern at this point that one keyboard was being hit on the table – finished the discussion

In this case there was evidently a reluctance to engage in the dialogue. This reluctance continued through the extract, to the point where I felt it necessary to shut the activity down. The intervention of the officer was noteworthy. Clearly mindful of the need to control the situation, the admonishment was intended to calm any potential tension. In this early example, the resistance of the young people was greater than their desire to express what I perceived to be more constructive ideas about their day-to-day existences. This was a “knotted struggle” (During, 1992) where the trainees were, at least in part, constructing an oppositional identity.

The second session, offered an opportunity to see if more familiarity with the keyboards might generate a more productive session. Again, six trainees were present. On this occasion I took the opportunity to remind the trainees about appropriate conduct, whether it was via the spoken word or the digital version. At this point I felt the tension of working within a secure environment and the initial exchanges only served to justify fears about the merits of offering young people a voice in this way.

Extract from transcript two:

John 8~ 5 uyytytytt6yttt

Mo if you read this...

John harry is a wolly

Luke fffffffuckffffff

John gets up and wanders to the window- SCO goes to him to encourage him to sit down

Although the pejorative terminology here is not ideal, the concerning factor was the movement to the window. One centre regulation was that trainees were not allowed next to the window, given their propensity to wave to passing friends or bang on that window. If officers did not move to encourage the trainee away from the window, they too were in very public display and might earn censure. The link to the Panopticon is clear here: almost continually both trainees and adult staff are in view through the design of the centre, through

video cameras and through radio access. This brings with it a set of pressures. However, in this case the incarcerated individual does not behave as predicted in the Panopticon model. In fact, the trainee has the chance to earn credibility with his peers by being more obvious. Rather than fearing the constant surveillance, he actually embraces it. The same cannot be said for the adult officer, who knows that he must take action and enforced his demand for sitting down with threats of sanction.

The session also offered pertinent information on the progress of the young people through its reflection of an incarcerated existence. Harry commented that he may have to go back to his accommodation unit in a little while, whilst both James and Harry commented on the absence of their peers from the session for varying reasons. This seemed to have created a fairly despondent and even negative mood:

Further extract from transcript two:

Mo MOHAMMED

Mo IZ

Standing while he types

John its liklyto be a lodywet day on the reen

Mo da one

Mo Tim IS A FART

Verbal admonishment form SCO - immediately

James we are missing Matt tonight l

Tim can you guys comment on my question?

Mo PAUL IZ A

“Mo” as a warning from SCO

Mo #.....

Harry Paul is going home

Mo today has benn a long day 4 me

Mo sometimes I get bored

Mo like now

Mo sorry time

Mo !!!11111

Paul Mohammeddid you enjoy your dinner?

Mo ish

Tim	You guys had enough?
Harry	pissed

It is clear that in this slightly longer extract, the influence of absent peers, a difficult day elsewhere and a lack of engagement can make it difficult to create a situation where expression might flourish.

In the first two sessions there was a degree of random typing of characters, e.g. “gghjjhjhjh”. It is possible that this apparent frustration was due to the lack of an appropriate skills base that would enable the participants to use the keyboards effectively – something explored in the next sub-section. In a later interview, Mo revealed that to begin with the keyboards did “piss him off”, but reflected that he could not recall what it was exactly that annoyed him. This failure to master the dialogue could link to versions of the ‘Frustration-aggression displacement theory’ (Dollard et al., 1939) which posits that aggression can stem from a failure to secure particular goals. It is also possible that the frustration came from a lack of cohesive social relationships with one another. However, the chosen vocabulary seemed insufficiently oppositional to support such an assertion. If a lack of group/social cohesion had in fact been the key reason for the keyboard expressions, it would be at apparent odds with the earlier stage three findings that indicated positive peer relations in the multi-modal activities.

Even at this early stage, it was clear that the incidence of the ‘flash-points’ was most connected to moments when the young people were participating in activities which required more thought in depth, and it became apparent that it was not simply a distaste for completing one particular activity that was the catalyst for irritation. My field notes of 28th August record the nervousness of these times.

Field notes:

What were the key language events in the session?

- ❖ Over-exuberance at start of session – lots of talking through one another...slightly more respectful of adult input. Establishing dominance in group amongst other trainees?
- ❖ Frustration at certain times – use of keyboards; whilst listening to expectations and INSTRUCTIONS especially.
- ❖ Swearing was present by young people (and quite frequent) – but I did not notice a single example of it being directed at anyone other than the trainee actually doing the swearing – quite a change from the days on the Astroturf!!!
- ❖ Significantly better whilst DOING things, however brief...even unfolding a map or watching the brief outdoor pursuits scheme video.
- ❖ Really pleasing moment when a trainee new to me demanded “what do you care?” in response to my inquiry about his health – was actually defended by Mo who suggested “He’s sound” as a defence.

What behavioural cues/non-linguistic features were observable (together with examples and timings if possible)?

Lots of tapping – especially at irritated moments

Lots of ups/downs out of chairs – again at irritated moments. Warnings accompanied trips to the window from officers.

Desire to shake hands on entry into room

Close physicality (warm emotion) of boys to their OWN officers – not others from different units.

Any other significant points?

Relieved to get first session done and underway – meet some of the newer faces and find out which officers were likely to be with the group for at least some of the time. I was

pleased to see the keyboards could be used without being broken/smashed etc – although some concern around the relative lack of text produced. Will see how this goes later on...

The key word “frustration” is established. Tasks which required a sustained period of concentration led to moments that could be described as “tetchy”. My field notes suggested that the young people were unsure of what to do with the keyboards. There were two occasions in the opening keyboard session that trainees had verbally requested support from their officers, checking whether they would be told off for picking up the keyboards. There were occasions of verbal swearing, predominantly without direction at any person but expressing a degree of frustration or uncertainty. This frustration made the development of positive relations a more protracted process, placing the process in potential jeopardy.

Much of the tetchiness could be passed over given the lack of overt aggression, although when it directly broke centre rules (most obviously approaching the windows) there was intervention from officers. It appeared bizarre that the willingness to please that accompanied the arrival of the young people into the room could so soon degenerate into frustration. It was certainly true that I was much more alert to potentially aggressive behaviour and tried to lighten the mood through jokes and praise to avert calamity. The officer too was evidently employing an approach intended to induce calm as he approached John from the side as opposed to ‘face-on’, with more gentle encouragement than direct order.

It was a more plausible explanation that the tetchiness was a way to avoid challenging moments – where the trainee simply did not feel that he could cope in that particular scenario. A development of this explanation might have been that the trainees were frightened of being put into a public space where others would be able to judge them on the basis of their actions/abilities i.e. in social and education capital terms, they were testing whether the technology and the social space was safe for them to contribute. It might also have been the case that the introduction of the keyboards to the trainees and guidance in what was expected from them had been inadequate thereby adding to their frustrations. More effective and individualized scaffolding on my part may have produced a less confrontational activity.

However, it should be noted that the use of the term “FART”, plus an implied insult directed at Paul (i.e., just a row of full stops), hardly represented the worst invectives that could have been levelled. One possible interpretation is that it demonstrates the nature of assertively masculine young people testing both the equipment and the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. In terms of language analysis, such swearing echoes the study of Morris and Morris (1963) in seeing the aggression as a defensive strategy, a code to protect against the adult potentially placing the trainee in a humiliating situation. It should also be noted that the mention of the day’s context generated some sympathy for the apparent plight for the participants. I was pre-disposed to such sympathy given my experience of the relatively unpredictable reactions of trainees when either they or their friends approach release dates. In this strategy I diverged from Mayr (2004) whose identification of control mechanisms by officers at the individual level possibly underplays the longer term benefits of winning respect by accepting the agency of the prisoner with good grace. When honesty was shown in explaining that Paul might be going home and “today has benn a long day 4 me”, I was prepared to tolerate the frustration that was apparent in the dialogues.

Finally, I was very encouraged by the apology that came from the most assertive trainee who had been using the capitals (to denote that he was shouting). His apology was, he explained, connected to a day of frustration. The fact that the apology came from the trainee, without prompt, reflected an acceptance of rules and the acknowledgement of friendships. This in turn could be reflective of the self-policing element of the Panopticon tower where the prisoners maintain their own acceptable standards. One possible interpretation, therefore, is that the dialogues gave an opportunity to vent frustration in a relatively structured fashion. For Little, language is an immediate expressive medium which, “more than any other part of culture...reflects the emotionalism, social and personal values, tensions and conflicts” (Little, B., 1982, p207). Such “tension release” as a feasible explanation is also endorsed by Little’s research (Little, M., 1990, p114) into the identity of young men in prison.

My analysis suggests that at this point, the participants were experimenting with the keyboard, such as checking the feel of the keys and seeing how to project statements. In Carspecken’s stage four terms, the young people were considering how what had been placed before them related to other systems that they were familiar with, for example, previous situations involving technology. At the early stages of the study the young people lacked trust – to an extent in me and especially in the equipment. This lack of familiarity is

somewhat at odds with the findings of Burkett (2008) who suggested that (when referring to young people using handheld computers) “mobile technology is an integral and normal part of their everyday life and students appreciated being in control of the pace at which they worked” (2008, p486).

As the keyboard sessions continued a number of themes developed and were reinforced. Firstly, the quality of the verbal interactions began to improve to the extent that a turn-taking dialogue emerged (Appendix L). There was also evidence that the trainees wished to uphold and self-police their own level of behaviour. Dialogue became purposeful and expressive with the trainees clearly setting out their wish for certain foods and even extending to expressing views on aspects of education (transcript four). Usage and familiarity, coupled with a lower level of distrust evidenced itself in a calmer and more productive use of the keyboards and enabled me to guide conversations towards more challenging topics such as trust (transcript 5) However, progress was not uninterrupted and insults and unruly behaviour continued to occur. Control was not always guaranteed (transcript 10) and there was one occasion when the overall behaviour and atmosphere persuaded me that it was appropriate to bring the session to a premature close (Appendix M). Perhaps such incidents merely reflect the normality of a contemporary teenage conversation. Overall, the transcripts continued to evidence the fact that as usage was ‘normalised’, the young people became more willing to talk in open forum in a ‘natural’ way, as testimony to their growing trust and respect for the exercise and their willingness to use their voice.

4.6 Data generated from interviews

Critical to the question of how boys, situated within the Secure Training Centre, report their experiences is the use of the semi-structured interview. Across these interviews three key topics were introduced, namely the school experience of that day; relationships with officers; and ideas that they would want to see integrated into life at the centre. These themes were confirmed through the use of data-driven coding where, once the notes had been written up after the interview, the coding of the text’s meaning was completed.

In the first of the interviews I began using a structure that remained consistent throughout the interviews. This involved a discussion about how the day had passed, and part of which would inevitably involve some conversation about lessons and the education wing of the centre. In all of the interviews the comments about the education were generally negative.

Comments tended to focus on the perceived inadequacy of the teacher rather than the subject itself. Various profanities were commonplace when describing Maths lessons in particular where the teacher was often accused of being “a lazy wanker” because of the number of worksheets produced. Ethically, I found such criticism more challenging to deal with than the previous profanities. This was partly because the swearing was of a more violent nature, but more because it lacked a context. The frequency of insult, in addition to the time gap between insult and actually having been taught by the teacher in question, suggested a personal vehemence towards the individual. This was an occasion when I felt it awkward to straddle the insider/outsider divide experiencing conflicting emotions. I had feelings of loyalty towards a colleague, a sense of duty that I should maintain order within the institution, my wish to act as a role model in challenging criticism, and a researcher’s desire to obtain useful data from lively interview situations.

The subject areas that tended to avoid such criticism were few, consisting of the canteen, the supported learning base and the gym. When praise was offered, it was usually no more than faint praise – “sound” was as the most positive term in use. It appeared that the best a teacher could hope for was for their subject area (not necessarily the individual teacher) to be referred to as “sound” or “alright”. When the trainees were asked for suggestions for improvements, their responses, though vague, focussed on adding a physical element or fun of some kind into the teaching.

Directly linked to their experiences of education in the day was the trainees’ experience of the canteen which served their lunchtime meal. Criticism of the canteen lunch meals was even more damning than some of that reserved for the weaker teachers. Such criticism strongly suggested that the boys genuinely cared passionately about what they received as food. In particular, the frequent criticism was around items actually in the food, such as hairs or bits of other food. Whilst it was difficult to ascertain the real extent of the culinary issues, the strength of feeling was evident. This sentiment accurately echoes the consistent feeling that was identified through the multi-modal experiences, which in itself testifies as to the reliability of those methods in exploring opinion.

Interestingly, the boys ‘packaged’ the education and the food on offer as one singular experience. They talked about food and education being “School”. They seemed not to differentiate between that which was provided by teachers and that which was provided by

the kitchen staff. Psychologically and emotionally they did not identify with the centre's education programme. Education was situated as 'the other', reflecting the "collective identity of difference and social exclusion" (The Howard League for Penal Reform, 2011, p10). It is clear that this study endorsed Hattam and Smyth's findings that not only do we need to create spaces for young people to express themselves, we need to "de-institutionalize the teacher-student relationship" (2003, p394).

The second key area that the interviews explored was that of relationships, specifically relationships with the security staff. This was a central area in my study because it offered a real opportunity to explore the everyday interactions of all of the players in the centre. Mo, in his five participations in interview, consistently praised his officers. His support was effusive on all occasions, with acknowledgement of how the officers were supporting him in various ways e.g. through providing toiletries, escorting him on site and providing companionship. A similar set of responses could be found for Paul, who in four group interviews, whilst not as effusive, certainly acknowledged that "They're alright you know". These two trainees recognised that officers were trying to support their lives within the centre. This study identifies that, at its most effective, discussions within the centre took on what Karp (2010) describes as "nurture groups" that formed part of the challenging process of reshaping identities.

However, not all of the trainees were so positive. At the other extreme, Harry rarely had anything positive to say, and in his interview responses would only offer very brief replies. His view of officers was imbued with negativity, only ever acknowledging their use in obtaining practical elements, e.g., securing personal possessions such as fresh linen. The other trainees tended to offer a more reflective view of officers that was typically positive. It was very clear that the officer was often seen as a parental figure, being associated with household chores, cleaning one's room and turning television volume down. This role offered at various times, discipline, clear boundaries, emotional care and emotional maturity. With the exception of Harry's comments, there was a consistent emphasis that the officer was especially valuable in times of emotional distress. To exemplify this, James talked with poignancy about how upset he had been on one occasion and his officer had delayed going home from a shift to offer support, because James had retired to his room, not wanting to be seen in tears. At these times, one was moved by the humanity of an officer, acting as a parent where sorely needed. As Foucault argues, identities can change over time in a fluid, dynamic

situation – perhaps the support of an adult at a time of pressure might be the catalyst for precisely such a process.

The final theme that was discussed in interview was how to improve the centre for the young people. This was typically a conversation entered into with great gusto, but with remarkably similar answers. Almost exclusively, the first topic that was identified was to do with food. Trainees in the discussions referred disparagingly to the quality of the food on offer. Comments such as “the pudding is minging, man” and “it’s just fucking disgusting” abounded. Significantly, comments of this type came from the entire grouping and such consensus reflected some significant misgivings.

The second most frequent suggestion related to the provision of clubs and activities, especially at the weekend. Again, consensus was evident that the trainees wanted more of a variety of clubs to join, and that one of these clubs should involve bonding with other groups (from whom they were normally separated). The other specific request that was universally popular was for music related clubs, such as DJ’ing or how to write effective lyrics. It should also be noted that most trainees felt that the weekend was the weakest aspect of provision, primarily due to the lack of lessons to fill their time.

In these discussions generally there was scant mention of the trainee council. It was not the case that the trainees recognised that this council was an active body that could make tangible improvements. On the three separate occasions that I asked specific questions about it, responses indicated that they didn’t know when it was held or who was on it. Mo, who actually sat on the council, acknowledged that it was a good idea to be involved, but struggled to list any obvious improvements that had been made recently.

The final group interview assumed the greatest significance. It was a plenary session for the entire programme and significance was further heightened by the previous session’s insulting transcripts. The following notes were recorded:

Q: What are your views and opinions about insulting one another?

A: Paul started laughing and said (paraphrased) that I’m only asking this about what happened last week – and that it should be left because his officer had already told him off once – “Leave it man!” And he made the point that an apology had been made

(uncomfortable moment – had I pushed my luck in raising the topic in the first place?)

Mo made the point that it's okay to tease – officers, mates – especially from your own unit, like he always banter with James or his named officer. James conspicuously quiet but did smile at the connection of the unit/togetherness/allegiance. Some phrases were not fair Mo thought, like it is out of order to talk about people's "mum's".

Did seem to be some physical "sheepishness" – eyes averted when the question was first asked, something of a pause in response times? Matthew and James reluctant to offer any response.

The feeling of collaboration extended to a sense of exploring values. In the final group interview, it was apparent that the young people saw themselves as a forged unit. The reluctance to use screen names on the computers was testament to the sense that the boys saw themselves as a team, such as Matthew's irritated comment that "Why wouldn't you use your own name – who do people think it is going to be?" More significantly, Matthew was prepared to ask that question in that manner suggested something about the altering balance of power in the dialogue i.e. by the end of the process the trainees were prepared to assertively express their voice and yet do so within a coherent structure – they were not content simply to remove themselves from the conversation as they had been in the earlier exercises.

When asked about their status as a team, Paul was emphatic in suggesting that all of the things that we had done over the study, such as making t-shirts, cooking and erecting tents could only be done as a team. Mo quickly added confirmation, suggesting that he was "pissed off" that he would not be able to go on the planned expedition with his "mates". In my field notes, I noted how at this point Matt and James were nodding their heads vigorously. Mo spoke about having to formally and publicly present to the Director of the institution about how effective the award scheme had been, suggesting that "I was scared, like proper scared, that I would look a prat, like I had to do it proper n'all and not bitch like a silly". By obliging the trainees to work together in front of the Director, a sense of cohesiveness developed. This cohesiveness provided the foundation for the trainees to express their voice

about what kind of centre they wanted to live in, most specifically the kinds of activities which should be available.

In field notes, I had also made the remark that if ever we had been disturbed, for example by other trainees banging on the window as they went past, the response would frequently be to shout the group name back in retaliation, followed by the phrase “bang bang”, for example “Ash 2, bang bang”. It is my view that the young people in this study could project and reflect on their own values as a group, values which seemed to carry more externally expressed significance than their own individual personal ones. When my status as a marathon runner was being defended, I felt that I was being defended as a member of the group; someone who was integral to its continued existence. It is possible that this was a protective instinct towards the self-preservation of the group or a protection of myself, personally.

The data from the study also suggests that the participants were capable of reflecting on aspects of life beyond the confines of the institution. This broader reflection can be seen on three main occasions. The first of these occasions involved the topic of effective pedagogy. In the fourth keyboard interaction, dated September 18th, the following occurred:

Tim	I will try to do that then...so which style of learning do you prefer – classroom; outside – thoughts?
<i>I noticed that an incident was occurring outside – some type of restraint, but ignored by the group</i>	
Matthew	I like to learn as a group, and i don't mind working in a classroom or outside
Luke	lear as a group
Mo	My name id Mohammed
<i>Others paused at this point</i>	
Mo	i prefer to be outside
<i>This response seemed to act as stimulus</i>	

James	i prefer with group
Luke	I hope it wouldl be good next week
Tim	So do I!!!!

It is interesting to note that there was a unanimous preference for group physical activities, such as fitness sessions and setting up tents. This topic was initially explored in the keyboard dialogue and my own field notes, but it was the group interview that allowed for a fuller conversation relating to the use of keyboards. Again, most trainees (with the exception of Matthew) supported their usage and enjoyed them. Of more significance was the formal comment of James – who suggested that writing down ideas in a shared forum meant that the comment itself had to be constructed carefully i.e. that if you write “rubbish” it would make the author “look like an idiot”. James believed that this was a positive feature of the keyboard dialogues as it ensured he thought about his comments more before he shared ideas – once it had been typed it was permanently projected on the wall. Despite the fact that earlier on group values were more important than individual identity, these comments illustrate that individuals were still concerned about how they might appear in front of their peers. Issues relating to a projection of masculinity are not to be lost easily.

Some group tasks simply could not have happened successfully without a trusting group dynamic. I noted that in the final interview, James smiled when allegiances to the group were discussed and this prompted me to enquire about the building of team relationships.

Q: Being a team is important for you guys?

A: Paul came in again...yes, because all of these things we’ve done we can only do as a team...like tents; like photos he prefers as a group; like the t-shirts; like cooking – I like sharing on the computers cause it is to do with making things better as a team, it makes adults listen.

Mo said that thing that pisses him off is not being able to go on the expedition with his mates.

Noticeably – both Matt (!) and James were agreeing/nodding with Paul as he spoke.

Paul went on...it's like (repeated a few times) this "outdoor thing" allows you to be trusted a bit more – not just the keyboard but the food; the cooking; the photos; the keyboards...allowed to be a bit more grown up.

Mo – even the presentations to the Director means that you make people listen to you – going back to talking to the Director to persuade him to do the football competition.

That these activities 'make adults listen' is significant. It not only emphasises the group identity as non-adults, but reinforces the concept that student voice – the expression of the combined opinion of the trainees – is seen by them as a potentially valuable tool for negotiation within the institution. The remarks of Paul too are essential in underlining the value of what the exercise was trying to achieve. These comments contribute meaningfully to understanding the extent to which student voice is workable within the context of a custodial institution.

To build on these comments, it was important to explore further the participants' views. The responses were as follows:

So what is it about the keyboards you enjoyed?

Paul shook head and half agreed...they were best for social purposes he was basically saying...he liked the way you could use text speak if you wanted to. James countered saying that although he had used slang, the fact it was on a public projection meant he was slightly unwilling to use txt speak – felt he needed to frame his conversation more technically.

Mo liked using them – not for the public audience but for the chance to practise computers and to practise written English. Offered me one example of when he had learnt a word in Literacy in the day and used it that evening in the session.

Matthew at this point is quiet.

Can you tell me how you felt putting it up in front of an audience?

Matthew decided to contribute @ this point – doesn't give a shit. Paul gently reprimanded him.

Paul stated quite firmly that they all know one another; from the units or from shared experiences, and most things in a prison aren't private anyway.

James came in at this point – maybe more formally than I expected him to...he stated that putting up on the wall is kind of good...felt it is being listened to rather than just hiding things away; value to his opinion. Forces officers and myself to see what they are thinking...and that it takes a little time to type it in which means people have to look at the comments because they are there in front of you.

Do you mind it not being private?

Mo – thought that it was important that officers who were present actually say their views. Matt (who I was keeping an eye on) nodded agreement. Paul said that private thoughts could be shared on a phone call or with their Barnados advocate or their key worker...not like there weren't ways to keep things private. Felt at this point maybe I'd got them to repeat aspects!

Most of you chose to use your own names rather than nicknames – apart from on the last session – why was that?

Mo – didn't really think about it.

Paul – just messing about on the last session; bit more confident – dunno really.

Matthew – slightly antagonistically, why wouldn't you use your own name...who do people think it is going to be?

James – couldn't think of a good name; others were take the piss if the name wasn't cool.

In this final group interview, there were several comments regarding the usefulness of the opportunities to express a view. Mo commented that I had brought in the food that “we wanted” whilst Matthew acknowledged that his officer had moaned to the catering staff about

there being hair in the food. The fact that one of the secure care officers had in fact taken the issue up with a member of the catering/management team came as a surprising, but encouraging, revelation to me. I was unsure if the officer's actions had achieved anything, but there was certainly an appreciation that someone had made an effort on their behalf from the trainee who mentioned this officer's efforts. If voice is to work then actions need to complement expression.

There were also comments regarding the relative usefulness of the keyboards. Whilst Matt and James were uncertain where else the keyboards could be deployed in the centre, Mo argued strongly that they should be used in English lessons and Paul said that they could be used on the trainee council to "chat" about ideas. There was even more enthusiasm for other uses of technology, with Paul and Mo talking excitedly over the potential applications of digital photographs – which individuals hoped to send home to relatives. Examples of such comments include "That's so what I've been saying, man – to let my family see I'm okay too" (Paul) and "I've been asking for something like this, you know, to let my foster mum know between visits" (Mo). This discussion demonstrated to me the importance of the individuals' wanting to express themselves on key topics, within the context of the team's cohesion. As the team was willing to participate in various events through sharing ideas, with the knowledge that infringement of acceptable behaviour might lead to the withdrawal of shared benefits, the protection of the group became a value in itself which could curb undesirable individual behaviour. The participation suggested that if a team of trainees could function effectively it could also lead to a calmer environment more generally. The building of a team mentality led to a more cohesive, calmer environment, one in which shared expectations and hopes were defended by other members of the group.

In addition to the requests for food, participants also seemed willing to articulate a set of wider requests, more connected to the activities in which they participated. There was an acknowledgement that activities could provide "a nice break from my unit"; and that they would provide "a break from the regular centre routine". Therefore, not only were the trainees prepared to engage in the activities required of them by me, but the requests suggested the formation of a cohesive group unit with a potential identity of its own. Several trainees commented that they would like a return to the "chill out" time when trainees had free time in which to interact socially with other trainees from across the centre. There was a marked preference for activities that involved physical activity such as "putting up the tent

and the cooking”. One Muslim participant requested more time with the institution’s Imam. By way of comparison, there was a marked rejection of inside, classroom-based tasks, when typed through the keyboard interactions:

I hate the sitting in the roomd and not doig any pratcial thins

In my questioning I invited participants to comment on what they might improve. As already elaborated, all trainees focused on the immediate concern of food provision, but coaxing on my part elicited views on a broader range of topics.

By the end of ten sessions, the affirmative comments from the group interviews about the opportunities to express ideas generally in terms of instigating changes in aspects of their lives was virtually unanimous. One trainee suggested an 8 out of 10 rating for the effectiveness of the keyboards in tackling serious issues, and even 10 out of 10 for ‘friendly bantering’.

4.7 Concluding remarks

In exploring how far voice is workable within the confines of a Secure Training Centre, I posit that trainees can be encouraged to develop dialogues through an ongoing process. At this institution, the documentation establishes a picture of welcoming consultative practices – at both the education and the custodial levels, albeit a confused one at times which offers differing perceptions of the trainee’s agency. Having digested this literature, I took the decision to reduce obvious symbols of power such as the physical alignment of the room, vocabulary choices and being discrete around keys/radios, and in doing so took advantage of my insider/outsider status to establish credibility. Building on this process, the use of participative, multi-modal methods was central to the engagement of trainees. This supported the creation of an ongoing process of establishing trust and credibility, which although challenging at times, ultimately led to a virtuous circle for developing dialogues. The space that this created for young people to express their identities, both the more assertive hegemonic masculinities and the subtler, perhaps more private version, was powerful. Notwithstanding the presence of existing embedded identities, the creation of this liminal space offered young people the chance to begin to reflect on a more positive, empowered identity.

In Foucauldian terms, this entire process allowed me to explore the micro-physics of power, rejecting the stereotypical binary opposition of powerful teachers and disempowered young people. Through exploring discourse, this process allows young people to place themselves as social actors in their own right, within a carceral social structure that profoundly governs their existence. The Foucauldian conception of discourse, these “technologies of the self”, has a specific meaning that is useful in terms of this study. For Foucault, discourse relates to how people’s individual subjectivity shapes the stories they tell and the way in which they perceive themselves in relation to the world (Fitzsimons, 2007). By exploring what the trainees believe to be true, it was possible to gain rich insights into their lived experiences. Through exploring the discourses with which the trainees interact, and through foregrounding their assumptions, it was possible to explore the relationships between power, discipline and knowledge. Hence, it also facilitated the exploration of the characters and nature of the individuals involved, e.g. the wishes, dreams and regrets of the young people.

The young people in this study were disempowered through their loss of freedom. However, in localised dialogues they had access to power in a constantly changing negotiation. It was very apparent the young people could, if they chose, dominate or subvert any of the dialogues. Crucially, this study was successful in securing their cooperation and agreement, leading in turn to a positive circle of trust. As this bedrock grew more solid, the self-policing element developed significantly. In Foucauldian terms, it was engaging in such micro-level power encounters, consistently reinforcing positive behaviour patterns that led to engagement. The trainees’ engagement in the project and their opportunity to share their discourses encouraged the self-policing of Bentham’s Panopticon - not through the building of a guard tower but through the opportunity to express ideas and voice, to create and develop an alternative identity.

CHAPTER 5: CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL REFLECTIONS ON THIS THESIS

5.1 Chapter introduction and overview

Chapter 5 offers a number of critical and analytical reflections on this study. Firstly, there is a reflection on the positioning of the study within a particular paradigm and the positioning of the researcher. Following this, the chapter turns to a reflection on the data collection methods employed in the study. This is, in turn, followed by a discussion of the theoretical complexities involved in the relationship between resistance and power. The penultimate section draws on the Carspecken model of systems analysis to offer a critical reflection on the concept of masculinity, harnessing Foucauldian concepts in so doing. Within that context, this chapter wishes to reflect on how successful this study has been. Finally, concluding remarks are offered.

5.2 Critical reflexivity and positioning

The qualitative paradigm of the study and the research questions themselves, albeit revised through experience and practical necessity, were a product of the researcher's background interests and teaching experience. As a critical ethnographer, with an aspiration to improve the lot of disadvantaged communities, I share with Thomas the premise that "the structure and content of culture make life unnecessarily more nasty, brutish, and short for some people" (Thomas, 1993, p33). My starting point was to explore realistic situations of social deprivation by grounding my findings in the data that emanated from the shared experiences of participants. These experiences were shared with me as researcher through discussions, observations, documents and dialogues, with the researcher interpreting and filtering the participants' views – this is the "realist narrative" (Van Maanen, 1988, p45) that offers a 'thick' set of data to interpret.

It is important to establish positioning at the start of any discussion that involves reflexivity so that the reader is clear about the researcher's standpoint. This is especially importance given the increasingly frequent acknowledgement that reflexivity has various guises, representing different things to different people, and therefore has a "firm place within the qualitative research agenda" (Finlay, 2002, p212). This is especially true in recent times of grounded theorists – it has almost become expected to discuss reflexivity in some detail (Koch and Harrington, 1998). It is clear that there are a number of definitions of, and

approaches to, reflexivity (Gentles, Jack, Nicholas and McKibbin, 2014). Among others, these approaches include seeing reflexivity as a form of introspection, as intersubjective reflection, as a social critique, and indeed as a form of mutual collaboration (Finlay, 2002). It is this form of mutual reflexivity that was adopted in this study. As a researcher who has consistently encouraged participants to tell their own stories, i.e. to co-construct their accounts, the regular opportunities to express aspects of identity represented a belief in the participants that they had the capacity to be reflexive beings themselves.

Reflections on the theoretical underpinning, the methods of data collection and analysis, the interpretation of findings and the positioning of the researcher, all together lead to a broader critical reflection in the nature of the project as a whole. This was a project by a single researcher who adopted a critically ethnographic stance with a particular focus on incarcerated and vulnerable young people. Notwithstanding concerted attempts at transparency, efforts at reflexivity are always inadequate because the researcher can only ever provide a partial accounting of the effects of researcher interactions (Finlay, 2002, cited in Gentles et al., 2015, p4). Interview data in particular, are logically understood and constructed as a process of interaction between researcher and participant. Such awareness is particularly apposite in a study that takes place in a setting where embedded power imbalances are made utterly explicit and subsequently enforced, and which has, as its initial research question, the nature and outcomes of interpersonal power differentials.

This study was an exploration of one aspect of the lives of a small group of participants in a very particular setting. The quality of this study resides in the understanding that it explored the sincerity of a few individuals who shared their lived realities and by so doing, offered potentially wider insights or avenues to research. The carefully considered adaptation of theoretical underpinning and research methodology was justified by the potential benefits that the research might bring to a body of young people. Where decisions were made, they were made in the context of a given social situation and can be justified in their own terms. Furthermore, they were made with the full awareness of both adults and trainees within the setting. This was especially the case after some of the post-it interactions where the calm running of the institution was threatened. As Gentles et al. argue, it is simply important to be transparent in recognizing these processes.

In chapter three of this study a number of arguments were established relating to the role of the researcher in this project. These included thoughts on the role as observer/participant in an ethnographic study and both the accompanying advantages and disadvantages that are associated with straddling the insider/outsider divide. It is now appropriate to reflect on the relevance of these issues. Therefore, in particular, my role as a teacher and a critical researcher warrants attention. By acknowledging the “power relations inherent within the research process” (Manias and Street, 2001, p236), an attempt has been made to make clear that in designing this study, the critically ethnographic stance that was adopted was intended to benefit the participants involved. Some of the statements and comments from participants towards the later stages of the project provide support to this view. However, it should also be acknowledged that at times, things were not easy through this study. There were frequent occasions when trainees refused to co-operate with activities, could be rude and offered their own challenges through exercising their own micro-capillaries of power. It could not be claimed that the participants were empowered or enfranchised due to the interactions from this study. Whilst opportunities were provided to express ideas, and some of these were taken up, others were not. It was clear that for these participants, the reality of empowerment was that it was a continuum along which this study supported some movement. This movement was also not always in the same direction as on occasion the extent to which empowerment had been achieved regressed, more than developed. This study does argue that benefits accrued to participants, but that the rate of accrual was inconsistent due to a wide range of factors.

Inevitably, during the course of the study, bonds between researcher and participant can begin to build and it is important to acknowledge such as a potential influence on research outcomes. Positionality, therefore is not immutable and can change as the division between insider and outsider becomes blurred. Reflecting on my own positioning, as the sessions progressed, it highlighted that there was a chasm between myself and the participants in the study. Almost the only unifying factor was that we were all male. There was a significant age difference between of approximately twelve to fifteen years. I had benefited from a stable family upbringing that had led to a university education and further higher degrees. This was not the case for the trainees – the alarming statistics that relate to prison populations where prisoners are thirteen times as likely to have been in case as a child, ten times as likely to have been a regular truant and 2.5 times as likely to have had a family member commit a

crime (Czerniaswski, 2015, p8) underline the social dimension associated with incarceration across the United Kingdom. There was a significant social class divide between ourselves. One of the participants was a refugee, who was endeavouring to learn English, and who had been convicted of a serious crime with years of a sentence still to serve. In terms of cultural divide, there were profound differences.

This cultural divide was exacerbated by due to the straddling of the role of insider and outsider. Even the secure officers stayed longer than myself in the centre, and of course the participants could never leave. The contrasts between researcher and participants could hardly have been more stark. However, there was also the dynamic between myself and other secure care officers. In the sessions the key responsibility for the session rested with myself, but the attitude taken by the officers could be crucial. At times, they would join in and encourage the session. At other times through demonstration of apathy or even resistance, such as by challenging the purpose of exercises, the mood could change in a room due to the bonds with trainees. This significance of this dynamic was something that had been underestimated prior to the study, and at times had the potential to act as a significant barrier to successful research.

As a critical ethnographer who believes in unifying people through a commitment to democracy, social equality and empowerment, it is also important to recognise that there were unifying factors. Whilst no-one can or would seek to hide those cultural differences, ultimately one's age nor background can be changed. We cannot require every researcher who wishes to explore prisons to have been convicted of a crime, nor to have come from a fractured home. It is the argument of this study that it is appropriate to get to know an institution in detail. The long period of employment preceding this study provided a platform for further experiences to be shared. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that we are all people with many unifying elements. As Carspecken argues, "most people meet their needs for dignity, respect and recognition by constructing and reproducing cultural forms that make their way of life a respectable one" (1996, p204). That is to say, there is more in life that unites than divides us, and as a human it gave me great pride to witness the trainees succeeding with various outdoor pursuit activities. The incremental successes and celebrations contributed to a welcome positivity which also had not been anticipated. It was genuinely pleasing that activities which were the conduit for the research aspects were so successful, resulting in genuine gains.

The pleasure of witnessing the success of the works was heightened when juxtaposed against the background warnings of burnout, emotional strain and stress that exist in the secure sector (Terrell and Staller, 2003; Flesaker and Larsen, 2012). Whilst activities were not always successful and learning was not a continuous escalator to success, there were significant moments that offered profound insight into participants' lives.

It is axiomatic that data formation, be it interview data or data from other interpersonal interactions, is best understood as being constructed as a process of interaction between researcher and participant (Gentles et al., 2014, p5). Inevitably, the positioning and perspective that evolved during the course of the project paint the research and its recommendations with a particular social and political hue. Such is the nature of critical research. It is hoped that this section established a clear, transparent view of the researcher's positioning that in turn allows readers to form an informed view on the nature and strengths of this study's conclusions and recommendations.

5.3 Discussion of data collection

The data collection used in this study is problematic. At times, the use of innovative data collection methods was a strength in producing a broad range of differently-sourced data. The selection of these methods led to insightful data which would not otherwise have been collected. At other times, the trainees actively resisted some of the strategies employed resulting in frustration for all parties. It should also be noted that even when resistance was not an element of the research strategy (i.e. when trainees were genuinely co-operating), the data-collection and recording processes had limitations. Some of these limitations derived from the ethical decisions taken by the researcher in order not to place vulnerable participants in challenging circumstances. This section highlights that whilst the data collection could derive insightful data in ways that could even be considered innovative, expedience and participant resistance also led to challenges.

As previously acknowledged, the research strategy had to accommodate the challenges of not using sound recordings and of not taking notes mid-session, but it did mean that there were occasions on which I had to fervently write field notes after an interview or discussion. Sitting in the car immediately having left the centre, writing down five key words that could be used later to stimulate my own recall, was hardly ideal. Even assuming that those key words provided an appropriate stimulus to memory, the wider criticism of field notes is that

whilst they allow the flavour of an interaction to be recorded for later use, it is more difficult to record precise words, expressions or nuances. This meant that whilst a record of events was generated that reasonably accurately captured the spirit of the suggestions made, it was not as detailed a summary as might have been generated in a different environment. In recognizing this fact, this study demonstrates a reflective criticality whereby it acknowledges both its own limitations and strengths.

One important aspect of the study relates to the number of people involved in the project. This was a small study, set in one institution with only a few participants, all of whom were male. Due to the uncertainties of life within the secure estate, even given this restricted sample size, those participants did not consistently arrive at the appointed hour. As noted previously, these participants were a particular tranche from within the centre. They were all on enhanced rewards regimes which meant that they might not represent the trainee body as a whole. Further studies might be of interest looking at trainees on lower regimes, but this assumes permission from those in authority at the centre who would authorize those young people to participate. In this context of this study, the opportunity to work with any trainees was gratefully grasped, leading to a convenience sample being obtained rather than any other potentially more representative sample. Furthermore, there was an element of self-selection in the sample: the better-behaved, trustworthy trainees were the ones who attended the sessions even once selected.

It could be argued that the reliability of a small sample, selected on a convenience basis, whose attendance was not perfect, imposes acknowledged limitations on the generalizability of the study's conclusions. However, in terms of the epistemological foundation for this study whereby 'truth' is a social construct differently created in interactions between different individuals with different experiences and different standpoints, the lack of generalizability is not the key concern. Instead, the barometer for success in this study is the extent to which participants have chosen, or indeed not chosen, to share their own truths and their own perceptions, so as to enable the researcher to derive and co-construct 'thick' data.

A further aspect of note relates to the time-scale of the project. At its best, it could be argued that the five month period helped to ensure that rich data could be collected and genuine insights into the participants' lives could be derived. The time-scale allowed sufficient time to overcome the distrust and sensitivities of the participants. However, it could also be

argued that a five month spell is not a sufficient time period to ensure that the fuller insights of a more traditional ethnography can be achieved. The powerful argument against such a traditional ethnography is that very kind of ethnography would have had its own difficulties due to frequent prison churn. Therefore, the exigencies of the context resulted in the adoption of a hybrid approach that draws on aspects of both critical ethnography and practitioner research. Faced with the pragmatism of having to design an approach to accommodate prison existence, a conventional theoretical approach was modified in order to fit the research requirements.

In addition, the time taken for a trusting environment to be established hampered some of the opportunities for collection of the most penetrating data. As someone who was ultimately an outsider, this held back a truly deep understanding in the earlier weeks, a process acknowledged by Gentles et al. (2014). This slow process was exacerbated by practical issues as the trainees had also to adapt to using the keyboards. The lengthier and potentially more revealing keyboard dialogues came later in the project, meaning a slightly lop-sided profile of data collection for that particular method. Fostering trust and acquiring skills postponed the collection of the most useful data. However, the move from an early stage where research was guided by past experiences and from limited pre-existing knowledge of trainees to a positive and empathetic understanding of specific trainees did occur.

It is all too easy to get lost in reflections on one's own perception of how one is being received. However, what is certain is that when those young people shared their truths with me, not only did it create useful research insight, it offered to me personally great fulfillment and the sense of becoming an expert researcher.

5.4 Resistance and power

In Chapter 2.2 an outline of the Foucauldian concepts that contribute to a theoretical framework to this study was established. In the following section a reflection on some of those concepts and their relationship to the outcomes of the study will be offered, drawing on aspects of resistance and power.

The findings of this study evidence the view that power relations are fundamental to the way that the concept of voice can be realised in the secure estate. Within the secure estate, everyday lives are rendered vulnerable to the use and abuse of power that are embodied, for example, through direct optical surveillance or the indirect recording and coding of the data

trail left as the objects of power pass through agencies and institutions (Allen, 2012). The Foucauldian concepts of observation, normalisation and examination are evidenced within the modern prison where power transforms the fundamental frameworks, the epistemes that underlie our knowledge and our understanding (Gutting, 2005, p50).

For Foucault, power does not consist simply of the confrontation between a normalised ‘us’ and a marginalised ‘them’. There are many more complexities that mean that individuals can resist the power of others in a myriad of fashions, as can be seen, for example, in the comments made in the ‘post-it note’ activity. Foucault explores the movement from “juridico-discursive power” to the “bio-power” which government would use to regulate and discipline our own selves (Foucault, 1978, p140-141). As an integral element of this and within a society of dominated others, power is dispersed through a multitude of micro-centres. It is through the recognition and exploitation of micro-physical power relations that the empowerment of individuals may be enhanced and the body may become disciplined. This dispersal of power has the potential to lead to practical and political change, even if initially such change is limited to an improvement in practical living conditions, as in the case of this study. In this instance, power is more than simply a constraining effect on knowledge, it is also the producer of knowledge and awakening.

The activities undertaken as part of this study highlight the accepted power relations within a hierarchical institution that imposes control and subjugation on the ‘souls’, the minds of the inmate:

There are two meanings of the word subject: subject to someone else by control and dependent, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to. (Foucault, 1982, p212)

This subjugation is evident in the contents of the institutional documentation where, despite reference to ‘respect’ for trainees, the overarching power relationship of governor and governed is clear in the tone of the documents, the language used and the instructions given.

Such power relationships are reinforced by the daily regimes of institutional life and by a timetable of operations that define the modern penal institution. As Foucault said, when cataloguing the development from punishment of the body to punishment of the mind, “we have, then, a public execution and a time-table...they each define a certain penal style”

(1977, p7). Externally imposed power relations are strengthened by uniforms, keys, intercoms and the prescribed formalities of incarceration. Findings from this thesis identified that attempts to minimise such outward signs were at times met with surprise and bemusement on occasion. This highlights how challenging it is to subvert the cultural expectations of both individuals and groups when in particular situations, even when one is trying to reduce the need for resistance i.e. even though the effort was there to equalize power relations, existing cultural expectations about roles that people should be playing governed the reactions of others.

Power is also imposed through surveillance. In Beech Meadow, the panopticon of CCTV and the constant presence of officers acted as a reinforcement of behavioural requirements and a potential brake on individual or group identity. This study has drawn on Foucauldian analysis to recognise trainees as a marginalised group whose identity is influenced by the power structures under which they exist, operating within a conceptual environment that limits them, through a process of micro-management, in ways of which they are unlikely to be aware (Gutting, 2005, p32).

Activities undertaken by trainees within the research programme represented opportunities for a discursive context. The multi-modal activities in themselves represent a technology of the self that allowed a discursive context for power relations to operate that in turn allowed for trainees to break away from previous norms of socialisation. Evidence of this resides in the engagement with the wireless keyboards as trainees conversed in a progressively more independent fashion. However, within the same opportunity (i.e. usage of keyboards) resistance in the form of rudeness and topic avoidance occurred that highlighted the participants, in critically ethnographic terms, were anything but fully engaging in the officially sanctioned activity with which they had been presented an in which they had been invited to participate.

This inconsistency raises the importance of interpretive communities in forging identity. Just as the group had certain expectations of how adults should behave and were bemused when these were not met (such as the differing uniform), the collages and t-shirts opportunities allowed fledgling group identities to surface. At an individual level, through the creation of collages, and at a group level, through the creation of team t-shirts, a sense of identity and awareness began to surface and alongside it, a sense of greater confidence and recognition. The keyboard activities promoted a gradual increase in the willingness to participate, to

contribute, and to express opinions. There were some comments from trainees during the individual and group interviews that acknowledged that views were being sought, listened to and even acted upon, for example through the provision of certain foodstuffs. These first stirrings of voice directly relate to this study's perception of what voice is. As chapter 2.4.1 indicates, whilst there are many competing definitions of voice, this study follows Seale (2010) in arguing for active empowerment and agency that will communicate views in order to change circumstance. When aspects of the trainees' lives were able to be improved, then this represented the successful functioning of voice whereby actions followed words. On other occasions, voice was not successful in that the actions demanded by trainees did not come to pass. This thesis was more successful in the provision of opportunities to communicate than in establishing a greater degree of empowerment. This study has already argued that it is the ring-fenced social space, through the activities that this study conducted, that provides the forum and the opportunity for the communication of views. It is with this communication of views that the development of young people as learners and as human beings can occur.

This, in essence, is a recognition by this study of the potential of micro-capillaries of power amongst the marginalised and disenfranchised, to undermine the ability of institutional power to create docile bodies that not only do what is expected of them but do it in the precise way that is expected (Foucault, 1977). It is a recognition of the potential for agency.

This recognition is founded upon a Foucauldian concept of resistance to power and it is appropriate to consider briefly its relevance. To repeat one of the most frequently cited observations of Foucault:

Where there is power there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power – these points of resistance are present everywhere in the power network. (Foucault, 1978)

So resistance and power exist in tandem. If “Power is never owned, but exercised” (Lauder, 2008, cited in Duffy, 2011, p3) and “Power relations and not power itself, are the objects of analysis” (Foucault, 1984), resistance represents the countervailing force that is operationalised into interpersonal or political action.

Foucault therefore recognises that the objects of power are not trapped, that resistance represents a route to freedom and that “Power relations (between) individuals are mobile, reversible and unstable” (Foucault, 1984, p292):

We are always part of this kind of situation (*a strategy of struggle against authority – my insertion*). It means that we always have possibilities, that there are always ways of changing the situation. (Foucault, 1984a)

For an individual the recognition of the possibility of resistance is at least partly a function of social, political and interpersonal relations. There will be cases where the disproportionate and unbalanced disposition of power will allow minimal opportunity for redress. But that is to ignore the potentially positive effects of resistance which is more than mutual incitement and struggle. It should be “less of a face to face confrontation that paralyses both sides, than a permanent provocation” (Foucault, 1982, p342). In terms of this thesis, this underlines the futility of trying to subjugate the young people incarcerated in the secure estate. Instead, the recognition of resistance can lead to a creative dialogue that in itself acts as an opportunity for expression as one of the ways of “changing the situation” (Foucault, 1984a).

It is this point of “changing the situation” that is fundamental to the concept of voice that this study adopts. It is not enough simply to create forums for expression, although this is profoundly important too. In following researchers who argue for agency to be included in conceptions of voice (e.g. Fielding, 2004; O’Connor, 1994; Seale, 2010), a key problem that this thesis highlights is the extent to which that agency can be created. In more propitious moments, trainees were able to take decisions which impacted on their lives. At other less constructive moments, the opportunities for enunciation were not harnessed in such a way as to improve lives in either a physical or emotional way.

Within this study, the traditionally understood institutional power relations are clearly unbalanced. Trainees are potentially subjugated and over-powered by judicial and governmental seats of power, by their youth and often, by their social and educational deprivation. Foucault recognised that this could be a perpetually asymmetrical power imbalance, leaving a limited margin of freedom (Foucault, 1984). However, as stated previously, agency can be awakened. In turn, resistance can be stirred and ultimately change may follow.

5.5 Reflection on masculinity in the light of a Foucauldian framework

Masculinity has been a constant theme in this research study and is an integral element of the identity that trainees construct for themselves at both a group and individual level. This section will explore social theory about masculinity and as part of this exploration, findings from the study will be related to these theories in order to reflect on the significance of the study. This is, in critically ethnographic terms, Carspecken's fifth and most challenging stage of systems analysis. Even by Carspecken's own reckoning, studies that harness only the first three stages are still of value and that "many of my doctoral students... find it practical only to use the first three stages". However, without attempting some degree of analysis, "only part of the whole picture emerges" (1996, p206). It seems appropriate, therefore, to conduct such analysis.

In this spirit, this section reflects on theory relating to masculinity in the light of findings from this study. This is especially important to do given that hegemonic masculinity, previously identified as potentially both oppressive and confrontational may be a negative force in interpersonal and societal relations. This is especially the case for this study where, despite this potential, the evidence of masculinity in this research was not the potentially destructive version that some identify (see, for example, Sabo and Kupers, 2001; Sim 1994; Toch 1998). Arguably, the masculinity identified in this study was, although relatively one-dimensional, of a largely positive construction. Typically, it espoused positive virtues of sporting excellence, healthy living and energy.

Masculinity, as a social construct, arises from the interaction of individuals and groups rather than as an essentialist element of individual bodies; it is part of the "technology of the self" whereby individuals reflect upon their own identity. It is important to acknowledge that Foucault saw his main goal as being to explore "a history of the different ways in our culture that humans develop knowledge about themselves" (1988b, p17-18). The knowledge, understanding and interpretation of masculinity is a function of the micro-power relations between members of social groups, whether they be fellow trainees, prison authorities or wider familial connections. In turn, it is the disposition of the power relations within the group that can determine a docile acceptance of the truths that form part of the group discourse. The self is forged through constructed, contingent and often competing discourses resulting in a self that is neither fully formed nor stable.

Such society is not ultimately ruled by any sovereign or judicial stronghold (even in the secure estate) but its governmentality is partly a function of an internal policing of its own social body (Duffy, 2011, p9). It is what Duffy refers to as the influence of the “village voice” (p10) which negotiates its truth through discourse, categorising how a group member can behave and from which he deviates at his peril. In the case of the secure estate, the dominant group discourse is typically that of hegemonic masculinity that ensures a particular kind of heterosexual, physically dominant and aggressive masculinity is seen (Cesaroni and Aliv, 2010; Maitland and Sluder, 1996).

There remains, however, the possibility of challenge to the dominant group discourse. By offering a “discursive space” (Pringle and Markula, 2005, p472), i.e. an informal forum, for the negotiation of masculinities, group members may begin to take a different understanding. This is what Pringle and Markula, in their research on masculinities amongst rugby players in New Zealand, referred to as ‘a strategy of resistance of marginalised knowledge’ (p472). Crucially, for Foucault, such resistance depends upon micro-power relations and the knowledge they produce. For Foucault, “there is no power relationship without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time, power relations” (Foucault, 1977, p27).

In terms of linking this study to the theoretical framework, it is clear that while aspects of an assertive masculinity were identifiable, the description of hyper-masculinity was not in evidence. Without wishing to paint an overly simplified picture, this study aligns itself with Pringle and Markula in its identification that, through the availability of the informal forum, an alternative space was created. It was in this space that alternative forms of masculinity could be expressed. This is akin to the position adopted by Hattam and Smyth (2012) who, as previously identified, also argue for a place of enunciation. There can be little doubt that this study did offer those opportunities.

That is not to argue that through the various forums that this study offered there were no features of hegemonic masculinity. Examples could indeed be seen, such as in the benign insults of the transcripts and the preponderance of images/phrases that linked to physical activity in the collages. In some sessions these expressions could be more vigorous than at other times. Therefore, this study reveals a problematic, inconsistent situation. The situation is that there is little, if any, evidence of hyper-masculinity, despite the high likelihood of this existing in a youth offender institution (Sim), but some evidence of a hegemonic identity.

The scenario itself changes on a daily basis due to the fluctuations inherent in custodial existence.

This inconsistency makes the job of explaining the motivations for the varying expressions of masculinity very difficult: any clear cut explanation should be treated with suspicion. What this study would argue, however, is that the spaces for enunciation have the potential to be useful in supporting vulnerable participants. As Carspecken argues in his discussion of overarching system relations, where underprivileged groups struggle to achieve dignity and respect, they “live their lives through damaged identities and low self-esteem; their expressive needs are blocked, they have internalised self-images, and their chances for personal growth are extremely limited” (1996, p204). This study has offered those spaces for expression, regardless of uptake. It therefore endorses both the wider view wider view of the importance of finding opportunities to support expressive needs as offered by Carspecken, and the views specifically relating to the importance of spaces for enunciation within the secure estate as advanced by Abrams et al. (2012), Beal (2014), and Hattam and Smyth (2003).

As suggested in chapter 2.4.2, all of these researchers link back to Foucauldian notions of re-coding identity (1977). If discourses of masculinity as evidenced in this research are to be challenged and modified, it is desirable, by acting through a plethora of capillaries of power, to change the field of understanding and the means of communicating – for bodies to re-identify themselves. This opportunity to mature out of a hegemonic masculinity may simply be a matter of the trainees’ ageing and maturing out of that mode of existence. The more one-dimensional concepts of masculinity may, as Pringle and Markula suggest, simply evolve into a more mature, more complex and less forthright conception of masculinity. Within the current study, it is the discursive space offered by new and challenging modes of interaction and expression that begins to prompt a challenge to accepted power relations and acts as a catalyst to the expression of voice that in turn offers opportunities to reflect on masculinity. It is a Foucauldian analysis that helps to illuminate these processes.

5.6 Concluding remarks

Chapter five has explore the various challenges around this study and researching challenging environments more widely. In so doing, it is clear that working within these environments is problematic. Various issues are simply not clear cut. It I precisely for this reason that it is

important to be transparent about one's own positioning in relation to any research, and the success and failings of any work that then follows. It is also vital to reflect on any study in the light of the theoretical framework that is harnessed. In this regard, this study draws on Foucauldian concepts, alongside other concepts connected to voice, masculinity and identity. The final chapter now turns to the findings of the study, such as they are in the light of the challenges inherent explored in chapter five.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1 Chapter introduction and overview

This study was concerned with how trainees expressed ideas connected to voice, power, trust, masculinity and identity. The aim of the programme behind the research was to offer trainees opportunity to express and reflect upon ideas, and even to influence decisions within the profoundly limited context of their incarceration. In so doing, a hybrid approach of Critical Ethnography and Practitioner Research was adopted, as seemed appropriate for the secure estate environment in which this study took place. In this final chapter, this key pillars of this study will be re-visited; a discussion of research questions will occur, and various recommendations will be made.

6.2 The context of the study

As noted in chapter three, this study combines critical ethnography with a practitioner research approach to research. Combining these approaches aims to provide a comprehensive account of the situations encountered within this study and was necessary to accommodate the particularly demanding research environment. Following Smyth (2006), ethnography was appropriate in order to develop relationships over time where groups within an educational context have been marginalized. When one reflects that the Youth Justice Board identify barriers with teachers as one of the four barriers to engagement, the need to build such relationships was critical within the setting.

Critical ethnography offered the potential establish powerful engagement with participants was fundamental. In its commitment to empowerment, to democracy and to recognizing power relationships, critical ethnography offered a lens through which to reflect on social interactions. This is particularly relevant for a study where conflict is a significant aspect. This study adopted Carspecken's structured approach to analyzing data, merged with the Practitioner Research approach of reflecting on one's own classroom practice. In so doing, this provided the epistemological foundation that hoped to ensure that participants' ideas were recognized and could be acted on

As chapter three highlighted, this study adopts a multi-faceted approach to its enquiry. It is ethnographic insofar as it involves significant immersion into the daily lives of the participants. It is critical in its challenging of perceived political power orthodoxies. But it

also draws on the foundations of practitioner research centred on practice and joint reflection within the practitioner's workplace. These approaches are not mutually exclusive. Rather they combine to provide a robust theoretical and practical underpinning for a detailed, intimate study of one aspect of the participants' daily lives.

As discussed more widely in this study, the aspirational concept of enabling empowerment did not necessarily meet with practical reality that was subject to prevailing policy and public opinion issues. As noted in chapter two, at the time of research the policy context reflected a movement towards punishment and control. As Czerniawski declares emphatically, policy in relation to prison and prison education "is not driven by what works and is not evidence-based" but is "positioned by political expediency and the signaling of politicians 'toughness on crime'" (2015, p11). This is despite the social rhetoric of 'New Labour' relating to social justice. When reviewing the 1990s legislative programme, one reflects on the introduction of Social Control Orders, the abolition of 'doli incapax', the creation of Youth Offending Teams and the development of ASBO orders. This movement towards a more punitive approach was a trend across most European nations at the time with an estimated 10.2 million people imprisoned worldwide, a rise of approximately one million people in five years (UN, 2009, p11). When sensational headlines followed the tragic murder of Jamie Bulger, the political context was established for what was a period of more restrictive policies.

However, as chapter two identifies, the position is not a simple one. In other words, the same time frame reflected a genuine aspiration to create more welfarist policies, not least through the creation of Secure Training Centres as distinct from more traditional Youth Offending Institutions. Policy changes began to take place which partly reflected a philosophical resolve to develop a more integrated model of welfare support across the public sector (*for example, No More Excuses*) and which partly reflected a profound social anxiety, especially stimulated by the Bulger murder. An awareness of these apparently contradictory national policy changes is crucial to an understanding of why Secure Training Centres exist.

As a critically ethnographic researcher, it was important to recognize that the national policy was contradictory and, if anything, predominantly favouring punitive control, thereby creating a challenge for this research even in terms of entering the field state. This challenge was no lesser at the level of the Secure Training Centre. STCs nationally had high rates of recidivism, whilst Beech Meadow had endured several years of traumatic existence with high

staff turnover, various poor inspections and the withdrawal of significant contractors. It should come as no surprise that in a national policy context which leaned towards punitive control of prisoners and where Secure Training Centres were not achieving stated goals, a critical ethnographer might struggle to empower participants. It is only due to the prolonged work within the establishment that sufficient credibility was built in order to gain the permissions appropriate to research on a small scale.

6.3 Discussion of findings

In attempting to provide an interpretation of how voice is expressed in a secure environment, the following are the summarised findings of the research study:

1. The concept of voice is workable within the confines of the secure estate, despite the existence of more hurdles than in other education settings. For the concept of voice to be workable, it is important to recognise that a broader approach to both the definition of voice and the practical expression of the ideas involved must be adopted, and that actions must follow the expression of ideas;
2. When given the appropriate opportunity and method, boys who are situated within such an institution are capable of articulating their views across a range of topics that are relevant to their lives;
3. The institutional documentation that was analysed demonstrates a theoretical commitment to the principles of facilitating the expression of ideas by the young people within the centre, whilst also reflecting pragmatic security concerns.

6.3.1 How far is the concept of voice workable within the confines of a secure training unit?

The findings in relation to this research question endorse much work that already exists in the literature connected to student voice. This thesis strongly endorses the point previously made by Batchelor that “voice has to be developed within the situated realpolitik of real lives in specific institutions” (2006, p184) and the importance of the context of the institution for this study should not be underestimated. This study embraces discussion of topics which may seem only tangentially connected to usual student voice practices, but the value of the data that was generated can only be really appreciated and acknowledged when placed in the

context of a secure institution. In the absence of proper contextualisation, there is the danger that the discussion of experiences and of relationships may not be considered to be a 'significant' or 'important' part of student voice practices. However, by allowing young people to consider relationships with other people, this study links to Fielding's broadest definition of student voice whereby education is about interactions between people (1999) and helping young people to find "what it means to be a citizen...what it means to be and become a person" (2001, p137). This shared identity can be particularly acute in marginalised groups in society - and in the light of often powerful ideals it is important to create a space to define the self in relation to tacitly understood values. This is the Therapeutic voice that Bragg (2008) identifies.

When dialogue between trainee and adult was successful, one underpinning factor was the creation of a trusting environment from the inception of our group interaction. The reduction of physically obvious power symbols was useful in generating early credibility prompting a virtuous circle of credibility, trust, expression of ideas and a further sharing of power – much of which was the power of language as freer more open forums became available. The use of 'language' grew through the use of technology and increasing group interaction. The freedom that this offered allowed for the very beginnings of both education and self-correction.

Much academic literature discusses themes of voice in the context of mainstream education (e.g. Batchelor, 2011; Klein, 2003; Walker, 2008) but voice within the secure estate fulfils a different function. Mainstream literature does not entirely ignore the concept of citizenship, but its prime focus is on pedagogic issues such as pointing students towards significant issues of education or researching classrooms. The key distinction that this study draws is that in a mainstream sector where children are not hungry for food, aspects such as pedagogy become more significant as their hierarchy of needs is fulfilled. Within the confines of the secure estate, where need satisfaction can be at a far lower level, the practical wish-list is a central focus. Time and time again in interview data the trainees focused on fundamentally practical concerns such as the quality of food and the range of activities on offer. It was also clear that the trainees valued having companionship from adult figures in whom they could trust and, on occasion, confide. They valued having access to people they could speak to. If voice is about the empowerment that comes from being valued and where both taking grievances and rights are taken seriously, then the topics for dialogue that this study covered are significant.

The position that this thesis adopts in relation to voice, however, is more radical than simply talking to others. As expressed in chapter two, although there are competing definitions of what constitutes voice, the argument of this thesis is that the locus of power is pivotal. Following both Fielding and Gunter and Thompson, this study adopts the position that there needs to be a shift of power to young people to allow young people to enact their own futures. Arguably, this study goes even further than Fielding in arguing that the opportunity to reflect on self that is more radical and potentially more beneficial than the desired shift of power to control aspects of the institution that Fielding calls for.

This thesis has argued previously that the power to express their thoughts and the opportunity to work with adults in authentic dialogic partnership promotes the development of young people as learners and as human beings. Central characteristics of dialogic interaction and rebalancing of power relationships were at the heart of my own study, manifested for example in the suppression of outward symbols of power and in the putative expansion of choice and agency. In answer to this research question, there are two fundamental points that need to be made. Firstly, the concept of voice is workable within the confines of the secure estate if there are the opportunities and the acceptance that having the opportunity to talk about practical concerns and personal matters is as legitimate as discussing pedagogy. However, the second key finding is that there were far too few opportunities to express such ideas and still fewer opportunities for trainees to enact change. Despite the theoretical commitments to supporting notions of voice as evidenced in institutional produced documentation, these opportunities simply didn't exist in any meaningful way.

Such opportunity to discuss relationships or apparently simple practical issues is very significant and, in the view of this thesis, under-reflected in current research trends. Nor should the significance of topics for discussion be solely determined by adults. Rather, the importance of the topic should be determined by the contextualised young person thereby increasing the potential for their agency over their own lives within the restricted confines of a secure establishment.

In the light of these points, I offer my own working definition of voice:

Student voice should offer young people the opportunity to express their thoughts through whichever means are most appropriate to them, about whichever topics seem most pertinent

to them. It should be an ongoing process that involves the young person gaining agency over the decision making processes.

That is not to say, however, that this study is blind to the challenges of working within the secure environment. It was clear that when working with young people in a secure environment, adult support was still necessary to help develop and maintain a structure. The adult needs to support the creation of a purposeful ordered environment and to engage the participants through the manipulation of an effective, progressive questioning strategy. This structure is necessary to provide a basis where all participants can share their thoughts without fear of insult or ejection from the group. The need to provide an operational structure with a degree of external control is a necessary limitation of this study. Although the input of the adult facilitator meant that participant interaction was never entirely independent and therefore not the utterly free expression of voice, it seemed clear that for any expression of voice to occur, a supportive structure, led by an adult, was necessary.

This study demonstrates that, given the appropriate structure and support, young people can express their ideas, for example, such as those relating to their own masculinity. Those thoughts and ideas may, on occasion, resound with frustration and annoyance. Both multi-modal techniques and emerging technology offer the potential for young people to express a range of human emotions and latterly to comment on aspects of institutional life. However, once again, the finding of this thesis is that for the trainees to develop there too few opportunities for trainees to express ideas in the manner discussed and still fewer for participants to take agency over their decisions. In this regard, the concept of voice that this thesis promulgates is not tenable in the context of the secure estate. This is desperately disappointing given the view of Talbot whose report found, very simply, that “engaging with prisoners can bring out the best in them” (2004, p34).

6.3.2 How do trainees, situated within such an institution, report these experiences within the context of an ethnographic case study?

The use of the visual methods represented a novel means by which to collect data and to stimulate engagement, although the reporting was not always successful. These methods offered the potential for engaging the trainees by giving them an early opportunity to express themselves. In terms of the various opportunities bracketed under the title of ‘multi-modal’, the data reflects a range of outcomes. It is clear that the post-it note activity led to negative

comments that could have potentially undermined the enterprise. It is important to be aware of this fact: one key task was firmly rejected by trainees. It offered very little in terms of generating trust and it jeopardised the entire research project. However, analysis of the collage and t-shirt activities identified that it is possible to engage trainees. The trainees seemed perfectly happy in the majority of instances to share limited notions of identity and self-perception, such as their denotation of themselves as a sportsman. Through regular engagement in dialogue and shared activities that encouraged the exploration of young people's ideas, it was possible to begin to work towards a virtuous circle. The initial breakthrough in showing trust and commitment on the authorities' part acted as stimulus for the growth of reciprocal trust and respect amongst the inmates. By contrast with the post-it notes, these activities developed the generation of trust and offered some insight into trainees' own notions of their masculine identity.

This study supports and endorses existing knowledge by following the findings of Brewster (1983), Gussak (2007) and Persons (2009), all of whom underline the value of artistic expression and therapy within the custodial environment. Themes that can be identified through the collage and t-shirt production are consistent with the topics identified by Persons. This study offered the young people involved a brief opportunity to express views about aspects important to them in means appropriate to them.

One of the ways in which the trainees reported their experience was through the use of the wireless keyboards. What became significant was how the text conversations evolved over the course of the programme. In the early stages more direct questions in both interviews and keyboard conversation generated more answers. Open questions at an early juncture yielded little, but in comparison, the question "what r u doing to ensure that you stay on or get onto platinum plus?" generated seven separate turns of response. Similarly, "what do you want me to buy for cooking next week?" saw five distinct turns of response. When prompted, it was clear that the participants had firmly held views, albeit perhaps lacking the means to express them, stumbling over words or being uncertain in offering them in the first place. Lacking the means here represented a limitation of the study where the keyboards did not facilitate the expression of more nuanced views which otherwise would have been interesting.

My own field notes indicate my frustration at the limited responses to ‘closed’ questions. On reflection, I accepted that for the young people to risk appearing silly might weaken their acceptance within the group as well as damage their own self-esteem. The idea that individual and group identities are inextricably interlinked is an interesting point. Such an affirmation of solidarity would echo a point made by Dymoke (2005) in her study of literacy practices connected to computers. She recognizes that the “most positive responses...were to those activities which centred on collaborative composition” (p68). It was the opportunity to work together over time that facilitated how the young people could express their ideas more freely – a claim also supported by Dymoke in her comment that wireless keyboards offer users “an increased stake in the written draft and a sense of ownership” (p73).

As sessions advanced, confidence and successful interaction developed. I asked more ‘open’ questions with more abstract issues, such as the issue of ‘trust’, being addressed whilst continuing to prompt with simple, straightforward questions to generate a degree of confidence. In turn, that led to more challenging queries that allowed the young people themselves to reflect on the evolving group dynamic in “system relation” terms. With experience, a format of facilitation evolved beginning with a relatively simple question followed by a more abstract topic. Finally, the opportunity was offered to ensure all participants had contributed. This manipulation of the dialogue could be seen as an example of control through manipulation, as discussed earlier (Little, 1982; Benaquisto and Freed, 1996; Hargreaves et al., 1975).

For a critical ethnographer, this manipulation may seem at odds with the notion of providing opportunities for young people to contribute freely. It could be argued that the standardization of the dialogue was similar to the standardization processes that existed within Pentonville prison, as highlighted earlier by Morris and Morris (1963). However, it was a necessary and short-term tactic aimed particularly at providing a structure facilitating expression. In essence, the need to standardize the dialogue represented one of the limitations of this study i.e. a measure of control was needed to ensure gains further on in the study. By the eighth interaction, the participants demonstrated their ability to use the technology, select their topics and communicate thoughtfully and independently. This development in length, topic selection and conversation instigation is testament to the scaffolding of their communicative skills, which in turn led to a degree of trust.

The verbal repertoire also extended to vocabulary selection, where I made appropriate use of insider argot and terminology specific to the institution, such as “Platinum Plus”. There was also the issue of ‘text speak’ which I used infrequently as when I twice used it, participants considered my phraseology as out of place. I may have been part of the group, but I could never be a full group member – a further limitation of this study. This finding echoes that of Stephenson and Scarpitti (1968, p384) who see the use of argot as performing the function of preserving a specific identity. Mayr makes a similar point when stating that “slang is an interpersonal device (that) enables the prisoners to identify with each other” (2004, p153). Combined with the use of insults to express a set of expressive values and to reflect a competitive edge within the team, language practices were critical for gaining credibility and a measure of trust from group members.

As the group dynamic developed, mutual support amongst the members grew. An example of this mutual trusting state was demonstrated when trainees began to display empathy for other participants, affirmations of others’ views, questioning curious behaviour and the ability to apologise for behaviour they regretted. Within the dialogues, there are very frequent occasions when the young people demonstrate empathy for one another’s experiences. In the debriefing interaction following the camp cooking activity, the participants were unanimous in their agreement. I made the point that it had been positive to see “we could trust you guys with equipment” which was reinforced by Luke’s “Yeah”, Harry’s “deffo” and James’ request for “More of what we did – that was cool”. Trainees here offered affirmation of one another’s views.

It was also clear that participants could begin to express ideas about education and activities provided across the institution. However, the evidence for this claim is limited – a few phrases only within a bank of session transcripts. Even when these ideas were expressed, participants benefited from facilitator prompting to begin and/or develop the interaction. Therefore, there is some evidence to suggest that trainees, can willingly express clear and useful ideas relating to their lived experiences within a custodial environment. If a more secure evidence base could be developed, this would be a significant finding in relation to the research questions of how workable a concept of voice is within a secure setting and how trainees report their experiences. However, with the more limited evidence base that was derived from this study, this remains a thread that could be usefully pursued in further research.

Additionally, in this research, it is clear that when young people are offered the opportunity to express ideas through computer-based textual forums, there is potential for positive levels of motivation towards the task that is set for them. This was most significant when two trainees took control of their own session, including topic selection. This certainly demonstrated an eagerness to participate – and by choosing their own topics, to go beyond simple participation into active engagement. The fact remains, however, that it took several sessions to get to this point and a few more developed transcripts do not constitute a solid evidence base. This thesis recognizes that insults, brief conversations and even nonsense typing occurred at an earlier point. Whilst there is enough encouragement in the trend from brief conversations to lengthier, wide-ranging ones, to consider developing similar research – the evidence from this study remains limited.

A further finding of this research is that the opportunity to create multi-modal, creative texts such as collages and t-shirt designs at times proved more effective in engaging trainees. Some trainees were genuinely proud of their selections of images in their collages and anxious to wear their t-shirts on an ongoing basis. Engagement with the trainees in terms that they could recognize and appreciate rendered them much more willing to share their views, suggesting that a degree of free expression had been afforded them. The creative aspects involved in this task offered an engagement reinforced with a tangible output. The chosen multi-modal methods generated some research data (and some destructive moments) and at times, acted as a catalyst in promoting the possibility of more meaningful relationships. This research found that the combination of traditional and non-traditional research methods together constituted an approach that at times led to expression. This was done typically, in a brief, limited fashion and rarely offered the prospect of material improvement in their own lives.

This thesis does not, however, wish to suggest that all opportunities were willingly embraced by trainees. In fact, this thesis highlights the difficulty of engaging disaffected youngsters. The finding of this thesis to the research question that enquires how young people report their experiences is simply that at times, they do not report their experiences at all. At times, the participants offered very little engagement. Consequently, in this finding this study adds to a variety of other studies that highlight the challenges of engaging disaffected youngsters (Ross et al., 2009; Clarke et al., 2011; Cremin et al., 2011). This thesis has aligned itself with

Cremin et al. who suggest that “Following Foucault we aimed, above all, to explore the ways in which power plays out within a school and what happens to diverse pupil voices” (p588).

This thesis shares the concerns of Finlay et al. (2010) who suggest that for individuals who are marginalized in society, conventional qualitative research processes can be ineffective and a “multi-modal” response is needed, as this thesis also shares the ethos of Renold et al. (2008), where the visual approach of using collage and visual diaries supported the engagement of disaffected and vulnerable youngsters. It is a finding of this research that this study contributes to the growing field of literature that, taking account of context, finds the use of digital, visual and participatory methods has the potential to be an important asset for the development of ethnographic research. The technology opened up a space where the young people could discuss topics of salience to them, at times expressing views about their own desires. However, it is also a finding of this thesis that those opportunities were not always taken up by trainees through either insulting comments or through limited responses. As extended responses were not a feature of the data set, substantial conclusions cannot be drawn.

6.3.3 How is reporting of these experiences positioned by institutional policy documentation?

It would be difficult to overestimate the significance of the institutional policy documentation. In terms of understanding the values, processes and aspirations of the directors and managers of the institution, the training manuals provide a rich source of information. For a researcher working within the centre, these texts are emblematic of an idealised macro-social structure and provide a barometer by which to assess the extent to which recommended practices are lived up to in day-to-day situations. Both adherence to policy and divergence from it can generate insight.

The priority that these key documents place on recognising the value of listening to the young people is certainly encouraging. As stated explicitly in the education manual, it is above “all else” that young people deserve respect – voices must be listened to. The dedication of an entire chapter to explaining how to commit effectively to the practices of student voice underlines emphatically that listening to trainees is to be encouraged. The key commitment was to listen to young people to ensure a personalised experience of education. However, the almost universal condemnation by trainees and a negative Ofsted verdict suggested that

despite the high ideals, there was at this time a mismatch between theoretical commitment and actual practice. The extent to which that reflected a deliberate denial of stated best practice or simply an inability to match the high aspirations was not the focus of this study.

Similar, if somewhat inconsistent encouragement to the notion of listening to young people is also a feature of the documentation issued by the security provider, especially in the later section of the inconsistently structured text. However, a cautious note should be sounded; the motive for the promotion of listening to young people may be out of a genuine respect, but it may also be linked to the need for keeping “good order”. The correlation that the text draws between listening to young people and pre-empting confrontational situations suggests that at least part of the motive for permitting the expression of voice is the desire to manipulate situations. It should also be noted that the text in the latter sections does warn against the agency of young people in contributing to their own victimisation, i.e. that the officers should not necessarily trust or be encouraged by everything that the trainees say or do within the centre. Arguably, in its very make-up the training centre does not betoken a fertile ground for the development of trust.

Overall, the documents highlight that in practical terms, adults have to deal with the flows of power emanating from trainees (i.e., ideally, we should hear them, but in practicality, we must be prepared to discipline them) and there is a significant commitment to the ideals of listening to the young people at the centre. It should be noted that despite some testing times at the centre, the Director and senior colleagues felt able to grant permission for a study that explored the expression of voice, something which suggests a practical commitment beyond mere aspiration. The trainee council, effective or otherwise, did run on a timetabled and structured basis, suggesting more than a token commitment. Although I could cite examples of young people not being listened to on a daily basis, tension in a secure environment is to be expected. This is a challenging environment for all concerned and it should be recognised that often officers could be participating in very long and testing shift patterns and more often than not, did try to act in the genuine best interests of the young people.

Reflecting on the set of documents collectively, it is clear that they endorse the activities involved in this stud. Such institutional commitment is significant. This is a closed institution and if the young people were to feel that their voices were being ignored they could not ‘take their custom elsewhere’. However, in practice, being listened to remained a

gift offered by the centre, rather than a freely given right. The commitment made by the centre to listening to young people's experiences is therefore an important one built on the institutional support and the goodwill of the operating authorities.

6.4 Recommendations

The following conclusions and recommendations flow from this study:

1. That the provision of opportunities for young people to express their views and subsequently have some agency, especially for matters that pertain to their day to day existence, is a desirable thing. Following O'Connor (1994), a recommendation of this study is that, within the boundaries of safety and security, opportunities to express views and further action should be an intrinsic element of the experiences of young people within the context of the institution to which they belong. In some cases this may involve continuing the provision of existing effective practice. In other cases, this may involve the creation of different forums to facilitate such expression.
2. That within the context of the secure estate, emerging technology can provide a vehicle for the expression of thoughts and ideas, assuming that security risks (such as internet access) can be eliminated.
3. Further research into effective means by which to engage the attention and enthusiasm of young people in the secure estate, especially of vulnerable and potentially disaffected young people, should be conducted. This would be of particular value to the current academic field.
4. In terms of access to the field this thesis argues that it remains a challenging prospect to gain the appropriate permissions in order to research within a custodial environment. This study absolutely recognises necessary reasons for the imposition of additional controls, such as the need to meet with many parties to gain permission and then in turn to significantly delay the publication of research findings. However, such controls do restrain the possibility of research flourishing in such environments. The fourth recommendation that this study makes is to suggest that the secure estate could engage more with research.

It should be acknowledged, however, that the recommendations listed above represent the experiences of one researcher working within a particular context, and may not necessarily be indicative of patterns across the secure estate more generally.

6.5 Areas for further research

As this thesis has identified in the literature review, there are areas of the field that relate to incarceration that are appropriately researched, such as the exploration of trust within prisons Abrams et al. (2008, 2012), Brayford and Holtom (2010), Carter and Pycroft (2010) and Karp (2010). Other areas, however, remain under-researched. One such example is that of how incarcerated young people can re-code their masculinity in the light of their experience (Abrams et al., 2012; Anderson-Nathe, 2012; Hattam and Smyth, 2003) in relation to masculinity. There are a number of areas where future research could be conducted to useful purpose. The first of these areas is in the secure estate generally, with an especial focus on juveniles within the system. It would be deeply unfortunate if more challenging environments such as juvenile prisons became perceived as areas where research was too difficult to conduct. It should be perceived as more important to investigate such institutions due to the potential social benefits that could be derived.

Under the broader heading of researching within the custodial environment, further research could be conducted by continuing to explore the impact of offering young people forums in which to empower voice within the secure estate. This may simply entail offering those young people different forums such as ensuring access to structures that already exist, such as the 'Trainee Council' within an institution. In this sense, this is an extension of concepts raised by Fielding i.e. that voice requires empowerment and agency, albeit Fielding was not referring to the specific context of prison education. It is important to reflect that this study was only of a very small scale nature, with participants generated through convenience sampling, bound by a limited duration. Within the entire cohort of trainees within that Secure Training Centre, this study worked only with a particular tranche of that society i.e. those on more advanced privileges due to previous calm behavior. There are useful research projects that could explore the benefit of more prolonged interaction with a wider sample of trainees to see if the apparent developments that occurred could be pursued further given more time.

As Czerniawski argues, within prison education "barriers to high-quality education exist for most prisoners and are compounded by fragmentation and differentiation" (Czerniawski,

2015, p11). In the light of secure estate education generally being disruptive, continuing to explore emerging technology will be an important area to pursue. The size of equipment has become smaller, more mobile, more advanced and less expensive as technology has become progressively more embedded into our lifestyles. Education cannot live divorced from this scenario, and this is especially true in the context of prison education. Whilst this thesis has already highlighted other researchers using innovative methods to engage frustrated, vulnerable young people, the field of exploring emerging technology within the secure estate is under-developed. It might be that as time passes, and as the users' expertise develops, the initial interest seen in this study by participants can be replicated and developed to be a useful tool on a wider scale.

The final area where further research would be useful relates to masculinity. The importance of hegemonic masculinity has already been well highlighted in the literature review (Sabo and Kupers, 2001), developed by Jewkes (2001) and seen as hyper-masculinity by Karp (2010). The interesting aspect to continue to explore within the secure estate context is how those masculinities can be adapted. As cited earlier, this is a point that is touched on by Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) in the claim that identities can change. In this "Cinderella profession" where prison education is "isolated from professional recognition, accreditation and remuneration" (Czerniawski, 2015, p11), it would be interesting to explore how young people's identities could be supported and empowered to grow.

6.6 Concluding remarks

Within the typically under-researched custodial environments of the United Kingdom reside the most vulnerable, the most costly and potentially most dangerous people in society. There is great social utility in developing a greater understanding of prisoner's perspectives so that we can generate benefits for prisoners' behaviour, for prisoners' well-being and for society's benefit as a whole in reducing recidivism. This is particularly the case when dealing with vulnerable young people who have their lives still in front of them.

To help establish a more secure future, critical practice-led research could usefully be pursued into exploring voice, trust, masculinity and power. Where this study has been powerful is in its attempt to engage, through innovative ways, with profoundly vulnerable trainees who at times, expressed feelings personal to them. Whilst this study has been

imperfect due to considerable limitations, there is enough of genuine interest to explore further through other work.

It is my belief as a critical ethnographer that improving the lives of these vulnerable young people can be achieved most effectively when researchers, education professionals and custodial professionals work together to explore how to most effectively empower those young people. In turn, the aspiration would be to help make challenging lives more rewarding, enjoyable and worthwhile.

Appendices

Appendix A – pen portraits of trainees:

It should also be noted that one trainee, Darren, attended for one session only. Given this, and the fact that he made no contribution, I have not included him in the sample below.

Harry:

Harry was a Key Stage 3 trainee. His background presented a troubled family life with relations rarely visiting the centre or calling him. He was remanded in custody rather than actually convicted at the point of my dealings with him, although he had a history of other prior convictions. These were predominantly connected to relatively petty crime such as theft. In the sessions he would often comment that he had been wrongly remanded.

In sessions he seemed to understand the verbal points made to him, although I was never convinced that his understanding was complete unless either myself or another adult had reworded the task specifically for him. This process could be a demanding one as he could be sensitive to appearing to be inferior to the other participants in the group. At times, he would challenge an adult by saying “I’m not thick, you know” in a confrontational manner. His reading skills were significantly below his chronological age and he attended the study base for additional literacy support.

In terms of Harry’s conduct and behaviour, he could be extremely challenging. Several adults informed me that he could be a volatile manipulative young man. One memorable moment involved an SCO who told me “Not to trust that one – he’s a slippery little fucker at the best of times” and that “He’s a wrong ‘un”. Although the basic premise of this view was supported by other officers, the tone was far less aggressive from those other officers.

Harry’s body language tended to bristle with indignation, and whilst he never actually contravened any of the regulations that were in place for the session – he also seemed to be frustrated by events. The only time I ever recall him enjoying an activity related to the use of the outdoor facilities, such as cooking on gas stoves or planting tomato plants. More typically, he would tend to hang back in group exercises, seemingly reluctant to be part of

the group. He was very concerned with how he looked, often combing his hair or checking on the position of his crucifix.

Ultimately, Harry withdrew from the course of his own choice – declining to explain his rationale to me.

James:

James was a Key Stage 4 trainee. His background was from a large, urban city. He was often contacted by his mother and family, either in person or by phone. He had convictions for physical assault as well as concerns around a history of gang connections.

Within the centre, he was good friends with Mo, sharing the same residential unit as him. He was also doing well within the reward scheme established. He was a Platinum Plus trainee. At no point did he ever drop below Gold. He was a sports fanatic, especially concerned with the football clubs from his home city. He liked being active, and was especially keen to complete the sporting aspects of the DofE award scheme as highlighted by him, continually bringing his passbook for me to sign. He would often ask when I could go out with him to play football, even after the session in the cold at approximately 8pm.

In the classroom context, he seemed to become restless very easily when confronted with more sedate style activities. At these times he could mutter to himself, although the phrases were often indiscernible. His reading ability, although not as weak as others in the group, did seem weak when given a newspaper or magazine article. I felt he needed support to read for understanding/meaning - I ensured that I asked him a question to clarify understanding. On occasion, he would stretch his legs and circle the room, coming back of his own volition after three to five minutes.

James had strong bonds with his secure care supervisors. On no occasion did I hear a negative comment about him – and they would often put their arm round him. Despite an occasionally aggressive stare, the impression I got from him, and one that was reinforced

by other colleagues, was that here was a young person who was trying to achieve success within the parameters of the secure environment.

John:

John was a Key Stage 4 trainee. His background was a troubled one in terms of family relations and conviction history. He was incarcerated for crimes relating to gang-related assault. An officer related how one night he stayed up for many hours in an angry state because someone with the ‘wrong’ London postcode had moved in to the room next to his in the residential block.

At times, his behaviour could be unpredictable. Although within the centre he was one of the older boys and had attained the Platinum level of the reward scheme, I was aware that his behaviour across the centre often belied such a status. I frequently saw him, for example, run across to bang on windows or to shout the name of his unit followed by “Bang bang”. His physical behaviour was never of concern in my sessions, but his verbal sparring could be inappropriate with some quite graphic references. However, at other times he would be quiet and talk about home in a quite candid manner. Typically, his reflections suggested sadness at being away from his home, explicitly stating on one occasion that “I miss it, you know?”. On a one-to-one basis he could be a really very pleasant young man and he loved his music/rapping/writing of lyrics. His verbal dexterity did suggest a slightly more able young adult compared to other participants in the group.

Given his moments of candor, several officers speculated as to whether his apparently aggressive verbal behaviour served as a ‘front’ for some fear about other aspects of his life. Whether this was true or not, it was very clear that he had energy and dynamism in need of an outlet. When this was denied him, there could be a negative impact on his behaviour patterns.

Luke:

Luke was a Key Stage 3 trainee. I remained unaware of his particular family or home context. This was partly because he had been at the centre for some significant time and

partly because he never spoke to me of his own previous context. His criminal record included a high frequency of theft and anti-social behaviour indictments.

In terms of his behaviour within the centre, he had also worked his way up to Platinum Plus. He seemed to want to gain attention from the older boys, partly through physical prowess, partly through verbal dexterity and humour and partly by following others' instructions. It was of note that he referred to himself, and officers talked of him, as the "class clown", or as a "joker". In relation to inter-personal relationships, his tendency to ignore the younger trainees within the group seemed significant. One SCO suggested that he wanted to be seen as a strong male by the other trainees and would therefore criticize the accommodation, food and teachers quite openly, making fun or ridiculing aspects of each day. Equally anxious to protect his Platinum Plus rating, if asked to desist by adult colleagues or by myself, he would do so without grumbling. His humour was infectious.

Unfortunately for the group, who enjoyed his presence, he was released home before the sessions ended.

Matthew:

Matthew was a very vulnerable Key Stage 4 trainee who was in the centre on a remand basis connected to a drugs offence. He was new to the centre – so had only achieved the Platinum award, but disclosed that he was working towards the Platinum Plus levels as he was jealous of all the additional electronic gadgets that you could have in your room once on the highest reward level.

He was quiet, even docile, in the majority of his dealings with other people –adults and trainees alike. He seemed to smile when people asked him questions and paid specific attention to him. When asked questions, he would take a moment to get to relevant answers and took the topic matter seriously – there would be little by way of rudeness. However, I did always feel I had to keep an eye on his relations with other trainees as it was well known that he could be quite easily manipulated by others. Examples of this included being asked, and complying with, the request to give up part of his cookie to others in the room, or being the one to have to fetch things when we were setting up tents. His strong physique allowed him to do the physical tasks really quite effectively. His

sound grounding in literacy base allowed him to access the other aspects of the programme appropriately.

My reservations about his behaviour were shared by some of the adult staff with whom I spoke. It was noticeable that some colleagues would position themselves relatively near to him, either by sitting behind him or by leaning on the wall relatively near to him. One typical comment was that “Well, he’s, just a bit slow, bless him – but nice, wish we had a hundred like him”. It was clear that the officers positioned themselves near him partly in order to safeguard him, i.e. to ensure that he was not likely to be bullied or to agree to unreasonable request from his peers.

He was typically a passive young man who never seemed to get in any difficulty with behavioural issues and was well liked by secure officers.

Mo:

Mo was a young Muslim trainee within Key Stage 4. His knowledge of English was initially poor given his refugee background, coming from Afghanistan. As far as I am aware, contact with his natural parents had ceased, but he was very well supported by his foster parents within the United Kingdom who would visit and call at frequent, reliable intervals. Mo would not waste a minute getting to the various appointments, would let me know in advance if he would not be attending because of any clashes. He had one conviction for rape which meant that he was likely to spend a significant time within custodial accommodation

However, he was always very willing to learn and would get involved with most activities. His attendance at sessions was excellent and he was a firm favourite amongst other adults within the centre. He particularly liked his sporting activities and was a remarkably skilled cricketer. He was on the top regime reward level of Platinum Plus. He regularly attended a variety of additional sessions and often spent as much time with the Imam as was possible. Over time his language skills improved quite remarkably, revealing in the process a wicked sense of humour.

Despite being sentenced for a sexual crime which can lead to negative perceptions from others within a prison context, several staff commented to me that this was hard to believe of him– such was the rapport he had built with adults. Over the time that I spent with Mo I do not believe that I ever had to reprimand him – he was a role model for other trainees who admired him.

Paul:

Paul was a Key Stage 4 trainee who was relatively new to the centre since his conviction for a variety of crimes, mainly connected to theft and anti-social behaviour. He had only had the time to make his way up to Gold briefly in the regime reward system. It was not clear to me what his background was in terms of family relationships but I was aware that phone-calls did come in for him periodically.

In terms of his classroom performance, he had only been put forward to participate in the DofE sessions because of his engagement in core lessons. It was meant to act as an incentive to encourage further positive behaviour; “a bit of a carrot” as was suggested to me. However, in my sessions he often chose to leave rooms to go to the break-out room in order to calm down/talk privately with an officer. I found him to be surprisingly rowdy to begin with, especially on entry to the room. He seemed especially concerned that people know his name and that his reputation around the centre would be known. When we were outside (e.g. sowing plants, or practicing map reading) he would call out to passing trainees and attempt to begin conversations at whatever volume he could make himself heard at – regardless of how appropriate this behaviour was.

Typically, his attention span could be very short and officers could ‘hover’ near him or actively sit with him to support any task that needed completing. This was particularly acute when activities were more desk based. Over the time that I knew him, this behaviour pattern subsided into much more of a calm, if occasionally cheeky, confidence.

Steven:

Steven was the trainee that I knew least about in the centre. He only stayed with the group for a relatively short period of time, and even then did not attend every session fully. He tended to come over with his own key worker from the SCO team with whom he would talk freely – but often out of earshot of other people. Despite this apparent aloofness from the group, he showed an interest in the activities that were provided and was quite happy to follow. By the later sessions he was beginning to voluntarily shake my hand on entry to the room and talk about the events of the day. He was released home from the centre in September.

Appendix B – permission letter to named representatives of key workers:

Tim Cook

c/o Activities dept.

Dear colleagues,

Re Research project

I am writing to you as the key worker for one of our young people to inform you of a proposed project at the centre. As you know, we are continuing to launch the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme here. This offers many benefits to the young person as it encourages participation in a range of activities. More information about the award itself can be found at www.dofe.org.

In addition to this, I hope to lead a research project as part of a degree I'm pursuing with the University of East London. The project is intended to find out how young people can communicate more effectively in different situations and by using some new technology – especially wireless keyboards.

Potential benefits of the study:

- The trainees will participate in some fun activities focussed on communication;
- That the trainees will have the chance to offer feedback about their experiences in the centre;
- That the adults in the centre might develop a better sense of how our young people communicate.

This proposal has been discussed and agreed with various senior colleagues including the Director. Ian Skene is my line-manager and is fully aware of the project.

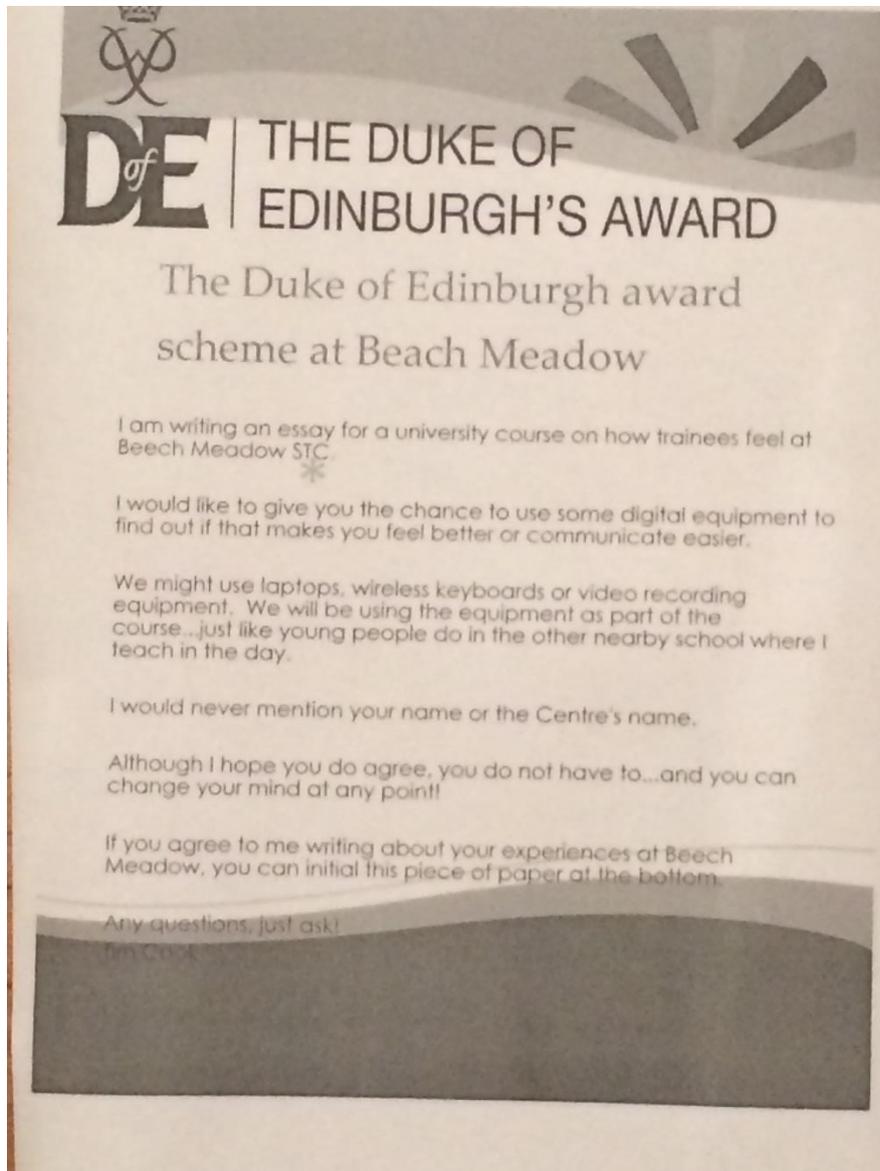
Participation in the evening sessions will continue if the young person does not want to participate in the project or if you have reservations. The research project is entirely voluntary and has no impact on the DofE experience that we will provide.

If you have any queries, questions or concerns as the key worker, please contact me. You can do this by either talking to me when I'm in the centre or by dropping a note off in my Activities pigeon hole. I'd be happy then to book some time with you to discuss anything. Alternatively, I know that Ian Skene would be happy to take any questions or listen to any concerns.

Yours faithfully,

Tim Cook

Appendix C – Informative sheets for trainees to agree to participate in the research project (anonymized in order to protect entire name)



Appendix D - Timetable of research activities:

Week number:	Week beginning: (all 2009)	Activities across the two evening sessions:
1	August 24 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Zing transcript generated ○ Post-it wall ○ Tissue-paper activity ○ Two sets of field notes made
2	August 31 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Zing transcript generated ○ Post-it wall ○ Two sets of field notes made
3	September 7 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Paired interview (Mo, Steven) ○ Zing transcript generated ○ Post-it wall ○ Two sets of field notes made
4	September 14 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individual interview (Harry) ○ Zing transcript generated ○ Post-it wall ○ Two sets of field notes made
5	September 21 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individual interview (Matthew) ○ Individual interview (Luke) ○ Zing transcript generated ○ Two sets of field notes made
6	September 28 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individual interview (Matthew) ○ Two sets of field notes made
7	October 5 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individual interview (Luke) ○ Zing transcript generated
8	October 12 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individual interview (John) ○ Zing transcript generated ○ Two sets of field notes made
9	October 19 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Design of t-shirt activity ○ Two sets of field notes made

10	October 26 th	Half-term break and illness –not present at centre
11	November 2 nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individual interview (Paul) ○ Zing transcript generated ○ Two sets of field notes made ○ Weekend activity of Fitness Marathon in aid of local hospice (7th/8th)
12	November 9 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individual interview (Mo) ○ Zing transcript generated ○ Two sets of field notes made
13	November 16 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Paired interview (Mo, James) ○ Creation of collage activity ○ Two sets of field notes made
14	November 23 rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individual interview (Matthew) ○ Zing transcript generated ○ Two sets of field notes made
15	November 30 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Group interview (Mo, Matthew, James, Paul) ○ Two sets of field notes made
16	December 7 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individual interview (Paul) ○ Zing transcript generated ○ Two sets of field notes made
17	December 14 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individual interview (Paul) ○ Zing transcript generated ○ Two sets of field notes made
18	December 21 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Paired interview (Mo, James) ○ Two sets of field notes made
19	December 28 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individual interview (James) ○ Individual interview (Mo) ○ One set of field notes made

Appendix E - timetable of activities:

Week number:	Week beginning: (all 2009)	Activities across the two evening sessions:
1	August 24 th	○ Team building activities e.g. confidence challenges
2	August 31 st	○ Service – weeding and clearing of an area of the site. Planting of small ‘plug-plants’ into individual plant pots for trainees to keep in yard or take back to unit.
3	September 7 th	○ Completion of clearing the site. Further session based on the Countryside Code including designing of the forthcoming Peace Garden.
4	September 14 th	○ Designing of menus – costing of appropriate foods for an expedition.
5	September 21 st	○ Camp craft: cooking on gas stoves.
6	September 28 th	○ Countryside code – how to protect our environment. Also, map reading and treasure hunt around the centre.
7	October 5 th	○ Camp craft: practising how to put up a tent safely
8	October 12 th	○ Sport: participation in centre football tournament ○ Expedition preparation: use of computer programme (EX2) to jointly design an expedition.
9	October 19 st	○ Expedition related fitness work: what would be appropriate clothing for an expedition, demonstration of purchased kit, circuit training to develop the fitness needed
10	October 26 th	Half-term break and illness –not present at centre
11	November 2 nd	○ Map reading revisited including compasses and route cards ○ Volunteering weekend: weekend competing fitness marathon in aid of local hospice.
12	November 9 th	○ Banners/t-shirts designed ○ Development of map reading
13	November 16 th	○ Health related fitness: sports session – updating logs and a cricket session in the gym

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Camp craft: intermediate work on camping. Both inside and outdoors putting up tents more effectively
14	November 23 rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Volunteering: planning and preparation for fun day e.g. design of posters, preparing a presentation to the Deputy Director. Also, preparation of promotional material for other participants in scheme.
15	November 30 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Volunteering: Planning and preparation for fun day including presentation to Deputy Director. ○ Rucksack related fitness
16	December 7 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ First Aid: learning key techniques of First Aid.
17	December 14 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Health session: how to keep healthy, both on expedition and more widely in life. Also included a circuit training session on fitness. ○ Presentation of mini-certificates
18	December 21 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Summary/updates of log books. Presentation of certificates based on aspects of award achieved so far.

Appendix F - list of codes:

- i. Challenge to adult authority**
 - a. Reaction to guidance from adults
 - b. Complaints
 - c. Refusal to respond
- ii. Reaction to being present at session**
 - a. Use of emoticons to reflect emotional state
 - b. Questioning
 - c. Apologies
 - d. Laughter
 - e. Insults
 - f. Explicit anger
 - g. Frustration
- iii. Reflection on group values**
 - a. Affirmations of others' views
 - b. Empathetic remarks
 - c. Playful banter
 - d. Indication of group loyalty e.g. to football teams or to residential units
 - e. Participant beginning a topic
 - f. Reflection on home life
 - g. Discussion of trust
- iv. Discussion of aspects of life at centre**
 - a. Preferences expressed for leisure time within the centre
 - b. Discussion of regime i.e. reward/incentive
 - c. Comment on privacy within a custodial environment
 - d. Sharing information about pedagogy at the centre
 - e. Sharing information about the food at the centre
 - f. Sharing information about the behaviour at the centre
 - g. Views on how to make material tangible gain within STC context

v. Discussion of award scheme experience and research process

- a. Request for expedition destination
- b. Requests for volunteering opportunity
- c. Discussion of physical activities
- d. Comment on the use of technology
- e. Confused text/experimentation with keyboards
- f. Use of naming/tag nicknames

Appendix G – Pages from CfBT Toolkit with coding

Table two: initial coding from CfBT manual

Annotation on text	Meaning reconstruction
Single straight line	Reference to “Respect”
Zig-zag line	Learners’ demands of various kinds
Circled text	Teaching methods required
Dotted line	Personal qualities of teacher needed
Dashed line	Use of voice in the classroom
Dashed line above and below text	Justification of control measure i.e. waver that not all activities are possible

Curriculum

- Generally young people were happy about the variety of courses offered by the curriculum.
- Courses that young people were particularly interested in included motor mechanics, plumbing, sports science, history and geography, contemporary music, PE, a variety of GCSEs and the opportunity to do A Levels.
- Learners had mixed views on how helpful and relevant they found their courses. It was important to have practical courses which would help improve personal and employment prospects in the community.
- A small minority rejected what they were doing, and felt that they were not learning anything.

Organisation of education

- Young people want variety in their curriculum.
- No curriculum timetable will satisfy everyone all of the time. But learners described how important it was that they should have an opportunity to take up the most popular subjects, such as art or music.
- The more popular courses tend to be over-subscribed: what is the fairest method of selecting applicants?

Level of work and activities

- It is difficult to get the balance right between a supportive and demanding curriculum, without either patronising learners, or leaving some behind.

- Some young people suggested that the demands made on them were not sufficiently challenging.
- In the context of a high turnover of learners, and the many constraints of a TOL regime, how far can education and training offer a wide variety of teaching methods, which allow for individualised and stretching learning goals?
- Young people reported on how they valued a variety of teaching methods, engaging them in more and less formal ways – worksheets, group work and games for example – with no one method used to the exclusion of others.
- Learners emphasised how much they value learning that relates to their life outside custody, and which they can apply in their personal lives or to their work.

Relationships with staff

- As in all environments learners report mixed reactions to their teachers.
- In general, it was reported that some teachers are not only good at their job but go out of their way to be helpful and supportive. But others find it more difficult to relate to their learners and talk to them on their level.
- Learners gave evidence that is repeated throughout adult education: how much the effectiveness of teachers depends on their personal qualities as well as their teaching strategies.
- Learners spoke of the importance of clear explanations – both at induction and in education.

- Building relationships with teachers is important, as is the continuity of teaching staff.
- Teachers need to know how to handle young people: to have authority as well as an understanding of learners' needs. This is as much about a teacher's qualities and character as it is about their teaching strategies.
- Respect is the key: learners want to be treated with respect. If they are, it will be reciprocated; if they are not, the teaching and learning is likely to be undermined.

Attitudes to education

- Something to be proud of: learners reported that they wanted something they could be proud of upon leaving. For many that would come with receiving a certificate to acknowledge their learning and achievements.
- The learners' voice: some learners talked about the importance of having their voices heard, of being represented in a forum at which their views could be made known, such as the Trainee Council.

How you can take the learning forward

There are several ways of promoting consultation with learners.

Formal channels

- Monthly consultations with small groups of learners using in-house questionnaires.

- Learners completing or being helped to complete student evaluation forms, either when completing a course or upon release.
- One-to-one tutorials with young people, including an assessment of their interests, motivations for learning and their longer-term aims.
- Learning and Skills Council monthly report, in a section on learners' voices.
- Learner feedback, and any recommendations arising from that, regularly distributed to education staff monthly.
- Report prepared for the wider prison establishment on learners' views and how this affects their engagement and participation in education.
- Workshops for staff designed to respond to learners' concerns.

Informal channels

- Ongoing one-to-one informal formative assessment: what's going well, what's not going well, what can we do to make things go better?
- Routine end-of-class review.
- Arranging to talk with a young person during a break in formal learning if there is a particular reason to be concerned about their learning or behaviour.
- Being responsive in the classroom; adapting teaching strategies and materials if there are signs that learners are becoming bored or disengaged.

Learners' voices: recommendations

Learner feedback was used to develop a set of recommendations for developing education and training provision.

Note: it is important to acknowledge that not everything we recommend below is an option for all YOIs.

Arrival and assessment

The purpose and results of the PLUS assessments should be explained in full to all learners, and they should be given the opportunity to ask questions.

How the PLUS results will be used should be fully explained to learners, with the emphasis on what it means to them in education.

The student handbook – where available – should be clearly accessible to learners.

Learners should be talked through the handbook, and given opportunities to ask questions.

Induction and new education

It is difficult to judge the optimum time for induction when young people are being transferred from one institution to another. Too long, and learners may disengage; too short and they will not be adequately prepared.

Where possible, learners should be given an education prospectus, giving details of courses and what learners can expect to take away from them.

- Staff responsible for the allocations system should talk through all the education and regime options so that learners are aware of what their options are.
- Learners should be allowed adequate time at the allocation point to enable them to make the right decisions about their courses.
- Where a learner is not able to be allocated their first choice it is important to provide a full explanation.

The curriculum and choice

- Where possible YOIs should look to offer a wider range of GCSEs if the learner profile makes this appropriate.
- Subject to the constraints of the fixed facilities and security clearance, the curriculum should be organised to allow as many learners as possible to take up their first choice of courses.
- The curriculum should offer breadth, progression and links to employability.
- The content of courses should include activities and skills that connect with what learners are familiar with in their daily lives.

The level of curriculum work and activities

- Learning activities should be both supportive and challenging, learners should be stretched.
- Teachers should allow time for activities that require learners to engage in discussion with the teacher, in pairs or in groups. Time should be given to active teaching and learning.

- It is important that teachers have and are seen to have high expectations of their learners.

Relationships with staff and teachers

Teachers should allow adequate time to provide clear explanations and to check that these have been understood.

- All lessons should be carefully planned.

- It is important that teachers are able to interact with learners 'on their level'. This is something learners are keenly aware of, and respond well to.

- Respect is key: where teachers show respect it is likely to be reciprocated. If learners feel that they are not being treated respectfully the process of teaching and learning is likely to be undermined.

Appendix H: Worked example of application of Carspecken model to CfBT Toolkit

The data provided in Appendix G provides a useful basis for illustrating the development and construction of derived findings. Therefore, in a sequential fashion, the stages of Carspecken's model will be applied to this material.

The document that this appendix focuses on is the education manual produced by CfBT, previously cited in this study. In this worked example, the focus is especially on the pages that discuss "Learners' voices" (1996, p26-27). This document was appropriate to include within the monological data set as it clearly relates to a topic of central interest for this thesis.

Assuming that the preliminary stage of drawing up a list of research questions and of specific items to study has been achieved, and that the researcher has already reflected on their own value orientations, the first stage in the Carspecken model is to compile the primary record through collecting monological data. By collecting material as unobtrusively as possible, in this example by collating various documents, the researcher is able to gain a detailed record through a relatively third-person perspective. It is monological data because the researcher collects it without any "penetrating dialogue" with the participants (Carspecken, 1996, p42). The collation of institutional literature provided a means by which to both collect data that was in a public domain and to collect data where I had had no part in its creation. In the particular circumstances of this study, the collection of institutional documents provided the best available means by which to gain insight without the potential for a 'Hawthorne' effect.

Having completed stage one of the analysis by sourcing and establishing a body of primary data, the second stage is to establish a 'preliminary reconstructive analysis'. The purpose of this stage is to begin to explore "interaction patterns, meanings, power relations, roles, interactive sequences, evidence of embodied meaning, intersubjective structures, and other items" (1996, p42).

In this example, the 'preliminary reconstructive analysis' facilitates the identification of six key areas which are listed in Table 2, Appendix G namely: teaching strategies; respect; trainee's demands; the use of student voice; security and control concerns. These themes allowed the researcher a starting point for the analysis of some of the challenges of effectively engaging trainees within the secure estate.

The chapter assertively describes an approach to education called a “Personalised Learning Approach (PLA)” (p21) which involves people “in the design and delivery of education and training”. This powerful opening to the chapter leads one to draw comparisons to more radical views of student voice, such as Fielding’s work supporting ‘Students as Researchers’. However, when the principles for PLA are outlined, there is a more passive description of the role of the young person. The four principles of PLA refer to having individual needs addressed; having coordinated support available; the safety of the environment and “having a say about...learning”. The lack of agency by the young person themselves is noteworthy. The fracture between a bold affirmation of the young person’s role in both designing and delivering education, compared to the passive role suggested in the principles, provided an interesting perspective to explore latterly in the research. What is even more interesting is that despite the powerful introduction to the Personalised Learning Approach, once past the first page in a seven page chapter, no further references to it appear. It is these kinds of fractures that offer points to explore in stage three of Carspecken’s model.

Having been introduced to a teaching model in the first few paragraphs, over the rest of the chapter two themes emerge in the text. These are ‘Teachers’ personalities’ and ‘Teaching strategies’. These are especially interesting themes which in other teaching environments may well be seen as inter-related or even synonymous. However, in this text there is a distinction drawn between a teacher’s own personal qualities and the strategies that they might employ. It is noted “how much the effectiveness of teachers depends on their personal qualities as well as their teaching strategies” (p25). There is a clear distinction that could be worth exploring too.

The demands on the teacher are seen in the frequency of dotted lines in my analysis and annotation which highlight that the teacher is expected to possess certain personal qualities, most obviously that “Teachers need to know how to handle young people: to have authority” (p25). Good teachers are seen as those who “go out of their way to be helpful and supportive” (p24). This is contrasted against those teachers who could not “talk to them on their level” (p24) – a statement which is repeated twice for emphasis. Ultimately, it is made clear that building relationships “is important” (p25).

As suggested, the personal qualities of teachers are juxtaposed against their teaching strategies. From the previous appendix, there are few circles in evidence, i.e. there are few

examples of the required teaching methods. This is interesting, because the text has previously stressed the importance of a particular approach to learning and has noted in emphatic terms that both strategies and personal qualities are important. Yet, when it comes to the text itself, few teaching strategies are actually cited, other than the selection of an appropriate curriculum. There is one suggestion that young people “reported on how they value a variety of teaching methods” such as worksheets or group work (p24) but that is about the sum total. Therefore, this text has both cited a particular approach to education and then drawn a parallel in the significance of teachers’ personal qualities as contrasted to teaching strategies, and yet remained nebulous about describing those strategies. One might have expected, for example, to have seen the authors be specific about the various successful or unsuccessful strategies. The emphasis on personal qualities is intriguing at this stage.

Where there is consistency is in the text’s discussion of the notion of respect. Respect is written large throughout these few pages and it is appropriate to examine some of the implications that flow from this particular primary code. The onus to demonstrate respect is placed clearly on the teachers. The declarative statement that “learners want to be treated with respect” is of interest to explore in terms of whether this actually occurred in practice, and how other institutional documents (such as the handbook for officers) positioned both staff and trainees, e.g. are the messages consistent or are there fractures, and if so, what might this suggest?

The later repetition of word “respect”, is even more powerful. We are told that “Respect is the key” (p25) and then again on page 24, the opening statement of the final message in the chapter is that “Respect is key”. In this conclusion there is then a warning of the consequences of how trainees might react if respect is not expressed. It is only at this point that any suggestion of young people having any type of power to resist the teacher’s intentions is alluded to. This, in the context of this thesis, was of course an interesting starting point from which to explore. The priority placed on the notion on respect through repetition, powerful declarative statements and structural positioning within the text made it very clear to any reader the demands placed on adults in the establishment.

There is also a significant amount of zig-zagged line, highlighting the frequency of various demands that trainees are perceived to make. Such demands included aspects relating to curriculum selection, to the importance of being listened to, to pedagogy (through the demands for learning related to life outside the secure estate) and to wanting something “they

could be proud of upon leaving” (p25). It is to be assumed from the tone of this text that, although these demands were various, they were reasonable. At no point are any criticisms made of such demands, nor any sense of any less reasonable demands that trainees are known to make (e.g. take-out food from fast-food outlets). At this early point in the study, given the volume of zig-zagged lines, it appeared that the trainees could be assertive. It could be interesting to compare the demands identified in this chapter with any demands made within the study.

In this chapter there is a very clear and formal perception of how young people’s voices can be used. The chapter lists how the consultations with young people have been included in various reports, used to inform the writing of the toolkit itself, used to inform staff training and included in a magazine for young people. Given the range of uses here, there appears to be an institutional commitment to using consultation in formal ways as part of a reporting and staff development process. Alongside this is a discussion of informal channels for the expression of ideas by young people. Four separate suggestions are made about how to gain feedback from young people in order to be “responsive” to their needs. It is clear that adults are expected to respond to the demands of young people.

The expectation on adults to respond is reinforced by the changing use of verbs. Early in the chapter, sentences presented information as fact, such as “Learners spoke of the importance of clear explanations”. The use of verbs changes significantly by adopting modal verbs, when offering recommendations on learners’ voices (p26-27). By using modal verbs, the use of which suggest a moral authority, it reinforces that the institution expects views of trainees to be listened to and acted upon – expectations are conferred on the adults to listen and react appropriately. That expectations are conferred on the adult is underlined by the consistent use of bullet points to present information. Bullet points are typically used in informative texts that direct particular actions by the reader. Through much of this chapter, bullet points are used to establish a particular set of standards for teachers.

The final key theme is that relating to security and control. There several occasions where the document acknowledges the security/control implications for working within the secure estate. One such occasion is to contrast the need for a wide variety of teaching methods against “the many constraints” of a secure estate regime (p24). A further occasion is that even when recommendations are made by the “learners’ voices”, not all recommendations are

“an option for all YOIs” (p26). Such conditions especially relate to curriculum selection where concerns about “the constraints of the fixed facilities and security clearance” (p26) are cited. It is clear that there are dilemmas for all those working within the secure estate and it is not just researchers who have to adapt their activities for safe working.

In summary, what is evident in an entire chapter entitled “Capturing young people’s voices” is the extent to which the influence of teachers is cited. The volume of dotted lines suggests that the teacher is central to the success of young people expressing themselves successfully. Whilst this may be true, these pages construct an interpersonal imbalance where the teacher is placed in a position of power whilst the influence and effectiveness of the young person is diminished.

It is not appropriate in stage two go beyond exploring potential meanings and to establish questions which the researcher would go back to the field to explore. What is of interest is how these codes reflect themes from other data sources and other texts from the institutional literature data set. By exploring the primary record (stage one) and then developing some preliminary analysis (stage two), it leaves the researcher in a position to return to the field with a more focused gaze.

The third stage is that of dialogical data generation. This is the point where the researcher can fully interact in the field, “conversing intensively” with participants, generating data “with people rather than record(ing) information about them.” (p42). Due to the iterative nature of this process, it can challenge notions generated in the earlier stages. In this worked example, the document can only serve as a starting point for asking questions. The preliminary thematic analysis introduced, for example, an exploration of varying perspectives on positioning. Questions around whether the trainees saw that they were treated with respect, what this actually looked like in practice and what it might look like when respect was not shown all seemed pertinent. What also seemed pertinent was the assumption in the text that because it was the teacher whose qualities and characters controlled the young people, the young people were passive in this equation. There was no recognition in the text of capillaries of power whereby the trainees would show respect, exercise authority nor demonstrate personal qualities. It was these areas that my study turned to as part of the iterative nature of these five stages and which are examined in some depth in my analysis of the data flowing from the multi-modal and interview interactions in the study.

Stages four and five relate to conducting systems analysis, and accordingly Carspecken discusses both in the same chapter. Stage four explores the comparisons between the research site and other sites that in some ways are similar to it, in order to identify system relations. Stage five leads to more inferences as one links the findings from stages one to four with broader social, theoretical concepts. Potentially, this then allows the critical researcher to suggest reasons for the experiences identified connected to class, race, gender or other political structure (p43). It is, of course, difficult to draw higher level analysis from a worked example of one institutional document. However, the themes that emerge from this text are of significance to this study.

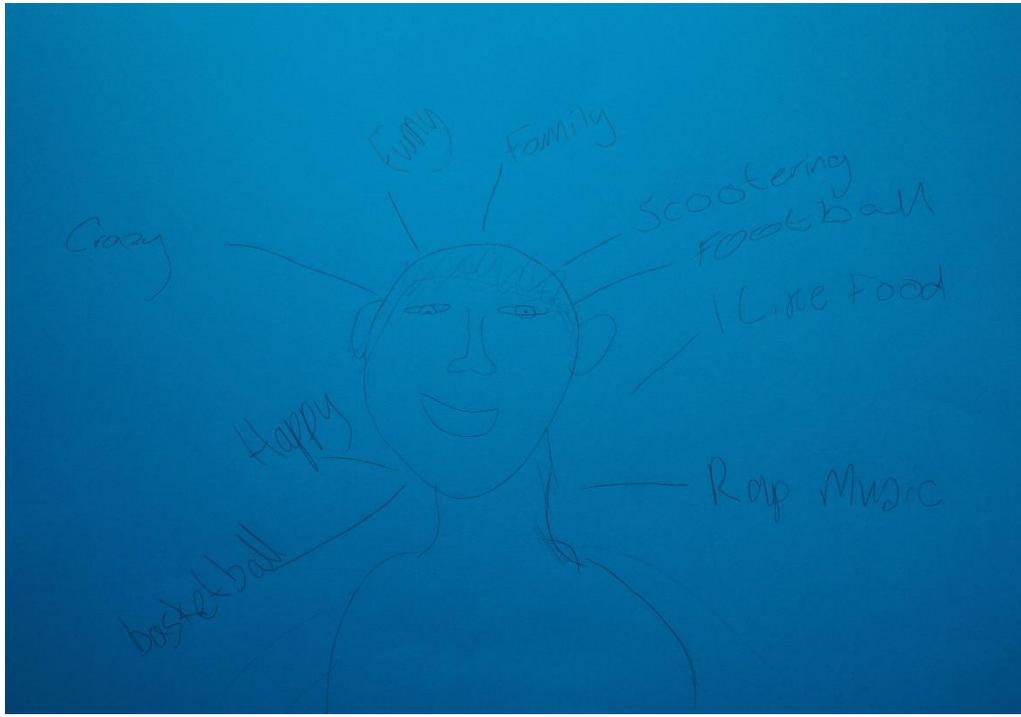
One such example is that in this worked example, there has been a discussion of how to effectively engage with trainees, including the accommodation of the demands that trainees may make. There has only been a slight recognition of the power that the trainees might exert. Therefore, the position adopted by the text, as highlighted in the findings chapter, paints a simplistic picture of power relations despite the evident institutional commitment. The lack of comment on how trainees may demand more unreasonable aspects is the initial thread that the researcher identifies in this worked example that provides the basis for further enquiry. Through careful analysis, this text provides many other interesting threads, not least the projection of institutional commitment to the concept of voice – albeit without a clearly defined concept of what voice might constitute. The text that has been used in this worked example, therefore, becomes part of a wider set of data that is analysed and discussed in the Findings chapter.

What this worked example offers to the researcher in the early stages of enquiry is an indicator of the institution's perception of ideal models of working practice. This allows the researcher to note (a) positions adopted within the text, (b) juxtapositions suggested within the text and (c) any schisms between aspirational practice and reality. In the especially interesting case of this study, the production of a second document produced for a very similar purpose but aimed at the secure care officers allows for a further set of possible comparisons. It is by analyzing the fractures between positions that interesting lines of enquiry develop for a researcher.

Appendix I – image of drawn boy with a crown



Appendix J – image of drawn boy with no magazine images used



Appendix K - montage of t-shirt images

Figure 1: Image of entire t-shirt



Figure 2: Image of floral addition



Figure 3: Image of "Hi"



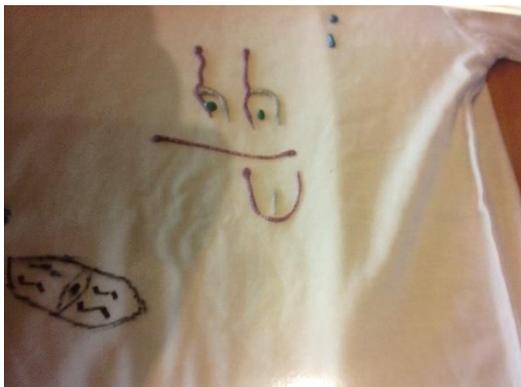
Figure 4: Second image of “Hi”



Figure 5: Image of “Swag” t-shirt



Figure 6: Image of small face



Appendix L – extract from transcript three:

Date: September 11th

Present: Mohammed; James; Luke;

Context: Poorly attended session – various “First response” calls were happening/SCOs reported disruptive behaviour all day. The wireless transcript came after a spoken conversation about the general tone.

Transcript:

Tim So...what r u doing to do to ensure you stay on or get onto platinum plus?

Tim And also...how can I, or the teachers or staff, help you guys?

Mo I will keep my behaciour

Put his hands under his chair to make the point

Luke I am going to carry on my good behaviour.

James I can talk to the staff

Stands and hugs nearby SCO

Mo Yeah I can have key work sessions with the staff

Nodding too

James Try to do well in class?

Tim I'd have thought so...any other ideas?

Luke maybe stay in class even if its boring

Makes exaggerated yawning motion

Luke and do the cleaning in the unit.

Tim Cool – anything else anyone wants to say?

Mo Nah.

James That does

Despite the interrupted nature of the entire session, and the consequently short nature of the interaction, I consider that this session represented a further development in the nature of our computer dialogue. I believe this to be the case partly because of the focused responses, directly in response to the initial orientating question. I also believe that this was more successful due to the more positive tone, including the suggestions of additional information with relatively little prompting. The absence of insult, even of a ‘bantering’ nature, was evident.

I later came to consider that one of my opening questions had not been addressed directly. I had asked how adults in the institution could support the young people most effectively – but this met with (albeit positive) suggestions about how the young people could help themselves to an apparently more successful life, for example through completing chores of participating in “key work sessions with the staff”. These responses missed the point that I was asking about *how they could be helped*.

This misunderstanding may be significant in that it could signify that the young people were so unused to being supported, or that the support offered was rarely negotiated, that the question was reinterpreted by Mo. It may also be that Mo, with a relatively weak understanding of English, misinterpreted the question through error and the other trainees simply followed Mo’s response. This ‘slipping’ of intent would be something to investigate later.

Appendix M – extract from field notes, December 15th.

What were the key events in the session?

Mixed views about this session – seemed to go in a spin for a long period. Trainees were unusual, as if something was not right...not sure what? Physically, lots of movement in the room from start to finish – do not think that if we'd been doing gas stoves this week we could have continued.

On the positive side – there seemed to be no 'standing on ceremony' – very quick handshakes and a direct movement towards the keyboards. Keyboard transcript length continues to lengthen. Also, noticed that trainees were again coming across in more appropriate equipment (i.e. bringing a waterproof and/or fleece) in case of going outside...is there an acceptance (tacit or otherwise?) that there are certain procedures to the session.

On the other hand – the procedures wouldn't normally include the endless baiting – both on keyboard and throughout the session in interaction with one another/officers. Did officers look tired tonight?

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