

Discourses of educational leadership the under-
explained influence of context

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Abstract

The aim of this small scale empirical research study was to shed a discursive light on the leadership that was experienced within two primary school settings in the North West of England and the constraints of context that shaped the discourses of leadership within those schools. Contextual factors have been defined as being on three levels: institutional, cultural and governmental. So using this framework as a sorting category for posing situated questions of the participants and Gee's (1999; 2005; 2011) interconnected one to explore and question the data and the taken-for-granted assumptions, it has been possible to garner an understanding of how these contexts interacted in framing an individual's understanding of the leadership they were experiencing and implications for their practice.

The research questions which this study addressed were:

What are the contextual factors that shape discourses of educational leadership?

What does the discursive analysis reveal of how stakeholders talk about ways of becoming in the leadership they are experiencing within a socially situated practice?

What are the implications of this analysis for the practice of leadership within school?

The research was influenced by two particular approaches to discourse analysis, a 'practice approach' and a 'critical approach'. As educational practices are communicative events, this study has adopted a critical discourse analysis in making visible the ways that individuals talk about leadership they are experiencing within their settings. Through a Foucauldian lens it was possible to question the basis for the assumptions and norms of educational leadership in school and examine the ways in which individuals within school were both constructed and shaped by that discourse.

This study takes the view that the school as an organizational context for leaders is both complex and under explored as it is in a constant state of flux. Various complexities are acknowledged concerning the contextual nature of leadership; it is complex, context specific, socially constructed, negotiated and hierarchical.

Analysis of 18 in-depth semi-structured interviews and 18 cognitive maps reveals a range of Discourses of contextual factors of leadership such as the Discourse of the pivotal role of the headteacher; Discourse of leadership activity; Discourse of identity-work; Discourse of power relations and Discourse of commodification of education all made visible by the individuals within the school to which they endeavour to belong.

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1. Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Aims and rationale

The aim of this study is to shed a discursive light on leadership and the constraints of context within a primary school setting. Methodologically, the research is best described as an interpretive discursive study, grounded in critical social philosophy. Which seeks to gain a deeper professional understanding of leadership within the primary schooling sector. Social reality for me is meaningfully understood by perceiving individuals as social actors, actors who are not always fully aware of the impact of the social stage on their actions.

In order to address the above aim the research engages with the following questions to provide a coherent structure for the study:

What are the contextual factors that shape discourses of educational leadership?

What does the discursive analysis reveal of how stakeholders talk about ways of becoming in the leadership they are experiencing within a socially situated practice?

What are the implications of this analysis for the practice of leadership within school?

My intellectual puzzle concerns how the effectiveness of leadership in two primary school settings can provide insights into how contextual factors shape that leadership. Therefore, in trying to understand the world in which educational researchers operate, this study is conducted within a range of beliefs about the ways in which education research can be understood as practice (Mason, 2002; Gillies, 2013).

The research questions stem from a desire to understand what shapes leaders' discourses within a primary setting and how this impacts on an individual's way of becoming within school. More often than not leadership in schools is learnt by on-the-job experiential learning, through a cluster network of school leaders and by adopting a mandated model of leadership. My experience has taught me that this leadership varies incredibly even within identical socioeconomic environments. My conceptual framework is therefore built around assembling data, evidence and arguments which are used to generate ideas and propositions. My strategy has been to operationalize what teachers articulate as 'effective' with regard to what

leadership feels like and how they observe it, know it and how their identities as teachers are built or destroyed as a result of it.

Furthermore, having moved from the private sector to become a primary school teacher, latterly a teacher educator within the higher education sector and subsequently a governor, I have always been preoccupied by a concern with policy compliance, particularly prescribed by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), and the bureaucratic nature of monitoring and evaluation within a school environment. The monitoring and evaluation involved powerful ways of being, or, in the terminology of Gee (2005), *Discourses*, which originated in and supported policy. In terms of my theoretical approach, a critical discourse analysis provides me with a way of thinking about the power behind the language-in-use and the relationships that this may affect and shape. I am interested in why some discourses were marginalized compared to others (Foucault, 1974). As a result, language and the analysis of discourse are central themes that permeate this thesis.

1.2 Research context

A case study approach is chosen when it is of specific interest, 'it is the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case' (Stake, 1995:xi). With regards to this study the case is a headteacher who led two primary schools in the North West of England. He was chosen for a number of reasons: firstly, because I have known him for a number of years, having taught beside him and latterly having become community governor of his second school; and secondly and more importantly, because the headteacher was head of both primary schools, allowing me to perform purposive sampling as I was able to observe and investigate the phenomenon over a four-year period. Also, the headteacher was a non-teaching head in both case study sites, therefore devoting most of his time to leadership and management. Additionally, it is significant that both schools have achieved positive inspection reports from Ofsted, especially in respect of management and leadership.

Ofsted reports are conducted by a team of professional educators (some previous heads themselves) who have standardized criteria against which they evaluate a school: overall effectiveness; achievements and standards; personal development and well-being; quality of provision and leadership and management (Ofsted, 2011; 2013; 2014).

1.3 Methodology and chosen methods

Education, educational research and the social sciences present a very complex set of interrelated issues. The way individuals build their relationships within organizations, along with the different ways in which they participate within social groups they find themselves part of within those organizations, is relational, time specific and related to common frames of reference (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014). This study is interested in the conscious and taken-for-granted ways of how things work, and why, in particular contexts.

This research is influenced by two particular approaches to discourse analysis: a 'practice approach' and a 'critical approach' (Lawless et al., 2011). Looking at effective leadership as discursive practice provides a means of critically analysing how participants 'talk-about' their practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991), allowing the researcher to examine what is being said, by whom, why, how and what happens as a result. A helpful means of looking at discourse analysis in this context is provided by Rigg (2005), who argues that thinking of discourse as both noun and verb can aid understanding. In other words, making a distinction between discursive resource and discursive practice enables an analysis of both what is being communicated, the resources; and how it is being communicated, the practices. This view is also supported by Lawless et al. (2011:265) who suggest that 'a practice approach views language as situated within a particular social and cultural context rather than within a particular interaction'.

In terms of a critical approach to discourse analysis, is as Rogers (2011:3) suggests a broad framework that brings critical social theories into dialogue with theories of language 'critical discourse analysts are generally concerned with a critical theory of the social world and the relationship of discourse in the construction and representation of this social world and a methodology that allows them to describe, interpret and explain such relationships'. Gee (1999:1) offers both a theory and a method for studying how language is used 'on site to enact specific social activities and social identities'. Gee's approach draws on American anthropological linguistics and narratives; social discourse theories and cognitive psychology (ibid.). For Gee (1999:28; 2004; 2005; 2011) critical discourse analysis (cda) argues that 'language-in-use is always part and parcel of, and partially constitutive of specific social practices and that social practices always have implications for inherently political things like status, solidarity, the distribution of social goods and power'. For Gee language-in-use is not just for saying things but used with other non verbal tools

builds things in the world. For him whenever we say or write anything we are building 'one of seven areas of reality' (1999:30). By adopting Gee's approach to discourse analysis this study offers both a methodological framework and a method which bridges the gap between more linguistic-orientated studies of language and the socio-cultural approaches of language as a social practice, this is further explored in 3.10.

The focus for this study is on the grammar of what is said the language-in-use. It is also interested in 'ways of representing, believing, valuing, and participating with all of the sign systems that people have at their disposal' (Rogers, 2004:7). Gee is well known for the distinction between little 'd' and 'D' discourse, 'it was one of the ways through which critical discourse analysis gained leverage in educational studies' (ibid.) What Gee (1999; 2005; 2011) refers to as *Discourse* with a capital 'D' represents an individual's way of thinking, believing, acting, interacting, speaking, listening and valuing (Gee, 1999). Little 'd' *discourse* refers to what is said or written. This distinction stresses that 'the form of language cannot exist independent of the function of language and the intention of speakers' (Rogers, 2004:7.), as a result serving to reproduce society through its social structures, relationships and value systems, 'language has meaning only in and through social practices' (Gee, 1999:8, 2005; 2011; Fairclough, 2015). For Fairhurst '*discourse* scholars ask 'How' questions ('How is leadership brought off?') in other words what stretches of oral language is being used and why. For her when *Discourse* scholars are using capital 'D' they are asking 'the 'What' questions ('What kind of leadership are we talking about?')' (2011:503).

The focus therefore within this study is on how discourse is put together, and what is gained by its construction, ways of being in school. This can highlight how language not only describes things, but builds things and has implications in terms of individual identity and social practice, and also politically in terms of the distribution of power (Gee, 2005; 2011; Lawless et al., 2011). This study therefore shares the assumption 'that because language is a social practice and because all social practices are not treated equally, all analyses of language are therefore inherently critical' (Rogers, 2004:2).

It was pertinent for the purposes of this study to introduce the distinction between 'D/discourse analysis' to stress that this study is interested in 'analyzing language as it is fully integrated with all the other elements that go into social practices (ways of thinking or feeling, ways of manipulating objects or tools, ways of using non-

linguistic symbol systems, etc)' (Gee, 1999:9). Now having made the point for the purpose of ease, this study will simply use the phrase 'discourse analysis or discourse' but will mean by this phrase both little 'd' *discourse* and capital 'D' *Discourse*.

This study further draws upon Foucault's work on discourse (1972) to address the research questions above. The Foucauldian school of thought sees discourse as a particular way of looking at and structuring the world. As will be discussed in Chapter 3, adopting a Foucauldian critique, together with Gee's (2005:9; 2009; 2011) interconnected framework, provides a means, a set of 'thinking devices'. This enables me to analyse the talk of the participants in terms of their physical locations in their settings and the social relationships and practices including relations of power that form part of their life in school. As a result, it is possible to question the basis for the assumptions and norms of educational leadership in the two case study site schools.

Furthermore, the methods of cognitive mapping and semi-structured interviews are used to try to understand the complexity of the socially situated practice of school (Mason, 2002). Cognitive mapping as a method is used as this can enhance the understanding of the participants' frames of reference as, through the process of mapping, relationships between concepts are demonstrated by propositions which are produced by the linking of two or more concepts by words written by the respondents which form meaningful statements (Novak & Gowin, 1984). By recording the process additional rich data was captured. Semi-structured interviews are appropriate because I wanted to question, to listen to participants talk in order to understand their situated knowledge.

1.4 Situating my argument

I situate my argument in the particular environment of the present primary school sector. Leadership discourse within schools requires measurable aims or goals, that is, generally quantifiable in nature (Gillies, 2013). School leaders and staff are therefore held accountable for the achievement of these outcomes. The focus within this study is on how language in these school communities is an ingredient of social processes resulting in, and sustained by, forms of power embedded within dialogical and relational social practices (Cunliffe, 2014), affected by time and space and co-produced (Grint, 2001; Osborne et al., 2002; Jackson & Parry, 2008; Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014).

'Leadership discourses, therefore, do not describe what is, or what must be, but instead construct the educational space in such a way as to render it fit for the discourse' (Gillies, 2013:46). A critical analysis of leadership within a primary school environment, I shall argue, necessarily needs to provide insights into the dynamics of the interactions and the construction of the educational space. The purpose of this is to open up a discursive space to talk about why, more so than other, broader aims of education, leadership discourses within a primary school setting require measurable outcomes.

1.5 Situating myself within the study

Trowler (2014:5) refers to doing research where one is employed or studying as 'insider' research. He advocates that what 'counts as 'inside' also depends on one's own identity positioning; how one sees oneself in relation to the organisation'. He warns that an insider approach must be appropriate and 'congruent with the research question' (ibid:9). Reason and Rowan (1991, cited in Trowler, 2014:6) suggest that by carrying out insider research it is possible 'to combine more objective research approaches, 'naïve enquiry' with those suffused with cultural awareness', something as a governor and teacher educator I can bring to the table. It is a matter of being conscious of where the fine line rests between 'where and how the endogenous character of one's research potentially illuminates the issues of interest, and where it could obscure them' (Trowler 2014:6).

Cunliffe (2014) further suggests that how we relate to each other within organisations is at the heart of management. For her there are three paths, relational, reflexive and a moral and ethical responsibility of those in management positions. Relational because within organisations we are in relationship with others that may not be the same as ourselves. In addition there needs to be an understanding of morals and ethics not in the standard sense of organisational ethics but in our relationships and interactions with others. Finally for her individuals need to adopt a reflexive practice something which is especially pertinent to my role as a leader within an educational setting and my journey for a greater understanding of leadership within education. For her, 'exploring the taken-for-granted relationship between language and our experience of the world, and examining the impact that assumptions of social constructed realities have on management theory and practice' is paramount (ibid:xvii). It is this emphasis on wanting to understand and be reflexive of the assumptions of socially constructed realities that surround leadership for me as a leader, an academic with teacher education and governor of a local

primary school that I want to explore. Furthermore being a governor of one of the schools and my connections with the headteacher I must remain vigilant of how I relate to my participants and be ever conscious not to assume there is only one meaning for example mine. In addition as Cunliffe (2014:41) advocates to be conscious that I am always 'in relation' to my participants

The design of my research study moreover, 'should not lose sight of the structural influences on practices' being conscious of not being 'over-focused on the practices-as-presented rather than on the forces that shape them' (Trowler, 2014:56). Truth claims therefore need to limit themselves to the areas of practice being investigated (ibid.). Therefore my methods and process of analysis needs to be relevant, robust and rigorous. This is something that will permeate throughout the study.

1.6 Claims to originality

This research contributes to a critical discursive approach which provides an illuminating lens for opening up a discursive space in which to question taken-for-granted assumptions of leadership and ways of being within a primary school setting. In addition Cunliffe (2014) argues that leaders within organisations need to take in account the two-way process of communication and adopt a dialogic aspect of language. She believes that the present focus of a monological one often practised by management within organisations results in leaders being unresponsive to not only the diversity of the many but leads to obliviousness of how a leader's voice is being received. This research contributes to such a critique and draws attention to the pivotal role of the headteacher and the preponderance of a monological leadership discourse.

In addition Fairhurst (2011) suggests that discursive scholars do not concern themselves with gaps in the literature but instead focus on localized problems or issues of negotiated meanings. This research contributes to such a focus. Through an examination of the discourse, it has been possible to reveal the socio-historical basis for leadership as experienced within a primary school setting. It explains how leadership has developed to reflect the socially situated practice in which it resides and examine localized issues where negotiated means result in coordinated pre-determined actions. This research contributes to such a debate by opening up a discursive space in which to examine the under explored influence of context on leadership within a primary school setting.

Gillies (2013) on applying the work of Foucault to the field of educational leadership, questions what sort of actions on themselves must individuals undergo in order to be legitimized within the discourse of educational leadership and therefore be accepted and to speak authoritatively. This research by adopting a discursive approach to institutional life of school provides some insights into why experienced teachers are tied into a power structure which does not enable them to work in an emancipatory way.

Furthermore this study contributes by presenting a conceptual framework for understanding the context of leadership which aids in furthering the discussion of how the interactions of different levels and types of context act to frame an individual's context and hence their 'technologies of self' (Foucault, cited in Gillies, 2013:15) within which leadership is understood and co-created.

1.7 Overview of thesis structure

Having outlined the aim and the research questions for this study as well as my motivations for undertaking the research, this chapter now moves on to present a structure for the thesis, providing a brief overview of each chapter.

Chapter 2 UK Historical Policy Context

This chapter begins by framing the UK Policy context within which headteachers and staff in the schools make sense of leadership within their settings, before moving on to present the themes from policy which frame and impact upon individuals within the case study sites. Central to the discussion is the ideology of a school improvement agenda focussing on educational standards, with the headteacher as the single leader. The chapter then proceeds to examine the complex nature of leadership in education. Principal to the argument within Chapter 2 is how leadership and management has been theorised within the management and school leadership literature over the years, from viewing leadership as the property of leaders; to considering the relationship of followers and leaders before ending the chapter by examining leadership as a social practice.

Chapter 3 The Conceptual framework

The aim within Chapter 3 is to develop an interpretivist theoretical framework based around social constructivism and meaning making. This framework is based on a distributed model of leadership within the two case study site schools; a social constructionist perspective on context; and a critical language analysis. Gee's

(1999) interconnected framework for conducting a critical discourse analysis is introduced and how I situate my research within this framework. In addition the rationale for why this study has adopted a Foucauldian lens is presented.

Chapter 4 Methodology and methods

Informed by my discussion of the theories and concepts as presented in Chapter 3, Chapter 4 establishes critical social theory as a suitable methodology for the study and establishes the research tools appropriate for undertaking a critical discourse analysis (cda). Ethical issues and limitations of the study are considered ending the chapter with a discussion of the unit of analysis and analytical process. The analytical tools and procedures utilised when analysing and interpreting the data will also be presented together with a discussion around Gee's (1999; 2005; 2011) tools of inquiry in order to present a sharp and comprehensible analysis.

Chapter 5 Interpretation and Explanation

In Chapter 5 by making use of Gee's (1999) tools of inquiry the findings and interpretation of the data are presented. A systematic analysis ensues bringing out the significance of the data gathered.

Chapter 6 Discussion, Implications and Contribution

This chapter concludes the thesis and draws together the analysis by drawing on the literature as reviewed in the study to help inform the analysis and discussion. In addition the chapter will present the implications and the limitations of the findings and the study's claim to academic contribution made clear.

2. Chapter 2: Setting the scene: policy and literature

Introduction

This thesis aims to critically look at the discourse of individuals within two primary school settings as they talk about their perceptions of the leadership they are experiencing. My conceptual and methodological approach therefore is designed to allow the participants to be heard as they think about and talk about the leadership within their schools and then to relate what is talked about back to the policy, the wider education system and the literature.

Thus the conceptual framework and analytical tools need to take into account ways of analysing the 'talk' within the setting(s) and to locate this within their social contexts. Furthermore, to identify from their discourses ways of being and to explain these discourses (Gee, 2005), these ways of being, in light of wider social and political issues requires an understanding of the contextual factors that impact upon their experience within school.

Likewise, the methodology and methods need to be chosen not for reasons of the inherent superiority of particular philosophies or sociological approaches, but for their value in the political interpretation of the subject. Moreover, my interest lies in the ways of being of the individuals within the settings and a desire to understand how they make sense of their world through drawing on the social resources available to them. This chapter therefore presents discourses of policy and engages with theories and themes from the literature that can provide a lens through which to understand the social location of the individuals within school and, through theorization, understand their ways of being and make sense of how they experience leadership within the settings.

This study explores how contextual factors shape discourses of leadership within two primary school environments within the current UK educational policy context. In order to develop the research questions, inform the design of the methods and situate subsequent findings, it is to those discourses that this study now turns: firstly, to discuss the relevant UK historical policy context and its relevance for school leadership; secondly, to discuss the traditional approaches to leadership and their significance for this study; and thirdly, to critically discuss current issues in leadership and context and how they are pertinent for the education sector.

2.1 Changing focus of leadership in education

The development of educational leadership and management as a field of study and practice in the UK was derived from management principles first applied to industry and commerce. This began as late as the 1960s, but since then there has been rapid expansion.

Theory development largely involved the application of management models to educational settings (Bush, 1995). However, as the subject grew as an academic subject in its own right, its theorists and practitioners began to develop their own models based on their own observations and experience in educational environments and now there is, as Thomson et al. point out, a leadership industry made up of knowledge producers located in private companies, universities and schools (2013, cited in Gillies, 2013).

Therefore, what follows is an exploration of the situation that, despite a perception within the educational sector over the last 30 years of the changing focus of educational research, it nevertheless has all centred around the issue of how educational leadership is seen as transforming schools. This nucleus has initiated site based management within schools, changing from local authority administration to management led initiatives, and from strategic and development planning to performance accountability leadership, all positioned within a policy discourse of implementing workforce reform which has at its heart, in part, the headteacher recruitment and teacher retention crisis, but above all progressing the school improvement agenda (Gunter 2012b).

It was New Labour that invested, developed and 'sought to structure knowledge production, ways of knowing and who are regarded as knowers in the field of school leadership'(Gunter, 2012:346). This was achieved by commissioning an extensive analysis of the leadership literature (Bennett et al., 2003) – developing, as the preferred model of school leadership, transformation distributed leadership (Bush and Glover, 2003) and being instrumental in 'constructing and communicating a discourse about what can be said and who can say it through National College seminars' (Gunter, 2012:346).

The overview in Table 2.1 below, adapted by the author, is not a time-framed chronology of all policy and initiatives within England over this period, but rather illustrates particular points within the period ca. 1988–2010 that have shaped and continue to shape the interplay between managerialism and leadership within

schools (Grint, 2011). These have resulted in new identities, particular ideologies and particular relations of power. At the heart of this discourse is the expectation that headteachers, when particular paradigms were ‘presented as common sense statements about what works, underpinned by beliefs in the power of the single person’, would drive them home (Gunter, 2012:346). This single individual would become involved in policy implementation through these new managerialist approaches with a political agenda of bringing about improvements in schools and the curriculum (Gunter, 2007). It is this discourse that provides the policy context for this study.

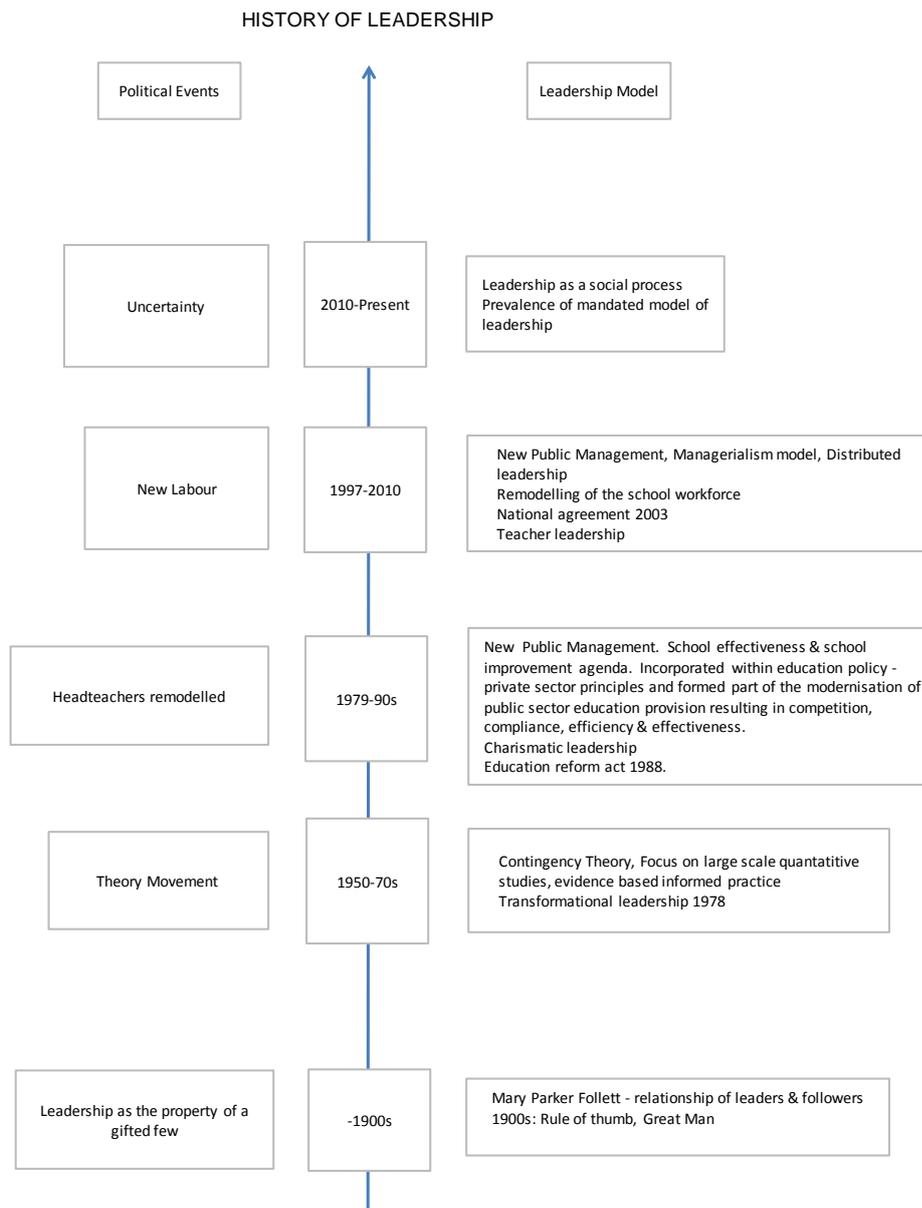


Figure 2.1 Representations of leadership over time

2.2 School effectiveness research

A result of the adoption of managerialist studies in the 1980s was the development of 'school effectiveness research'. This school of thought adopted quantitative methods to analyse what led to an effective school. However, this school of thought was riddled with criticisms (Riley & MacBeath, cited in Bennett et al., 2003). The data collected was statistical and there were issues of accuracy of measurement as well as widespread disagreement about agreed definitions – for example, what exactly was meant by 'effective leaders' – or concerns about the social and economic content.

As a result, disillusionment with the positivist approach of school effectiveness research was countered by the growth of the school improvement movement. This approach has the organization at the core and has as its rationale the development of strategies that will lead to improvement. It calls upon a wide variety of approaches to data collection, sees each school as a community and recognizes the significance both of those with a 'stake' in the findings being involved in the research and, more importantly, of the leadership of these communities.

Under the 'New Labour Government' of the late 90s, the emphasis for education research remained on school improvement, but with an underlying belief that this depended on teachers developing their classroom skills and reflective practice as part of the school improvement agenda. Hence the term 'practitioner research' came to be more widely used. The field of 'practitioner research' involves a wide variety of contexts such as social work, police work, health care work and schooling. The different contexts result in different approaches, but what they each share is what Dadds and Hart (2001:7) refer to as a 'study of one's own professional practice with a view to improving that practice'. However, as in other areas of the public sector, practitioner research in education can be carried out for a variety of reasons and take many forms, and in the main was driven by policy and political agendas.

Within this shift in focus, like other areas of the public sector, leadership as a theme also emerged strongly. In England it was a means of transforming schools. Initially promoted by the Conservative administrations led by Margaret Thatcher and John Major as part of the 'school improvement' agenda, moves were made to remodel schools, focusing on effective and efficient management of schools as part of the wider educational reforms of the late 1980s early 90s. This involves centralizing the curriculum and linking assessment to the new National Curriculum, while at the

same time devolving financial responsibilities to schools which supported the growth in the marketization of schools. A further result of these reforms was the creation of institutional requirements that fostered the expansion of managerialism within the school educational sector (Gerwitz, 2002). This drive was subsequently taken up by New Labour, with their ideology of a school improvement agenda, focusing on educational standards within schools which had the headteacher as the single leader in the institution who would be the key influencer in driving this forward. This all formed part of the drive for the centralization of education, which is expanded upon next.

2.3 UK Policy – New Public Management (NPM)

New Labour was also preoccupied with the centralization of education. They imposed policy and initiatives to raise 'educational standards' as part of their wider move for public sector reform involving the civil service, health and social services as well as education, described as the continuation of Thatcher's New Public Management (NPM) paradigm (Gunter, 2008). Through New Public Management (NPM), a concept coined by Hood (1991), Margaret Thatcher (1979–1990) wanted to drive changes in public policy management by drawing on practices from the private sector, using market forces to hold the public sector accountable. Her objective was to modernize and ensure efficiency within the sector. The rationale for NPM was that citizens were to be considered as customers with more choice and the right to opt out of service delivery. Public sector educational provision is closely linked to this modernization, and especially leadership 'as a reform strategy central to the NPM project' (Hall et al., 2013:174). Policy, therefore, is understood within this study as a tool or technology (Foucault, 1979; Ball, 2008) that seeks to make changes in discourse, practices and meanings, where these 'work to privilege certain ideas and topics and speakers and exclude others' (Ball, 2008:6).

For education in particular, the drive was directed toward standards and accountability; devolution and delegation; flexibility and incentives; and expanding choice (Butt & Gunter, 2005). It was presented as a positive reform based on the 'need to move from a system of informed prescription to informed professional judgement' (DfES 2002, in Butt & Gunter, 2005:133). Targets and accountability for schools were also part of these new strategies and initiatives, all part of the new *Remodelling of the Workforce* policy announced in January 2003.

New Labour continued to support the managerialism model and financial autonomy that the Conservatives had initiated. They also continued to support 'evidence-based' policy, seeking guidance from research such as that commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in 2000; 2001, 2002 to shape their modernization policy, particularly in relation to the raising standards agenda (Ozga, 2002).

However this resulted in an infrastructure that promoted local competition between schools, creating 'by the mid-1990s certain dysfunctions (which) had been generated through the workings of the quasi-market, not least long working hours and unattractive nature of teaching as a career' (Gunter, 2008:257). This put pressure on schools to perform better as they competed with each other within local authorities to raise attainment in national tests, the results of which were published in league tables, enhancing competition between schools. A culture of managerialism supported the infrastructure of this, perpetuating not only the system but the policy process, reinforcing the perception that, over the preceding quarter of a century, the economic objectives of education have come to dominate discourse and the political agenda of successive administrations.

2.4 Remodelling of the school workforce

The National Agreement of January, 2003 (DfES, 2003) between the government, employers and unions (except the National Union of Teachers, one of the largest teaching unions) resulted in the remodelling of the school workforce. This agreement is considered historic; its rationale was to tackle the problem of teacher workload and the crises in retention and recruitment of teachers (Butt & Gunter, 2005). It was preceded by the studies of PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC, 2001) commissioned by the DfES and the School Teachers' Review Body (DfES, 2000). It involved contractual changes for teachers; a reduction in administrative and clerical work; limited hours for covering absent staff; remission in hours if part of the leadership team within school; guaranteed planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time; and, for the headteacher, time to lead the school. It was introduced in three phases over two years and monitored by the Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group (WAMG) comprising members from the unions, private sector and the government. Two further groups were also formed, both government backed initiatives: one to review policy in order to cut bureaucracy, named the Implementation Review Unit (IRU); and a third body, originally located within the

National College of School Leadership and then transferred to the Training and Development Agency, the National Re-modelling Team (NRT).

Among the consequences of remodelling for schools were that they recruited more support staff and could either introduce or develop the role of financial manager, or employ a bursar (previously a role held within the Local Authority). Pastoral care for students and parental liaison became the role of a learning mentor or student services function rather than a teacher, and teaching assistants could now teach and cover for absent staff or for PPA time. Workload for teachers was also reduced through ready-made lesson plans made available on the internet and online completion of assessments and reports, to name but a few changes (Gunter, 2008). The NRT presented schools with a prescriptive change management model to implement these changes, thus redefining educational leadership as the means for transforming schools.

Two further developments which can be linked to the remodelling programme are, firstly, the introduction of Academies from 2002, consisting of a partnership between a private sponsor and government funding to create new schools, whereby private interests control the governance of the school and the ethos and direction. Secondly, the continued remodelling of headship within schools with the introduction of National Standards for Headteachers 2004 (Department for Education and Skills, 2004) and the 2007 study from the Department for Education and Skills in partnership with PricewaterhouseCoopers (DfES/PwC, 2007) was another important aspect of the remodelling programme. PwC advocated that it was not a legal requirement for the headteacher to have Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), hence their rationale for the role to be split between a Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer. A headteacher's role could now be divided between administrative leadership and leadership of teaching and learning (Gunter, 2008). Labels such as 'leader', 'manager,' or 'administrator', as Fitzgerald (2008:332) argues, are 'all part of the commodification of teaching' as 'attaching labels to the particular work, authority and status of teachers is a discursive process that signals the role and identity of those adults within the bureaucracy of schools', all part and parcel of a system of 'organisational requirements and reform implementation rather than teaching and learning' (ibid.).

Remodelling of the workforce in schools did not begin with teaching and learning, but with what teachers should not be doing, 'the need for the national curriculum, testing, league tables and inspection were part of a drive to open up the "secret

garden” into a public playing field where the job of the teacher was pulled apart and rebuilt in particular ways’ (Gunter, 2008:259). Under the Conservative administration, teachers would no longer be responsible for designing the curriculum or exercising their judgement on standards, as this would now be undertaken by Her Majesty’s Inspectors and privatized companies.

New Labour, on the other hand, took this one step further with the implementation of national strategies such as the ‘Literacy and Numeracy Hour’, prescribing materials for teaching and learning with a prescriptive delivery mechanism. As Thatcher’s government was keen to lay claim to raising standards, so too was New Labour. The then Secretary of State for Education and Skills, Estelle Morris, was clear in her rhetoric promoting the discourse of an effective school which continues to have implications for the case study schools:

[O]ur ... strategies, and policy have been key strands in our new national framework. They have had a transforming effect on teaching in primary schools ... The number of unsatisfactory or poor lessons by primary teachers has plummeted from 17% in 1995/96 to 4% in 2000. Our policies have helped primary teachers make the difference. (Estelle Morris, 2001:6)

Regarding the rhetoric within the White Paper *Schools: Achieving Success* (DfES, 2001), Ball (2008:95) observed that this educational system would ‘echo the pace of globalisation and the speed of contemporary capitalism’ and argued that education was firmly rooted within the economy and ‘neo-liberal versions of the performing school’ (Fitzgerald & Gunter, 2008). Shamir (2008:3) defines neoliberalism as:

a complex, often incoherent, unstable and even contradictory set of practices that are organised around a certain imagination of the ‘market’ as a basis for the universalisation of market-based social relations’ which ‘penetrat(e) every aspect of our lives of the discourse and/or practice of commodification, capital-accumulation and profit making.

Such a neo-liberal model of education, Ball (2008) suggests, is evident within the UK education system today. Factors which may have consequences for the settings within this study.

The rationale for this new remodelling was to introduce national accountability, which included national testing, inspection by Ofsted and intervention at both school and local education authority (LEA) level, all part of the public service reform as highlighted by New Labour in 2001 (Morris, 2001). The objective of this modernization was to break with the past and for headteachers and teachers alike to

embrace a future vision. Raynor & Gunter (2007), however, saw this as an attack not only on public service identities, but practices as well. Section 3.2.4 expands the discussion on the construction of identities and the view that they are produced and controlled.

A further means to secure reforms within schools was through national state-directed training of headteachers, through which they are trained and accredited as transformational organizational leaders (Raynor & Gunter, 2007). This began under the Major government in 1997 with the creation of the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and continued under New Labour, who realized that it needed a person on the ground to deliver and be responsible for implementation of the reforms and deliver nationally determined targets irrespective of their own experiential knowledge and local context. Furthermore, key leadership researchers (DfES, 2004; Leithwood et al., 2006, Day et al., 2009; Ofsted, 2014) have identified headteachers as central to the delivery of national reforms and critical to realizing key outcomes of schooling. These key researchers advocate that it is the headteachers who are accountable, and are capable of carrying out actions that were not possible under previous regimes where the emphasis during the post-war period was on such things as administration, management, professionalism and guardianship for those in their charge *in loco parentis*.

However, following the Education Reform Act (1988), headteachers were being remodelled as chief executives, a process that developed further under New Labour with the normalization of strong leadership and the assumption that headteachers, as effective leaders, are essential to successful schools drawing on school effectiveness research (Raynor & Gunter, 2007). 'Leadership, therefore, is a tool designed for a particular purpose. It is designed to achieve what might not otherwise be achieved' (Gillies, 2013:21) – that is, better school outcomes – through the relationships and practices of teachers who might or might not effect change in terms of quality or quantity.

If, as Leithwood et al. (2006) advocate, leadership is about vision and influence in order to reach organizational goals and management is about efficiency, leadership is therefore a more effective way of securing the required end result. For this study, then, a question to be addressed is wherein does this perceived effectiveness lie in terms of the overall leadership discourse. Furthermore, by using a Foucauldian lens and his concept of critique, this study will be able to probe, question and challenge the assumptions underlying leadership practices and the leadership vision,

investigating why that particular vision was chosen over others while also probing professional autonomy and why teachers within school feel compelled to follow the vision.

2.5 Complex nature of leadership in education

2.5.1 Leadership versus Management

Although leadership has been recognized as important for schools by politicians, inspectors, practitioners and researchers, the function of leadership has not been consistently referred to by these individuals. Furthermore, in the study of strategic leadership and management in education, the terms 'leadership' and 'management' are often used interchangeably. Similarly, although the literature does not always make a clear distinction between the two, the idea of leadership as being more important than management permeated the leadership literature from the mid-1980s (Schedlitzki, and Edwards, 2014).

Furthermore, researchers continue to debate not only the relationship between these two terms but also, and more frequently, between the aims and methods of educational leadership and of management (Fidler, 1997); the form or style of leadership (Bolam et al., 1999; Leithwood and Jantzi, 1999; Southworth, 2004); and to what issues leaders should pay attention. Some studies suggest that school leaders should concentrate on organizational culture (Hargreaves, 1994); others, such as Sergiovanni (1998:105), advocate that management and leadership division is the same as the division of tactical and strategic leadership; while, according to Zaccaro and Klimoski (2001:3), many studies of leadership are context free, the concentration being less on organizational variables that might impact on leadership and more on the 'interpersonal processes between individuals, nominally leaders and followers'.

Cuban (1988:190), who states that 'there are more than 350 definitions of leadership but no clear and unequivocal understanding as to what distinguishes leaders from non-leaders', links leadership with change while management is seen as a maintenance activity. Fidler (1997:26) argues against a firm distinction between leadership and management, claiming that they have an 'intimate connection' and a 'great deal of overlap, particularly in respect of motivating people and giving a sense of purpose to the organisation.'

Other viewpoints of leadership believe that it should be grounded in a personal and professional value. For example, Bush (1999) links leadership to values, vision and influence while management relates to implementation or technical issues, whereas Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989:99) also advocate that 'outstanding leaders have a vision of their schools – a mental picture of preferred future – which is shared with all in the school community', and pay little attention to the detail of management within a school.

Whilst there is considerable debate within the management literature about the relationship between leadership and management, Zaleznik (1977) suggested that leaders develop visions and drive changes and managers monitor and solve problems. Kotter (1990) believed that not all managers are leaders and therefore not all leaders are managers, whilst Yukl (2002) adopted the view that leaders could be divided into those who acted on 'position power' and those who acted on 'personal power', the former being a positional privilege whilst the latter is derived from expertise and character. It seems that, traditionally, leadership is defined by its counterpart, management. The definition of management derives its meaning from the Latin word *manus* meaning to handle things, objects, machinery – with a growing impetus during the Industrial Revolution for its use in reference to handling machinery.

Leadership, on the other hand, derives its meaning from the Anglo-Saxon word *laeder*, which means 'a road' or 'path', suggesting some form of direction giving. Schedlitzki and Edwards (2014) suggest it is these etymological differences that researchers have, over the years, used to distinguish the two concepts.

However, it was Drucker (1995) who advocated that an effective manager should strive to be both a formal and informal leader. He believed that leadership is a key task of management, just as planning, budgeting, organizing etc. are. It is this stance that Jackson and Parry (2008) adopt in understanding the different facets each brings, which need to be intertwined in order to work effectively. They argue that we 'shouldn't ghettoize leaders and managers, demarcating those who should lead and those who should manage' (ibid.:19). The devil, for them, is in the detail (ibid.).

As is evidenced throughout the literature, 'leadership' is a highly contested concept, but it is this understanding of leadership and management being intertwined and inseparable that this study adopts. For the last decade there have been those within

the literature who identify particular facets of the management process as leadership and the findings from the case study schools are consistent with this. A central element that has developed in many definitions of leadership is the presence of a process of influence within leadership – as Yukl (2002:3) argued, ‘most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted’ to organize the activities and relationships of others within the organization.

This view is reinforced by Harris (2004) and Leithwood (2000), who both support processual distributed leadership as opposed to the traditional top-down leadership models. For Grint (2005), it is not a matter of establishing consensus regarding the term leadership, but rather of understanding what it is, is it a person, a result, a position, a process, or a combination of all these. Grint (*ibid.*) advocates that leadership is actually a function of a community, not a result derived from an individual deemed to be objectively superhuman.

In order to understand the adoption of preferred models of leadership within schools, this chapter further explores the different approaches to how leadership is considered within education. However, initially it is appropriate for this study to outline the development of educational leadership and management as a field of study and practice within the UK.

2.5.2 Theory within education

The role of educational theory and theorizing about education has been extensively debated, not just in terms of the many different theories propounded, but in terms of whether theory should play a role in education, and if so, where. The position that this study takes is that theorizing is central to scholarly work because, as Carr and Harnet (cited in Gunter, 2001:63) propose, it seeks to challenge ‘the irrationality of conventional thinking in order to make educational ideas and beliefs less dependent on myths, prejudices and ideological distortions that common sense fossilizes and preserves.’ The importance of theory can be seen in why one theory is chosen over another, and how decisions are arrived at as to what is important and useful for a school community of practice. As Southworth (1995:55) asserts, ‘in much of my work on school leadership I have tried to chart the “theories” headteachers hold about their work ... I am deeply interested in headteachers’ “folk theories” about school leadership’. This study too is interested in discourses of headteachers including their folk theories, but through its empirical work this study explores the wider connections between the individual and the contextual setting in which they

are located to explore how those contextual factors function and shape headteachers' folk theories in their experience of leadership.

Theory is a useful lens through which to observe and understand practice. For Cunliffe (2014:7), 'theory and practice are interwoven in many ways.' She believes that the application of theory to practice is closely aligned with the co-production of knowledge: 'If we begin to take a critical approach by asking "what are we taking for granted?", then new ways of thinking about the theory-practice relationship emerge' (ibid.). Gunter (2001) advocates that theory and theorizing can be used for a number of purposes: to describe what is happening; to understand what and why something is happening; to improve or enable change to take place; or for politicization – to be emancipatory, to enable change within existing power structures.

Theories and theorising have a number of purposes, from being a lens through which to look at practice, through to being a predictive model that can become prescriptive by determining what educational practitioners should do. (Ibid.:66)

A critical analysis may, for one researcher, be the accuracy of their results, yet for another it may be about using theories of power to challenge established ways and assumptions within an organizational environment (Gunter, 2001; Cunliffe, 2014; Gillies, 2013). For Foucault, the discourse of educational leadership, management and administration in schools is at its basic level about the approved and authorized effective exercise of power to achieve educational ends (Gillies, 2013). Through such a lens, the study is able to probe what individuals within school say is true and accept as true in the terms of leadership discourse they are experiencing (power and its contextual relevance for this study is explored in 3.3.3).

2.5.3 Leadership: a highly contested concept

The debate concerning educational theory is long-standing. There have been more than 500 years of research into leadership, and as of 28th July 2015 there were 139,239 items on Amazon.co.uk relating to leadership, yet there is still no clear consensus as to its basic meaning: 'the concept of leadership remains elusive and enigmatic' (Meindle et al., 1985:78). This is the case because leadership is a complex concept which draws on our 'emotions, desires and sense of identity' (Bolden et al., 2011:17) and is open to subjective interpretation. It is regarded by some as a set of traits or characteristics, while others regard it as a process of social influence. As a result, this study takes the position of Gallie's (1964:187) notion of an 'essentially contested concept' by outlining the developments in defining leadership and consequently adopting the position that a consensus on a definition

is unlikely. However, for the purposes of this study, a working definition of leadership will be presented at the end of this chapter.

Grint (2005) agrees that leadership is a highly contested concept and believes that this is for four reasons. Firstly, some theorists believe leadership to be a property of a person, thereby concentrating on the personal attributes of the leader. Secondly, there are those who concentrate on the results of a leader. Thirdly, it could be considered as the position that the leader holds and the resultant responsibilities they have. Finally, Grint suggests that leadership may be regarded as a process whereby the functions and processes of leadership are paramount. What is evident from these four areas is that a wide diversity of views of leadership are held and expressed in theory, practice and development.

Which position a theorist adopts is, according to Bolden et al. (2011), a result of different epistemological ways of thinking about leadership and consideration of what issues are relevant for exploration, and also the theorist's ontological position. In other words, whether they consider leadership to reside 'as an attribute of leaders themselves or as an emergent property of the system(s) to which they belong' (ibid.:19). Draft et al. (2008:635) actually believe that 'the manifest diversity of leadership theory and definition is actually unified' – an ontological position where, 'talk of leadership necessarily involves talking about leaders and followers and their goals.' According to the ontological position of Bennis, who is considered a leading scholar in the field, leadership is 'a tripod – leader or leaders, followers, and a common goal they want to achieve' (Bennis, 2007:3, in Draft et al., 2008). Draft et al. (2008:636), however, believe that such a belief is limiting as this insinuates that leadership is something done by leaders:

[W]e believe that as the contexts calling for leadership become increasingly peer-like and collaborative, the tripod's ontology of leaders and followers will increasingly impose unnecessary limitations on leadership theory and practice.

They propose an ontology where talk of leadership would no longer involve talk of leaders and followers and their shared goals – something that resides in the leader – but of 'direction', 'alignment' and 'commitment', a collective achievement.

Although this suggests an alternative view of thinking about leadership, it still assumes, as Bolden et al. (2011:19) propose, that 'leadership is a discrete phenomenon to be described, studied, and/or practiced'. A more radical view, and one which this study adopts, is to consider leadership as 'relational, time specific

and related to common frames of reference within groups and societies and how it only exists in its ability to influence and shape our ways of thinking' (ibid.). Considering 'this view of leadership context in depth, helps to unpack the complexity of leadership processes as well as explore the meaning-making of individuals within this process and locate the constraints and possibilities that context as a symbolic space places on them' (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014:83).

As it was appropriate to consider the various ontological positions with regard to how leadership is considered, and therefore the ontological view held within this study, so too is it necessary to review the different ways in which leadership has been analysed and represented over the past century. Although this study does not align itself with any one contemporary theory of leadership, it is relevant to acknowledge how leadership has been, and continues to be, identified, developed and presented 'as advice from politicians, officials, officers of quangos, academics and consultants, about how to lead and manage' in schools (Bush, 2003:22).

The present prescriptive model preferred by government educational offices and the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL, previously the National College for School Leadership) is that of a transformational distributed model. As the role of the headteacher is the important link between the government's continual reform of education and its implementation within schools, 'this requires a programme for creating an appropriate headteacher identity' (Hatcher, 2005:253).

Table 2.2 below outlines these broad areas with their main perspectives and the theories attributed to them. As will be seen, despite the changing focus on educational leadership, management and administration as previously discussed they are not separate entities either theoretically or chronologically from each other but are interconnected.

The table below presents three broad approaches to how leadership has been and still is considered: firstly, that of leadership as the property of leaders; secondly, the leader–follower aspect; and thirdly, leadership as a social process. What they all have in common, however, is what Gunter (2001:69) refers to as 'the enduring and stable feature (of) the agency of the leader, combined with the assumed control over both the self and others.' It is relevant for this study to explore these theories as each in turn has relevance for the leadership found in the two settings. Leadership as the property of leaders, leaders and followers and leadership as a social process will be presented next.

Table 2.2 Theories of leadership

Theories	Leadership based on the following questions/concepts	Illustrative texts
Leadership as the property of leaders		
Trait	What is leadership? Do I have the right qualities to be a leader?	Stogdill (1974)
Style	Do I know my preferred leadership style? Do I know how to obtain a balance between a concern for tasks and for people? Have I had the correct in-service training on the behaviours required to achieve the right style?	Blake and Moulton (1964)
Contingency	Have I reflected on the context that affects which leadership style is appropriate? Do I know how my subordinates will respond to particular styles?	Fiedler et al. (1977) Hersey and Blanchard (1982)
Leadership & followers		
LMX	Leaders and followers negotiate their roles Process of leadership making	Danswureau et al. (1975); Graen & Cashman (1975) Graen & Uhl-Bien (1991)
Transactional	Motivate and empower followers Rewards for good performance and threat or discipline for poor performance Do leaders need to have control of rewards and penalties?	Burns (1979) Bass (1990)
Charismatic and transformational	Do I have a vision and a mission? Can I empower my followers to live the vision? How can I ensure my leadership has positive effects on production outcomes?	Burns (1978)
Leadership as a social process		
Distributed leadership	How is the practice of leadership distributed over leaders, followers and the situation? How is the task stretched and accomplished through the work of a number of individuals? How can I enhance the individual and capacity of the team to accomplish the task? Decentralized leadership Teacher leadership Communities of practice Democratic leadership Social interaction a critical part of distributed leadership	Gronn (2002); Spillane (2006); Spillane & Camburn (2006); Spillane et al. (2001); Harris (2004, 2005, 2014); Harris et al. (2007); Leithwood et al. (2006); Wallace (1994); Bryant (2003)

2.6 Leadership as the property of leaders

What follows is a review of leadership as the property of leaders, beginning with the traits and skills model, moving on to the styles and behaviour approaches to leadership, considered a foundation for modern leadership research and theory, and ending with an analysis of the contingency and situational theory of leadership. Although originally not applied to the education sector, it is relevant for this study to have an overview of how these leadership theories have morphed through the years and to appreciate how elements from these approaches might still impact on the present preferred model of leadership within schools.

2.6.1 Traits and Skills approaches

The early field of Leadership studies as we know it now originated in the early to mid-twentieth century out of research carried out in the United States starting with the ideal of 'great man' theories (Carlyle, 2001). Initially the great man theory set out to identify core traits of effective leaders with the goal of identifying individuals who were born to lead. What this approach proposed was that having a leader with a certain set of traits is imperative to having effective leadership. This approach is also used for self-awareness. By analysing their own traits, leaders can garner an understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses. Many organizations use a variety of questionnaires to measure a leader's traits, such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator or the Leadership Trait Questionnaire (LTQ) (Northouse, 2016). The LTQ assesses an individual's traits and identifies their strengths and weaknesses and therefore what they need to develop. This questionnaire is used by organizations for leadership assessment.

There are a number of strengths of the trait approach. The notion of a leader out front leading, a special kind of person who leads us all for the better, is instinctively appealing. The trait approach endorses this ideology because its foundations are built on the understanding that leaders are different and they have special traits: 'people have a need to see their leaders as gifted people, and the trait approach fulfils this need' (Northouse, 2016:30) – something which could be relevant in times of turbulence, such as when an Ofsted inspection is being carried out within a school. A further strength is the amount of interest and research that has been devoted to this approach. Additionally, although the trait approach focusses only on the leader themselves, this could be seen as a strength as it provides a deeper understanding of a leader's traits in the leadership process.

However, although this approach has created a great deal of research interest (over the past 100 years), it became evident that with each new study a different group of traits was identified. In fact, as 'Stogdill (1948) pointed out more than 60 years ago, it is difficult to isolate a set of traits that are characteristic of leaders without also factoring situational effects into the equation' (Northouse, 2016:31). From a comprehensive study of the key pieces of research carried out on Trait theory over this period, Northouse (2007; 2016) concludes that the main leadership traits that leaders possess are: intelligence; self-confidence; determination; integrity and sociability. However, 'despite these findings and over a century of research on trait theory that provides us with benchmarks when looking for or at leaders, the trait

approach does not account for situational variances' (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014:23), nor does it provide a comprehensive list of traits or any attention to leadership outcomes (Northouse, 2007). Nevertheless, the value of this research is that:

[T]his approach offers ... a list of attributes that may render someone more or less likely to be perceived as a leader in a given context ... i.e. by virtue of these traits they may appear more credible or legitimate to potential followers. (Bolden et al., 2011:27)

Much like the trait approach, the skills approach takes a leader-centred perspective. However, unlike the trait approach that focuses on personality characteristics that are fixed, skills and abilities can be learned and developed. Katz (1955:34) advocated that effective leadership was based on three types of personal skills: 'technical, human and conceptual' that determine what leaders can accomplish. This model was further developed in the 1990s when a group of researchers with funding from the US Army set out to test and develop a theory of leadership based on problem-solving skills. Their goal was to identify what skills effective leaders have, and how their characteristics affect performance. From this, Mumford et al. (2000) developed a skill-based model of leadership, which is broadly a capability model as it is based on a leader's knowledge and skills.

This model is different from Carlyle's 'great man' theory which suggests that leadership is primarily only for a gifted few. This model implies that individuals, through learning from their experiences, can develop leadership skills. The skills model is very different from the models that will be discussed in subsequent sections, which focus on behavioural patterns of leaders, for example: style approach, leader-member exchange (LMX) or transformational leadership. The skills approach does not concentrate on what leaders do, but rather on the capabilities of leadership, the knowledge and skills that can enable a leader to be effective (Mumford et al., 2000).

However, although this approach does not claim to be a trait model, a large part of it includes individual attributes which are trait-like (Northouse, 2016). Also, the skills model was constructed for the military and hence it is debatable whether these results are applicable to other organizations in other sectors, particularly the educational sector. A broader perspective, where the behaviours of leaders is considered, is that of the styles approach.

2.6.2 Leadership styles and behaviours

Like the previous approaches discussed above, the styles approach to leadership has been around since the 1930s and, like the trait theory, is considered to be one of the foundations of modern leadership research and theory (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014). This approach considers how leaders behave rather than what characteristics they have. Generally, style theorists consider two ways of thinking about leadership: people versus the task, and directive versus participative styles (Wright, 1996, in Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014). These two paradigms may be broken down into four styles of leadership: concern for the task; concern for people; directive leadership; and participative leadership. However, it was John Adair (1973) who, in his influential 'Action Centred Leadership' model, suggested that there was a missing element and the way to consider leadership is through three constituent parts, not two: the task, the team and the individual, as it was equally important to meet the needs of both the leader and the followers to achieve an effective style of leadership.

The styles approach remains relevant and continues to be discussed within organizations today. In particular, in looking at leadership within the two case study school sites, this study needs to consider these two ways of thinking about leadership, considering in particular concern for the task (teaching) and concern for the individual (teachers). Furthermore, it is generally considered that looking through a styles lens provides a means of describing leadership in a general way and has led to popular leadership assessment tools such as the Leader Behaviour Description Questionnaire (LBDQ).

However, whilst the behavioural theorists paid attention to the different leadership styles, they paid little attention to what effective leadership would look like in different situations and, as is acknowledged in the current research literature, there is no one leadership style that is applicable for every leader. It was for these very reasons that the leadership research field developed further and led to the idea of contingency and situational leadership approaches.

2.6.3 Contingency and Situational approaches

As with the trait and styles approach, the contingency and situational approaches remain popular in the conventional literature. As in the styles and traits approaches, the individual is critical but the context is not. In the contingency approach,

both the essence of the individual and the content are knowable and critical. Here one would expect individuals to generate an awareness of their own leadership skills and of the context so that they can compute the degree of alignment between themselves and the context. (Grint, 2001:2)

For instance, when there is a crisis a strong leader should know when to step in and when to withdraw, self awareness and a clear understanding of the situation is Grint believes, at the heart of this approach (ibid.). Fiedler's contingency model of leadership (1964; 1967, in Grint, 1997) differentiated between managers who are task- or relationship-orientated. Task-orientated managers concentrated on the task and do well when there are good leader–member relationships, and also when the task is unstructured but their position power is strong, showing a compelling directive leadership style. Relationship-orientated managers do well in all other situations but have a more participative style of leadership (Bolden et al., 2011).

Within the situational approach, it is proposed that certain situations demand certain kinds of leadership. In this approach, the leader adapts their style to suit the situation, so leaders need to be aware of the situation and their own 'repertoire of styles' and therefore their own development work that is needed to ensure this versatility (Grint, 2001:3). This approach is premised on the observation that followers move forward and backward along a developmental continuum which is aligned with their competences and commitment. Therefore the leader determines where the follower is along this continuum and adapts their leadership style accordingly. Within organizations, the situational approach is often used as a useful model for training people to become effective leaders as it is a straightforward and easy to use. Furthermore it is a very prescriptive style of leadership. For instance if followers are low in competence then the situational approach suggests a directing style. Effective leaders within this approach adapt their style accordingly based on the organizational goal and followers' needs.

Although both the contingency and situational models of leadership have advanced the field of leadership research by taking into account how leadership occurs in situ, how versatility of styles is required and the fact that leaders are not 'born' but can be developed, the approaches remain problematic (Bolden et al., 2011; Northouse,

2016). Few research studies have been conducted to justify these approaches' assumptions and propositions and therefore their theoretical bases are brought into question. For instance, how are competence and commitment weighted (Blanchard et al., 1993; Northouse, 2016)? What are lacking are solutions for issues such as how to be consistent when multiple styles of leadership are required, how to deal with complex and poorly defined tasks, or how to respond to individual and group needs. Finally, questionnaires based on these models require respondents to analyse situations within work and then select the most appropriate leadership style for the situation. This requires individuals to select from four areas: directing, coaching, supporting and delegating, leaving out many other possible leadership behaviours. The best answers for respondents are predetermined and therefore biased in favour of particular situational leadership (Northouse, 2016). The following section now considers the interaction between leaders and followers.

2.7 Leadership and followership

So far, this study has presented models of leadership that consider followers as passive and propose what it is that leaders need to have in order to get the most out of them. As early as 1942 Mary Parker Follett (cited in Bolden et al., 2011) recognized the relationship between leaders and followers and the need for interaction and partnership, however it is only in recent times that this approach has been considered seriously and explored further. When this study refers to followers it is not in terms of passivity because this study takes the position that the social influence of leaders and followers is a two-way affair. Furthermore, individuals in schools move in and out of followership and leadership roles (Spillane & Diamond, 2007). In addition, as has been pointed out previously in this study, followers validate the leadership they are experiencing and help to define the practice (Spillane et al., 2003); 'Leaders influence followers by motivating actions, enhancing knowledge and potentially shaping the practice of followers' (Spillane & Diamond, 2007:9).

The following sections will explore a number of theoretical approaches: leader-member exchange (LMX), a follower-centred perspective; charismatic leadership; and transformational leadership, and outline their relevance for this study.

2.7.1 Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) theory of leadership

LMX theory (which was originally named 'vertical dyad linkage' theory) introduced the idea that leaders and followers negotiate their roles within work groups,

focussing on the vertical links between individual leaders and their followers (Dansereau et al., 1975; Graen & Cashman, 1975; in Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). This marked a noticeable shift in leadership studies. In contrast to the situational models, where followers were treated as a passive and a homogenous group, the LMX theory looks at differences in the relationship between leaders and individual followers. This model proposes that there are two different types of relationships – ‘in-group’, where the individual negotiates their own responsibilities and the relationship between them and their leader is built on trust; and ‘out-group’, a relationship which is based on formally agreed contracts and mutual trust and respect. Northouse (2016), however, draws our attention to the implications of these two propositions; whereas in-group members do extra things for the leader and the leader does the same for them, subordinates in the out-group are less compatible with the leader and usually just come to work, do their job, and go home. An outcome of which could result in ‘dividing practices’ within the case study schools it could be in this respect that ‘persons are individualized, marked out, separated...constructions of (a) discourse’ (Gillies, 2013:26).

LMX theory has undergone many revisions since its inception but continues to influence research into leadership processes (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014). A further development of this approach has been the exploration of the process of leadership making (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991), which builds on LMX research and advocates that leaders need to develop as many high-quality exchanges and work relationships with individuals as possible and therefore avoid the negative consequences of out-group presence. Leaders should therefore develop as many positive high-quality networks as possible throughout the organization to ensure group and organizational effectiveness (ibid.). Graen and Uhl-Bien (1991:36) present a model of the leadership-making process, the ‘Life Cycle of Leadership-Making’.

This life cycle begins with the participants as strangers; leaders are encouraged to develop relationships as, initially, relationships will be based on a rule-bound and contractual basis and therefore low-quality leader–follower relationships occur and follower interests are more likely to be engaged with themselves than the group. The second stage of this model is the ‘acquaintance phase’, at this stage trust and respect are being developed in the dyad relationship and both leader and followers are moving away from a pure contractual relationship to a more social, career-oriented one. The third and final phase of this Life Cycle of Leadership Making is the

mature partnership phase in which a high level of trust and respect is reciprocally given, leading to high quality exchanges, 'because of the transformation which occurs in mature leadership relationships when followers agree to take on additional responsibilities, therefore leaders can rely on these followers to behave as trusted associates who will aid in the design and management of the work unit' (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991:29).

Associations can be made here between leader behaviours in mature partnerships and transformational leadership, which will be discussed shortly. In terms of Graen & Uhl-Bien's (1991) leadership definition, according to which leadership occurs when leaders develop mature leadership relationships with their followers, 'these are individuals', in their eyes, 'with whom the leader is effectively able to earn incremental influence above that which is formally defined by the employment contract' (ibid.:209). As a result, effective leadership processes are achieved. However, this does not explain newly qualified teachers (NQTs) or recently qualified teachers (RQTs) who have limited experience with their headteacher or leaders and yet out-perform their more experienced colleagues.

A strength of the LMX theory is the conceptual understanding of leadership processes that it provides through the dyadic relationships between leader and follower. It also highlights the importance of communication and the 'relational nature of this as a key aspect of leadership' (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014:59). Although this approach began with dyadic relationships, it has progressed beyond leader-member exchange ideas to prescriptive value in how leadership-making may be developed. In contrast to styles and contingency approaches, the area of LMX and leadership processes remains of interest to leadership scholars and current research and development efforts. Culture (individual, group and multi-level) and leader-follower behaviours are just some of the current interests for LMX researchers.

Despite the continuing current interest in LMX theory and its revisions and developments, the theory still has a number of conceptual weaknesses. For instance, it is still not clear how dyadic relationships develop over time, or how these relationships affect each other, for example how inequalities among them affect performance: 'there is still conceptual ambiguity concerning the nature of exchange relationships and again a lack of empirical insight into how these change over time and how role negotiation occurs' (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014:60). In the same

vein, Anand et al. (2011) criticize the limited exploration of the influence of context and organizational culture on dyadic relationships.

The approaches discussed so far have considered leadership in a systematic, rational and objective manner, whereby leaders consider their options and adapt their style accordingly to influence performance. As a means of challenging this position, the political scientist MacGregor Burns (1979) proposed transforming leadership studies by changing the focus from what matters to the reciprocal relationship between leaders and followers whereby individuals engage with each other in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. Burns attempted to link the roles of leadership and followership. For Burns, leadership is quite different from power because it is inseparable from followers' needs (Northouse, 2016). In his seminal work, Burns (1979) distinguished between two types of leadership: transactional and transformational. Transactional leadership relates to the majority of leadership models which focus on exchanges that occur between leaders and their followers (Northouse, 2016), and is discussed in the following section. Similarities of this model are present within the mandated model within schools which states it has empowerment and motivation of individuals as intrinsic to the model.

2.7.2 Transactional leadership

Fundamental to Burns (1979) was the ability of a leader to motivate and empower followers, along with the moral aspects of leadership which could be applied across different leadership styles and situations. In his view, the paramount consideration was the transaction between a leader and a follower, such as offering a material or psychological reward for compliance with a leader's wishes, hence providing psychological satisfaction much akin to an individual's self-actualization and esteem as described in Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1954). Therefore leaders engage in transaction with their followers, explaining what will be required and therefore what compensation they will receive for completing their tasks. Hence there is a reward for good performance and a threat or discipline for poor performance, resulting in effective leadership (Bass, 1990). For instance, in a classroom observation, teachers who have carried out a good or outstanding lesson are given a good grade. What is required, then, is simply for managers to monitor and reward subordinates for work completed. According to this approach, 'management-by-exception' (also referred to as *laissez-faire* leadership) where the manager monitors and takes corrective action only when needed, can be effective (ibid.).

However, Bass (1990) advocates that transactional leadership is a recipe for mediocrity. This approach, he believes, is flawed in the sense that it requires leaders to have control of rewards and penalties. This is evident within the public sector, especially within schools, where mid-level leaders will not be in a position to grant or impose rewards or sanctions. Bass, however, acknowledges that there is a place for transactional leadership and includes it in the 'Full Range of Leadership model' that comprises three components: Transactional Leadership; Transformational Leadership and Laissez-faire Leadership (Avolio and Bass, 1993; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Yukl, 1999). Within this model, Bass (1985:27) suggests that transactional leadership can be useful in achieving a lower order of improvement in organizational change 'when the result of leadership ... is an exchange process ... but higher order improvement calls for transformational leadership.' Nevertheless, he does not advocate transformational leadership as a panacea, believing that it is inappropriate where workforces and the environment are stable within organizations (Bass, 1990:31). However, when turbulent times occur, such as the drive for new public service educational provision in England during 1979–1990, then Bass and his followers consider that transformational leadership is required at all levels.

In contrast to transactional leadership, transformational leadership is a process in which a leader interacts with a follower and creates a connection through which the individual level of motivation and commitment is raised in both the leader and the follower. For Bass (1985:31), 'the transformational leader motivates us to do more than we originally expected to do'. It is a process of changing how individuals see and feel about themselves, resulting in their increased motivation and therefore performance levels. He believed, however, that the ideal approach to leadership should exhibit both transformational and transactional qualities as required.

Contemporaneous with an interest in transformational leadership in the 1980s and 1990s was a growing interest in charisma in leadership. At a time of major organizational restructuring and competition within many Western organizations, charismatic influence was seen as an antidote to the negative effects of such change and a tool for boosting morale. This coincided with the New Public Management of public service educational provision in England, which resulted in a focus, firstly, on leadership in schools, and then a later shift to distributed leadership. The headteacher was seen as the the implementer of school reform: 'The focus of much leadership work under New Labour ... was upon school headteachers as the imagined single leaders of schools' (Hall et al., 2013:178). A charismatic leader was

the one to bring about this reform, 'the preferred model of this leadership was imported as 'transformational' (eg Burns, 1978) and legitimised through named examples of particular charismatic headteachers who were regarded as exemplar good practice leaders' (Gunter, 2012:20).

The charismatic leader was seen as someone who could rebuild morale and successfully implement change within an organization (Bryman, 1992). 'This approach, in effect, combines both notions of the transformational leader as well as earlier trait and "great man" theories' (Bolden et al., 2011:32). It involved a shift in thinking in leadership studies, a move away from the style and situational approaches. It has been referred to as the 'new approach' or the 'neo-charismatic approach', despite the fact that these theories involve transformational leadership and charismatic leadership which date back to the mid-1970s (Bryman, 1998; Schedlitzki and Edwards, 2014).

2.7.3 Charismatic and Transformational leadership

Charisma was first used to describe a special something that individuals possessed. Weber (1864-1920) offered possibly the most well-known definition of charismatic leadership theory, suggesting charisma is

a special personality characteristic that gives a person superhuman or exceptional powers and is reserved for a few, is of divine origin, and results in the person being treated as a leader. (Northouse, 2016:164)

Weber, although proffering charisma as a personality characteristic, appreciated the value of followers in validating a leader's charisma (Bryman, 1992). In recent years other theorists have extended Weber's theory to describe charismatic leadership in modern organizations (Conger & Kanungo, 1998; House, 1977).

The principal behaviours in charismatic leadership differ from theory to theory (Yukl, 1999; Bryman, 1993). For Conger and Kanungo (1998), conveying a strategic vision, understanding individual needs, taking risks and identifying threats and opportunities exemplify a charismatic leader, whilst House (1976) believes that articulating a vision, communicating high performance expectations, showing belief that subordinates will attain them and developing a collective identity are the key behaviours of a charismatic leader. Furthermore, he suggests a number of effects are the direct result of a charismatic leader:

House contends that these charismatic effects are more likely to occur in contexts in which followers feel distress because in stressful situations followers look to leaders to deliver them from their difficulties. (Northouse, 2016:165)

Examples may include a headteacher having to compete with league tables and rigorous monitoring of their school, staff and pupils in accordance with Ofsted requirements.

Table 2.3 Personality Characteristics, Behaviours, and Effects on Followers of Charismatic Leadership

Personality Characteristics, Behaviours, and Effects on Followers of Charismatic Leadership		
Personality Characteristics	Behaviours	Effects on Followers
Dominant Desire to influence	Sets strong role model shows competence	Trust in leader's ideology Belief similarity between leader and follower
Self-confident Strong moral values	Articulates goals Communicates high expectations Expresses confidence Arouses motives	Unquestioning acceptance Affection towards leader Obedience Identification with leader Emotional involvement Heightened goals Increased confidence

Source: adapted from House (1976, cited in Horthouse, 2016)

In Table 2.3 above, this overview adopted by the author originating from House (1976) illustrates not only the personality characteristics of a charismatic leader but also how their actions and behaviours have charismatic effects on followers. House's charismatic theory has been extended over the years. One particular development was by Shamir et al. (1993:585), who proposed that charismatic leadership 'strongly engag(es) followers' self-concepts in the interest of the mission articulated by the leader' and hence ties the identity of a follower into the collective identity of the organization. The intrinsic rewards of work far out weigh the extrinsic rewards, and work thereby becomes an expression of the followers themselves. The charismatic leader therefore sets high expectations such that an individual's self-efficacy is enhanced and their identity becomes entwined with that of a collective identity (ibid.).

Yukl (1999) suggested that there is compatability between charismatic leadership and transformational leadership and, as Jackson & Parry (2008:33) further suggest, 'charismatic leadership is often thought of as a sibling of transformational leadership'. The authors further observe that other commentators suggest charismatic leadership is a component of transformational leadership and argue that

there are good reasons for studying this approach to leadership as there is a large body of theory on which to build and, as it is questionnaire-based research, there is scope to broaden the methodological base. More importantly, they suggest carrying out research of this nature is important because it enables the researcher to research the contexts in which leadership is taking place and 'the processes that are at play in the leadership that they are experiencing' (ibid.:33).

Therefore, although there remains confusion about the meaning of charismatic leadership (Bryman, 1993), 'most charismatic theories emphasize follower attributions of extraordinary qualities to the leader' (Yukl, 1999:294). It can either be, as Conger and Kanungo (1998) propose, that the attributions are decided as a result of the characteristics of the leader, followers and the situation, or, as in the definitions of House (1976) and Shamir et al. (1993), that charismatic leadership is defined in terms of influencing follower attitudes and motivation and by followers' validation of a leader's charisma, as demonstrated in Table 2.3 (Yukl, 1999:294).

Yukl (1999) calls for more clarity and consistency in how charisma is defined and used. What he suggests, and what is useful when looking at leadership in the case study schools, is thinking about the attribution of charisma to a leader by followers who identify deeply with a leader. This, according to Yukl (ibid.), retains Weber's original meaning of the word and helps to differentiate between charismatic and transformational leadership. Yukl (1999), in his evaluation of conceptual weaknesses in charismatic leadership theories, draws attention to the fact that with a charismatic leader a follower will be drawn to the leader: 'they will imitate the leader's behaviour, accept the leader's task objectives, comply with the leader's requests, and make self-sacrifices and an extra effort in the work to please the leader' (Yukl, 1999:294). In addition, through an evaluation of the research, Yukl (ibid.) further claims that, in extreme cases, 'the follower's primary self identity may become service to the leader'. Followers in these cases may be reluctant to disagree or criticize or stray from the leader's plan or vision.

2.7.4 Transformational leadership

Part of the grouping that Bryman (1998) termed 'new leadership', transformational leadership has become the subject of systematic empirical inquiry in school contexts only recently, specifically as each headteacher is now 'trained and accredited as a transformational organizational leader by a publicly funded government agency the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) (previously the National College of School Leadership (NCS)' (Gunter and Raynor, 2007:2). This approach

to leadership is in the main concerned with capacity development and inspiring higher levels of personal commitment to organizational goals by followers (Sharrat & Fullan, 2009). The effect of this is greater commitment on an individual's part resulting in greater productivity (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985). The popularity of this new leadership approach, Bass and Riggio (2006) argue, may be due to the intrinsic motivation of leaders and their commitment to an individual's development, which they believe fit into the pattern of today's workforce who want to be inspired, empowered and led in turbulent times of uncertainty.

Burns (1978), who coined the phrase transformational leadership, drew on Maslow's 'hierarchy of needs' to suggest that the transformational leader 'operates at need and value levels higher than those of the potential follower' (Allix, 2000:10). As followers progress up the needs hierarchy they become less self-centred and narrow-minded. 'The implication here,' according to Allix (ibid.:15), is that leaders have some sort of monopoly on moral truth, knowledge and wisdom, which they exploit to draw followers up to their own perceived ethical standards.

According to the National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers (Department of Education, 2015:5), a headteacher is 'a guardian' of their school: 'they occupy an influential position in society and shape the teaching profession' (ibid.:4), and 'communicate compellingly the school's vision' (ibid.:5) to 'secure excellent teaching' (ibid.:6) and to 'hold and articulate clear values and moral purposes' (ibid.:5).

Although the standards for headteachers were updated and reviewed in 1999, 2004 and 2015 with the next review being scheduled for 2020, previous and present administrations want, as Smith (2002:25) says, 'to establish an official orthodoxy with regards to the leadership and management of schools'. Furthermore, those institutions working with the college in delivering developmental programmes in school leadership and management are expected 'to work in partnership with the college so that their programmes can be presented as part of a coherent national framework' (DfEE, 2000:2). For a headteacher to achieve the right standard, they should 'ensure that all those involved in the school are committed to its aims (and are) motivated to achieve them' (DfEE, 1999:12) and similarly 'communicate compellingly the school's vision and drive the strategic leadership, empowering all pupils and staff to excel' (DfE, 2015:5). Pointedly, over the years since their inception in 1999, at no point in any of the reviews of the standards has there been any reference to interaction with other staff to formulate the school's aims collaboratively.

For Jackson and Parry, this 'new leadership' which emerged in the 1980s is a new way of conceptualizing and researching leadership. They believe that this label reveals 'a conception of the leader as someone who defines organisational reality through the articulation of a vision, and the generation of strategies to realise that vision' (Jackson & Parry, 2008:28). This new leadership approach is underpinned by a depiction of leaders as 'charismatic' (House, 1977; Northouse, 2016; Bass, 1985), 'affective' (Northouse, 2016) and 'visionary' (Sashkin, 1988). It is about a process that changes and transforms people (Northouse, 2016).

By building on the work of House (1977) and Burns (1979) and extending their approach, Bass gave consideration to followers' rather than leaders' needs. In his view, transformational leadership could be used in situations that were not always positive. It is about improving performance and developing followers to enable them to reach their fullest potential (Avolio, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1990).

In their model, Bass and Avolio (1994) identified four characteristics of transformational leadership: Attributed charisma/Idealized influence; Inspirational motivation; Intellectual stimulation; and Individual consideration. With regard to attributed charisma, leaders are role models for their followers and are admired, respected and trusted. Followers as a result want to emulate their leaders: 'leaders are perceived by their followers as having extraordinary capabilities, persistence and determination demonstrating high standards of ethical and moral conduct' (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014:67).

Inspiration motivation, according to Bass & Avolio (1994), means that leaders behave in ways that motivate, inspire and involve their followers in envisioning a desired goal and as a result followers are committed to that goal and share the vision of the leader. Furthermore, within this model, leaders intellectually stimulate their followers to be innovative and willing to take risks with new approaches. At the same time, leaders pay attention to each follower's needs for achievement and growth: 'a two-way exchange in communication is encouraged and management by walking around is practiced'. Leaders monitor their followers' work but not for corrective action but to assess progress, and followers do not therefore feel checked up on (ibid.).

Although there are different orientations with regard to what is considered a transformational leader, Northouse (2016) echoes Bass's four characteristics and identifies four main factors: charisma or idealized influence; inspirational motivation;

intellectual stimulation; and individualized consideration. Idealized influence describes leaders who act as strong role models whom followers identify closely with as they see them as having strong ethical and moral values and a self-determined sense of identity. Followers therefore trust their leaders implicitly and in return leaders provide a vision and clear mission (ibid.).

Conger and Kanungo concur with this view (1998), proposing that leaders who exhibit transformational leadership often have a strong set of internal values and ideals, and they are effective at motivating followers to act in ways that support the greater good rather than their own self interest. Their charismatic influence, used to transform a follower's behaviour, 'stems from the leader's personal idiosyncratic power (referent and expert powers) rather than from position power (legal, coercive and reward powers) determined by organizational rules and regulations' (ibid.:59). Within this approach the transformational leader will involve themselves in the culture of the organization and help shape its meaning. Individuals within this structure will have a strong sense of their roles and their part in contributing to the goals of the school. In the same vein, Northouse notes that 'transformational leaders are out front in interpreting and shaping for organizations the shared meanings that exist within them' (2016:126).

A different perspective was provided by Leithwood & Jantzi (2000) and Kirby et al. (1992) when they reported findings from research studies that they designed to investigate the direct effects of transformational leadership on school conditions, including strong direct effects on classroom conditions.

Leithwood & Jantzi's research concentrated on a sample of 1,762 teachers and 9,941 students in one large school district. The 'Organisational Conditions and School Leadership Survey' was used to explore the relative effects of transformational leadership practices. Results demonstrated strong significant effects of such leadership on organizational conditions, and moderate effects on student engagement. The authors state that the most obvious interpretations of their findings are that headteachers and transformational leadership practices make a disappointing contribution to student engagement. They advocate that their evidence is consistent with other large-scale quantitative studies of principal leadership effects.

Leithwood & Jantzi (2000) nevertheless identified five factors that make up transformational leadership: building school vision and goals; providing intellectual

stimulation; offering individualized support; symbolizing expectations; and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions. They believe that most models of transformational leadership are flawed because they do not include transactional practices such as managerial practices, and so four management dimensions were added to their model: staffing; instructional support; monitoring school activities; and community focus (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000).

Kirby et al. (1992) used Bass and Avolio's (1990b) Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), an 80 item questionnaire consisting of six leadership factors in their study of 103 practising educators from six different school districts. Respondents associated leader effectiveness with charisma and intellectual stimulation. They concluded from their findings that followers prefer leaders who 'engage in the transformational behaviours associated with individualised consideration, intellectual stimulation, and the transactional behaviour of contingent reward' (Kirby et al., 1992:303). They concurred that their findings regarding extraordinary leaders are similar to Sashkin's (1988) and Bass's (1985). Like Bass, they believe 'that certain leader behaviour are necessary to elicit satisfactory performance and that others enhance performance beyond expectations' (Kirby et al., 1992:309).

Kirby et al. acknowledge, however, that their research had limitations. Their quantitative survey relied on 'single-source perceptions of leadership antecedents and consequences and there was only one perceiver per leader' (1992:309). Furthermore, they believed that the MLQ 'confuses outcomes and behaviours' (ibid.:310). In addition, they argue that the new leadership approach has a tendency to concentrate on top leaders, with little attention given to informal or middle leadership processes. What is interesting to note is that the quantitative approaches advocated by Bass, Leithwood & Jantzi, etc, (as described above) are more likely to concentrate on formally designated leaders than informal arrangements such as a subject leader within a school (DiPaola, 2008).

Furthermore, with the exception of some transformational leadership studies, research to date has, in the main, carried out little situational analysis until recently. As Jackson & Parry (2008) observed, there has been scant attention given to a wide range of contextual factors that can have limiting effects and leave little room for transformational leaders to perform. They identified these contextual factors to include technology, industry structure, public policy and social and cultural transformation: 'Therefore, there is growing evidence that situational constraints

may be much more important in restricting the transformational leader's room for manoeuvre than is generally appreciated' (ibid., 2008:32). Bass (1997), however, insists this is not the case. He believes that transformational leadership works in almost all situations, but that it is situationally contingent. He thinks more remains to be done with regard to investigating why transformational leadership fails. Yukl (1999) believes that transformational leadership is lacking because it omits important behaviours and is ambiguous about other aspects, such as the negative effects of transformational leadership, which do not appear on the research agenda.

A further weakness of this new leadership approach is the ambiguity about the underlying influence processes associated with it. Furthermore, 'transformational leadership treats leadership as a personality trait or personal predisposition rather than a behaviour that people can learn' (Northouse, 2016:178; Bryman, 1992). If transformational leadership is a trait then it is therefore difficult to teach individuals how to change their traits. Even though, as shown in Table 2.3, theorists such as Weber, House and Bass advocate that transformational leadership is concerned with leader behaviours and therefore as a result their effects on followers, there is nevertheless a propensity to see this approach as a trait perspective (Northouse, 2016). Antonakis (2012) further highlights that, although there is evidence of linking transformational leadership with organizational effectiveness, there is still not enough evidence to establish a causal link between leaders and changes in followers. A further criticism is that this approach has been referred to as elitist and undemocratic (Avolio & Bass, 1993; Avolio, 1999). Similarly, Yukl (1999) has argued that transformational leadership is tinged with a heroic leadership predilection. What follows is a shift in focus from leaders to leadership practice.

2.8 Leadership as a social process

The theoretical perspectives outlined so far within this review have represented leaders as extraordinary – because of their exceptional traits, charisma, vision, ability to communicate an ideology, a sense of moral purpose etc. – in order to motivate their followers. Also, it may be acknowledged that transformational leadership advanced the field by recognizing the need to engage followers in an engaging and binding way. It achieved this by drawing on an individual's emotions through its emphasis on vision and charisma (Bolden et al., 2011), but it also reinforced traditional stereotypes. Yukl (1999) in fact suggests transformational leadership may have done more to actually reinforce the image of a heroic leader rather than challenge traditional leadership:

While heroic accounts of leadership may inspire us into action, they also have the potential to be misleading, paving the way to exclude particular people from leadership roles and/or enabling others to abuse their powers. (Bolden et al., 2011:34)

What follows is a review of a shift in focus from leaders to leadership practice, from a concentration on what a leader does, either on their own or in relation to others, to one on a shared social practice where many contribute, a distributed perspective of leadership. The following sections will first present an overview of what this study means by leadership practice, and then go on to explore teacher leadership and outline the measures necessary for the introduction of a distributed perspective and its relevance for this study.

2.8.1 The practice of leading

A great deal of literature concentrates on leaders, leadership structures and roles and what leaders do with little attention to the practice of leading (Hallinger Heck, 1996; Spillane & Diamond, 2007). Therefore, an important element of understanding leadership is to examine the day-to-day micro-practices of leadership in school, as 'a rich understanding of how, why and when they do it, is essential if research is to contribute to improving the day-to-day practice of leadership and management of schools' (Spillane & Diamond, 2007:5).

In support of a practice or 'action perspective', Eccles & Nohria (1992:13) see 'the reality of management as a matter of actions and processes rather than as a matter of things, states, structures ... or design.' Focussing on leadership as an activity means that individuals acting in different positions within an organization may take on the work of leadership (Heifetz, 1994). With this view in mind, the strength of leadership to influence rests on its effectiveness as an activity (Tucker, 1981; Spillane & Diamond, 2007).

Individuals use language to carry out actions such as giving instructions. However according to Gee (2004; 2005; 2009), individuals enact larger activities using the word in a special way. By an activity, Gee means 'a socially recognized and institutionally or culturally supported endeavour that usually involves sequencing or combining actions in certain specified ways' (Gee, 2011b:30). For Gee, the term 'practice' is often used for what he refers to as 'activity'. This study adopts Gee's position with regard to recognizing practice as a cultural endeavour, but extends the definition further by asserting that practice is used to refer 'to the comprehensive enactment of the profession, a set of specific skills or behaviours ... the actual doing

of leadership in particular places and times' (Spillane & Diamond, 2007:6) in a socially recognized cultural endeavour.

Furthermore, by focussing on leadership activity, attention will be centred on the interactions between the followers and leaders; for instance, when communicating the vision of the organization, the concentration will not be purely on a set of strategies, but 'the dynamic situations in which culture and practice' operate (Spillane & Diamond, 2007:6). In addition, this study is not just interested in thick descriptions (Mason, 2007) based on observations of the actions of individuals within the schools, but also on the interactions of the stakeholders and how these function and shape the discourses of leadership within the settings.

2.9 Teacher leadership

Successful school improvement is dependent upon the ability of individual schools to manage change and development (Muijs & Harris, 2006). According to the DfE's *Importance of Teaching: The Schools Whitepaper 2010*, 'as we make schools more autonomous, taking up a leadership role will become more attractive and more important' (DfE, 2010:26). Muijs & Harris believe that teacher leadership empowers teachers and contributes to a school's improvement. They indicate through their research that there are certain conditions that need to be in place in schools for this to happen: a 'culture of trust and support, structures that supported teacher leadership but [are] clear and transparent [and] strong leadership with the head usually being the originator of teacher leadership' (2006:961).

Previously, leadership within schools was attributed to the headteacher and those who held senior management posts within schools, with teacher leadership and influence being limited to the classroom. Spillane (2006), however, urges researchers to look at the leader-plus aspect of leadership. Although he acknowledges that little is known about how leadership practice is distributed among formal leaders and teacher leaders, he believes that, 'a distributed perspective urges us to take leadership practice as the unit of interest and attend to both teachers as leaders and administrators as leaders simultaneously' (ibid.:21).

Muijs and Harris draw attention to building capacity within schools through collaborative working practices, which they believe is necessary for improvement to occur: 'building capacity for school improvement implies a profound change in schools as organisations' (2006:961). In the USA, Canada and Australia, teacher leadership is well developed and grounded in research. The authors believe that this

model of leadership entails a redistribution of power and alignment of authority within schools (ibid.).

Just as leadership is a contested concept, so too is that of teacher leadership, as it is defined in various ways; however, the most commonly held interpretations comprise the formal leadership role, that which is held for both management and pedagogical reasons – for example a head of department, a subject co-ordinator or head of key stage – as well as the informal leadership roles of coaching or leading a team. These are seen as comprising collective and collaborative practices. A key element is the ‘ability of those within a school to work together, constructing meaning and knowledge collectively and collaboratively’ (Lambert, 1998:5). Gronn believes that leadership from this point of view is ‘fluid and emergent’ which he believes has three implications. Firstly, power relations between leaders and followers are blurred as a result. Secondly, it also has implications for tasks and division of labour within schools. Thirdly, he sees it as the opportunity for all teachers to become leaders (Gronn, 2000:333). Leadership from this perspective is a collective phenomenon.

Muijs and Harris support Gronn’s work, believing that ‘teacher leadership is premised upon a power re-distribution within the school ... [whereby] the power base is diffuse and authority is dispersed within the teaching community’ (2006:962). The belief here is that power is distributed and realigned amongst the individual members within the school (Harris, 2003). This leads to the claim by some that distributed leadership equals schools functioning democratically (Harris, 2003; Halpin, 2003). This is a central issue for advocates of distributed and democratic leadership; however, it raises the issue of where the strategic power actually lies. However, with regard to democratic leadership, Hatcher believes that this ‘idealises managerialist practice as democratic [and] disguises the reality of the ultimately coercive power of management. While participation is nominally inclusive, authority is exclusive’ (2005:259).

Day et al., in their review for the NCSL, claimed that ‘heads nurture success in schools through sustained articulation, communication and the application of core values with a range of internal and external stakeholders’ (2010:16). Their findings from a three-year national research project on the impact of leadership on pupil outcomes also stated that ‘the distribution of leadership responsibility and power varies according to local context’ (ibid.) and that heads that were successful engaged in ‘progressive and selective leadership distribution’ (ibid.:17).

2.10 Summary

Overall, the concepts of leadership as a social process and distributed leadership are novel in that they involve a move away from theorizing and empirical enquiry focussed on a single leader, which has often been the norm to date in the field of school leadership, to a focus on shared leadership. As has been identified in the literature reviewed above, policy and structural changes across school systems have resulted in alternative models or forms of leadership practice being implemented within schools.

Furthermore, an analysis of distributed leadership viewing it as an analytical tool 'offers a means of understanding and interpreting leadership practice' (Harris, 2014:15; Spillane, 2011). Moreover, as 'it is central to the Leadership Development Framework adopted by the National College for School Leadership' (Hatcher, 2005:254), as has been discussed previously, distributed leadership is the preferred model of leadership within schools. This study, by adopting a distributed perspective, sets out to explore the shared experience of leading and managing within the case study schools and to understand the internal forces at work of the activity of leadership: 'a distributed perspective frames this practice in a particular way; it frames it as a product of the interactions of school leaders, followers, and aspects of their situation' (Spillane & Diamond, 2007:7; Spillane, 2005).

As discussed in the next chapter, which presents the conceptual framework for this study, distributed leadership provides a useful lens through which to investigate leadership activity within the case study settings.

3. Chapter 3: Conceptual framework

Introduction

As this PhD study aims to explore how contextual factors shape the discourses of leadership within two primary schools, it is relevant to set the scene. Chapter 2 presented an exploration of the historical, ideological and policy contexts which have influenced leadership within schools, and then went on to present a review of the intellectual origins of leadership and how it continues to be theorized. Additionally, the chapter then introduced a model of distributed leadership and considered its importance for a current understanding of leadership within an educational environment.

My argument is that such an exploration was necessary in order to give an understanding of the temporal location of the individuals within my research, 'assembling evidence and argument' (Mason, 2002:31). In this chapter, I take a constructivist approach to continue the theme of enabling the 'location' in order to establish a theoretical space for the discussion and the description of my research tools in the next chapter.

The conceptual framework for this research is influenced by two approaches to discourse analysis: a 'practice approach' and a 'critical approach' (Lawless et al., 2011). The aim within this chapter therefore is to develop an interpretivist theoretical framework based around social constructivism and meaning making. This framework is based on a distributed model of leadership within school; a social constructionist perspective on context; and a critical language analysis.

My intention from the outset was not to find a philosophical label for my approach, but rather to find a coherent and consistent framework that would enable me to answer my research questions; hence the rather heterogeneous approaches that nevertheless sit well together to aid me in formulating a meaningful argument in relation to my puzzle (Mason, 2002).

These elements form part of my conceptual framework for the following reasons. Distributed leadership, as a theory, 'offers a way of understanding and interpreting leadership practice' (Spillane, 2011). For Harris (2008), the model of distributed leadership is context specific (Harris, 2008), and for her,

those in formal leadership positions play a pivotal role in leadership distribution, and they are the prime influence on others and actively model reciprocal trust,

responsibility, and accountability that are essential for this model of leadership to work most effectively. (Harris, 2014:55)

My aim throughout the research has been to investigate different stakeholders' responses to discourses of leadership, and in so doing I have set out to use critical discourse analysis to investigate discourses of the topic, where '[c]ritical discourse analysis is a problem-orientated and transdisciplinary set of theories and methods that have been widely used in educational research' (Rogers, 2004:1). Furthermore, as Gee (1999), Rogers (2004) and Kress (2004) advocate, educational practices are communicative events and so therefore discourse analysis would be a useful way of understanding how texts, talk and other semiotic interactions that comprise educational environments are built across time and context. According to Kress (2004:205),

education is a social process ... and being social, it is the product of social agents, structures, processes, values, purposes, and constraints. In its forms and processes it reflects the society in which it exists.

In other words it is a means of 'getting at' the meanings, these 'in turn have (had) their part in shaping and constituting the practices, structures, shapes, values and purposes of the schools and of those who are participants in its processes' (ibid.).

Therefore, in this chapter, I first begin by offering a way of understanding and interpreting leadership activity within the research settings through a distributed leadership lens. What follows is a consideration of the contribution of contextual factors that shape leadership and the framework that helped sort the categories for analysing the activity within the settings. I will next draw upon Foucault and his influence for discourse analysis. The discussion will then set out to establish the theoretical and analytical role not just of discourse analysis, but critical discourse analysis, calling on the various theorists and outlining why I have chosen Gee's methodological approach for this study, situating my own research using his theory and methods. In addition, using critical analysis tools I will introduce the theoretical questions which this study poses in order to understand the data surrounding leadership in education. In doing so I will seek to understand the social phenomena being investigated and the links between language and the dominant discourses within a primary educational environment.

In the first instance what follows is a lens or frame of the significant aspects of distributed leadership activity and how it might be understood for the purposes of investigating leadership practice within the case study sites.

3.1 Distributed Leadership

The model of leadership often found in educational establishments, and that which the case study sites professed to have adopted, is that of distributed leadership (Gronn, 2002; Harris, 2004; Spillane, 2005; Hammersley-Fletcher et al., 2007). School practitioners, professional developers, policymakers and scholars are investing their time and energies in researching and deliberating about distributed leadership. The National College of School Leadership in the UK has invested in promoting a distributed approach to leadership as the preferred model in schools (Hatcher, 2005).

3.1.1 Key researchers within the field of distributed leadership

Distributed leadership is not a new idea; it has been traced back to the mid-1920s and earlier by 'Gibb 1954 in the Handbook of Social Psychology and further back by Benne and Sheats (1948)' (cited in Edwards, 2011:302). According to Spillane (2005), it is a term that is often used interchangeably with 'shared leadership', 'team leadership' and 'democratic leadership'. Part of its attraction is 'its chameleon like quality; it means different things to different people' (Harris et al., 2007:338). Spillane, according to Harris et al. (ibid.), has developed the most complete theoretical model of distributed leadership. Spillane (2005) argues that distributed leadership is dependent on the situation, and it is possible that a distributed perspective allows for shared leadership. Harris (2004:13), in support of Spillane, suggests that the best way to think of distributed leadership is as 'a way of thinking about "leadership"'. For her, 'distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organisation rather than seeking this only through formal position or role'. However, Harris (2005) also warns of the danger of distributed leadership becoming a catchall for any attempt to share leadership or delegate of leadership.

Spillane & Diamond (2007:2) pose the question, 'does a distributed perspective offer a substantively different way of thinking about school leadership or is it simply another case of the emperor having no (new) clothes?' They warn that 'loose constructs' may result in difficulties for researchers, but more importantly, although they may provide a structure for exchanges within schools, 'they often give a false sense of agreement and understanding among people as they talk past one another' (ibid.:2).

However, a distributed leadership approach stands in contrast to traditional ideas on leadership where an individual is supreme in managing an hierarchical system and structures, while distributed leadership is characterized as a form of 'collective leadership in which teachers develop expertise by working together' (Harris, 2004:14). Hopkins, chair of the Think Tank report (National College for School Leadership, 2001:6), hailed the 'substantial contribution that dispersed and distributed leadership and "network" leadership can make to the climate of the organisation.' This declaration is still central to the Leader Development Framework as adopted by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (previously NCSL).

3.1.2 Distributed leadership as conjoint activity

Distributed leadership is concerned with creating a common culture of expectations utilizing individual skills and abilities. In other words, it involves maximizing the 'human capacity' within schools, capitalizing on teachers developing expertise by working together. Gronn refers to this as an 'emergent property' of a group or a network of interacting individuals – 'distributed leadership as concertive action' (2002:429). This view suggests a move away from structures of command and control, instead viewing the school as a 'community' concerned with maximizing the capacities of all those within the organization (Delanty, 2003). In support of this, Gronn (2002:424) argues for viewing the notion of distributed leadership as 'a unit of analysis which encompasses patterns or varieties of distributed leadership'.

Spillane (2005:145) supports this view and argues that distributed leadership emerges through interaction with other people and the environment: 'this way of thinking about situation differs substantially from prior work'. He advocates that the difference between this school of thought and, say, team-working, collaboration etc. is that distributed leadership results from the activity, it is a product of 'conjoint activity' (Gronn, 2002). For example, a leadership routine may involve up to five leaders: the headteacher; the Key Stage leader; the Local Authority (LA); the school's literacy coordinator; and the Link Literacy Governor, where the latter position is one taken up by the author. There will be times when these leaders' actions will overlap and others when they do not. The headteacher will keep the relevant goals and standards to the fore, keeping everyone on task and reminding them of the expectations for the school. The literacy coordinator will identify the issues within the school, suggest solutions and resources and present literacy teaching strategies that will be implemented throughout the Key Stage. The actions of the subsequent teachers within the Key Stage will define the leadership practice

they are experiencing. They, in turn, will feed back and provide knowledge about that particular teaching strategy. The headteacher will then use this information when discussing the development of the school's literacy initiatives with the literacy link governor and the governing body as a whole. Leadership practice is demonstrated, therefore, in the interactions between leaders and followers, rather than as the function of one or more leaders' actions (Spillane, 2005).

It is through this conjoint activity that, according to Spillane, individuals play off one another, creating a 'reciprocal interdependency between their actions to define a collective practice' (2005:146). This leadership practice is spread across four or more leaders who work separately yet interdependently to monitor and evaluate teaching in a school at different times and through different methods. They will 'pool their interdependency', their separate actions defining a collective practice for monitoring and evaluating teaching (Spillane, 2005; Gronn, 2002).

As part of this conjoint activity, Gronn advocates that power and leadership are separate entities and work independently (Hatcher, 2005). For Gronn (2000:333), the 'key component in the activity system which accounts for organisational leadership taking a distributed form ... is the division of labour'. 'Division of labour in an organisation means that the actions of each individual only make sense in the context of collective activity of the inter-dependent participants' (Hatcher, 2005:256).

Gronn identifies that there are two aspects of this activity: power exists in terms of structural authority and influence, which, according to Hatcher (2005), he uses synonymously with leadership. For Gronn, there are five sub-elements of structural relations: authority, values, interests, personal factors and resources. For him, the most important of these is 'authority because it is always the locus of overall organisational responsibility and legitimacy, and anchors the role system of an organisation' (2000:322). Leadership, on the other hand, is evident 'when ideas expressed in talk or action are recognised by others as capable of progressing tasks or problems which are important to them' (Gronn, 2000:320). These two aspects of activity can, for Gronn, work independently. Whilst the headteacher holds the reins and has the authority, leadership can reside with any teacher who is able, through their ideas, to influence others, and 'suddenly, [the] possibility opens up of all organisation members becoming managers ... and all followers becoming autonomous leaders' (ibid.:330).

This view is problematic on both theoretical and empirical levels. Gronn's theoretical approach draws on an application of activity theory that has been identified as growing out of the ideas of Mintzberg, who observed managers doing what they do. This work, however, was incomplete as it did not explain how management was actually carried out nor explain leadership effectiveness. Gronn's work draws on Engestrom's 'Structure of Human Activity' approach, which is a model of an activity system that conceptualized activity as a collective labour system comprising six inter-mediating components: tools, object(ive)–outcome, division of labour, community (of practice), rules and subject(s). Within an activity system, 'an individual internalises the use of language and tools during socialization by participating in shared activities with humans [and is therefore] constantly reconstructed through participation in artefact mediated human activities' (Miettinen, cited in Thorpe & Holt, 2013:21).

Through an activity theory lens, it is possible to see how agency and structure interrelate and mutually create each other at the micro-social level. However, as Hatcher summarizes, 'contemporary versions such as Gronn's, having disassociated themselves from their origins in Russian Marxist psychology, do not have an adequate theory of power' (2005:256). Authority, which is power, is not just another aspect of activity because it is a different type of phenomenon, it permeates all things. Bourdieu, introducing his concept of field, suggests that 'fields present themselves systematically as structured spaces of positions (or posts) whose properties depend on their position within these spaces and ... can be analysed independently of the characteristics of their occupants' (Bourdieu, 1993:72). Therefore, by definition a field 'is simultaneously a space of conflict and competition ... in which participants vie to establish monopoly over the ... effective capital within it' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:17).

With regard to a school, it is the head who is in the overall position in the power structure and therefore the privileged site of influence.

Leadership 'from below' can only be translated from the sphere of ideas to that of action when it is sanctioned by the authority of the headteacher ... thus, officially sanctioned 'distributed leadership' is always delegated, licensed, exercised on behalf of and revocable by authority – the headteacher. (Hatcher, 2005:256)

Furthermore, it is not possible to alienate the power of the headteacher and isolate it from the state. Activity theory should conceptualize activity systems not as

independent units of analysis, but as 'subsumed in wider social structures of power, (Hatcher, 2005:256). As demonstrated by Bourdieu when he theorized concerning the relationship between field and the 'field of power', '[t]he field of power is that arena of struggle among the different power fields ... for the right to dominate throughout the social order' (Swartz, 2010:47). Central for Bourdieu is the role of the state, which is 'not synonymous with the field of power ... [but] assumes the key role of regulating the struggle within the field of power' (ibid.). Teachers and educational establishments are being more intensively managed than at any other time in the past 50 years and so it is inappropriate to separate the two functions of leadership and power without exploring 'the principles of their articulation' (Hatcher, 2005:257).

In addition, through this pooled activity and these separate activities, colleagues interact to define a collective practice for evaluating and monitoring teaching. As a result, primary schools have their own unique culture. Cullingford (1997) believed that teachers take on responsibility not only for the curriculum but for the social, moral and emotional welfare of their pupils. Therefore it is important that the ethos of any school avoids friction because of the close working conditions of teachers. This has led primary schools to adopt models of working relationships that involve collaboration.

Furthermore, in primary schools, which vary greatly in size, teachers may have multiple responsibilities, and therefore the role of a mid-level leader is somewhat different to the norm, based on only having a limited number of individuals to lead. Additionally, primary teachers see themselves in terms of age-based expertise and therefore are reluctant to tell colleagues in different key stages how to deliver a subject; rather, this will be done through negotiation and collaboration. Therefore primary schools are still very dependent on the leadership philosophy of the headteacher, who still exercises enormous power even if this functions to 'allow' others to take responsibility (Hammersely-Fletcher, 2007). As a result, the behaviour of the headteacher still has a great influence on how leaders in a school are enabled to act as leaders. Primary schools then favour communities within which delegation and collaboration are valued and where they know each other very well.

3.1.3 Distributed Leadership as direction-setting and influencing practice

Headteachers, Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and subject leaders will discuss ways of leadership which best suit them in collaborating on the best practice going forward for the school. This will involve delegating responsibilities where individuals in the school will take on leadership roles. 'For headteachers this involves them in

having the courage to share or hand over aspects of their responsibility to others' (Hammersley-Fletcher, 2007:428). Rolph (2010) believes this is a paradox which distributed leadership causes: 'A headteacher who wishes to see distributed leadership in his or her school will need to have huge self-confidence and enormous strength of character ... great courage and self-discipline' (ibid.:1).

In his empirical research, Wallace (2001) investigated the extent to which headteachers of senior management teams (SMT) in UK primary schools shared leadership with SMT colleagues. For Wallace, the SMT consisted of the head, deputy head and other senior teachers with management responsibility and the term 'management' in the label 'management team' refers both to 'leadership' (setting direction for the organization) and to management activity (orchestrating its day-to-day running). Wallace was informed by research and theoretical literature on school leadership and his research was conducted in four SMTs in large primary schools. This involved interviews and observation and was guided by cultural and political perspectives. Wallace, supported by theoretical literature, claims that, over the years, practice has rendered shared ownership of school leadership as a staff entitlement. Headteachers

are urged to promote transformation of the staff culture through articulating a vision of a desirable future state for the institution; garnering colleagues' support for it; and empowering them to realize this shared vision through developing management structures and procedures emphasizing professional dialogue, team-working and mutual support. (Ibid.:154)

However, theoretical studies reflecting these principles are problematic in the UK context, where UK central government reforms have increased headteachers' dependence on SMTs, whilst blame for failure still lies with the headteacher. Wallace (2001) makes no challenge to central government reforms, albeit recognizing that they have caused the dilemma over shared leadership. His research clearly values teamwork; however, his evidence is contradictory with regard to members' culture of teamwork as he does not question the management hierarchy, which is led by the headteacher and where parameters are clearly set. He proposes that school leadership should be shared as widely as possible, contingent on the degree of risk for the headteacher. Wallace does not relate his findings to other researchers' work, so up to now they remain untested against other research that might support or challenge them. Furthermore, the sample of informants is small, so the generalizability of his findings to other UK schools is uncertain. Moreover, Wallace's research and findings do not address the possibility that local

contextual factors may contribute to team effectiveness, nor does he take into account the psychological motivations of the team members.

3.1.4 Communities of practice and distributed leadership

Rolph (2010) believes that, as a result of the government's workforce reform agenda, making changes to enable teachers to teach by releasing them from the burden of many tasks, such as administration, pushes the boundaries of autonomy in schools and creates new models for ways in which schools can organize themselves 'to encourage a culture of informed professional judgement' (Hammersley-Fletcher, 2007:428), i.e. a community of practice. Wenger (1999:73) refers to people engaging in professional activity in an organization as 'communities of practice' that exist 'because people are engaged in actions whose meanings they negotiate with one another ... practice resides in a community of people and the relations of mutual engagement by which they can do whatever they do.' According to Bennett et al. (2003), developing such a way of working involves developing trust and openness; recognizing varieties of expertise, rather than position, as the basis for leadership roles in groups; people working together to pool their initiatives and expertise; and leadership as a product of concertive or conjoint activity. It is a culture built on courage that has the confidence to use the professional judgement of many to drive them forward.

In his distributed perspective on leadership, Spillane (2006) identifies three essential elements: leadership practice is central; leadership practice is a result of interactions among leaders and followers; and finally, the situation both defines leadership practice and is defined through that practice. Leadership for Spillane involves both 'mortals as well as heroes' (ibid.:4). He advocates the importance of building professional communities among teachers. In his leader-plus approach (the work of multiple leaders), he bases his ideas on empirical research in how staff worked on various organizational functions such as developing a vision, building teacher knowledge, managing resources and building a professional community. For Spillane, the 'leader-plus approach recognises that such routines and structures play an integral role in leadership' (2006:7).

However, other authors warn of the conflicting priorities, targets and timescales within schools (Storey, 2004; Timperley, 2005; Harris, 2007) and therefore the potential difficulties arising out of distributed leadership, including inevitable consequences for communities of practice. It is a matter of necessity to cross structural and cultural boundaries (Harris, 2007). Timperley further counsels about

formally appointed leaders, since because they 'do not automatically command respect and authority, teacher leaders may be particularly vulnerable to being openly disrespected and disregarded because they do not carry formal authority' (2005:412). Fitzgerald and Gunter, in their theorizing, question whether it is possible for 'distributed leadership to occur in a policy climate that affords authority and responsibility for leadership and management to those labelled according to an established hierarchy' (2008:334). Harris (2007:341) concurs and questions whether the hierarchical school structure actually 'mediates against distributed leadership practice and (whether) this type of informal influence and agency' is actually possible in such a structure. Furthermore, Codd (2005:200) cogently argues that, as a result of the 1988 Education Act and the consequent reforms of centralized control over 'critical political areas such as the curriculum, the assessment of learning and the teaching profession itself' means that teachers themselves are monitored and appraised against pre-determined standards of performance and evaluated in terms of 'value-added'.

As has been pointed out previously, as a result of these moves, a set of managerial values have infiltrated the discourses of leadership within school communities and become the frames of reference for individuals within schools, which is in direct contrast to traditional democratic educational values (Codd, 2005). The preferred model of leadership within the two case study schools was a distributed model, so understanding their leadership activity within this framework will aid an understanding of the patterns of influence and enable a closer exploration of actual leadership practice and its impact.

3.1.5 Summary

According to Leithwood et al. (2006; 2009:270), based on their research on school leadership for NCSL, there is ever-growing confidence that distributed leadership contributes to the effectiveness of the organization, but in their opinion it is a 'hot topic'. Whatever definition is adopted for 'distributed leadership', it is a body of thought that is provoking much debate and controversy, as despite there being a view that it does contribute to the effectiveness of a school, there is still little empirical evidence that links it to improved pupil outcomes.

What is pertinent to this study is that 'a contemporary distributed perspective on leadership ... implies that the social context, and the inter-relationships therein, is an integral part of the leadership activity' (Leithwood et al., 2006:45). Harris (2014) concurs, believing that much of the research literature has focussed on the formal

headship and has overlooked leadership that can be distributed across the many varied roles and functions found in a school.

Similarly, as Spillane (2005) has suggested, the distributed perspective frames leadership through the interactions of school leaders, followers, and their situation. It is not the actions of individuals that are paramount, but the interactions among them. Spillane advocates that leaders 'act' in 'situations' that are defined by others' actions. It could be argued that this perspective on situation is not new, but rather something from the Contingency school of thought. This school of thought proposes that situation works independently to influence a leader's behaviour (Bolden et al., 2011). Spillane (ibid.:4), however, believes that 'situation does not simply affect what school leaders do as an independent, external variable, it is inextricably linked.' Adopting this perspective on leadership focuses attention not on the attribute or actions of individual leaders, but on situated leadership practice (Bolden et al., 2011).

This study takes leadership to be a fundamental social, organizational and political phenomenon and adopts Spillane and Diamond's (2007:7) perspective, which frames leadership practice 'as a product of the interactions of school leaders, followers and aspects of their situation'. In order to investigate 'purposeful activity' it is necessary they argue, to study individuals within their natural environment because this is where sense making can best be understood. For them it is the socially situated practice with its interdependence of the actors, activity and the environment which, is the appropriate unit of analysis for studying leadership practice.

3.2 Contextual factors and their relevance for this study

Moving on from understanding the relevance of a distributed model of leadership for schools, it is relevant also to consider the contextual factors that shape that leadership. As this study takes Spillane's (2001) perspective of leadership being stretched across leaders, followers and activities wherein there is a reciprocal interdependency, it follows that a leader in a school has to deal with multiple variables that change constantly in a variety of ways and, as a result, leaders have to be vigilant and aware of what is happening. In addition, 'the school as an organisational context for the work of leaders is complex' (Southworth, 2004:7), and Harris also identifies how the 'current context' within a school environment, 'is rapidly shifting' (2008:58). Furthermore, it is recognized that context is not a simple

phenomenon, rather 'it is multiple, blended and variable, because contexts also change over time' (Southworth, 2004:2). It comes in many forms and, as has previously been identified within the study, the role of headteacher in primary schools is one that is developing rapidly to reflect an educational landscape that is changing at national and local levels (NCLS, 2009). Leadership within schools need to think about their schools' staff development needs; staff needs; the cultures and communities the school serves; the socioeconomic environment they find themselves in; the ever changing face of the school year; and, importantly, the changing development needs of the children.

Moreover, the fact remains that, though schools operate within a devolved system, they are steered by central government policies and funding streams and the continuous development of educational policy. Educational leadership within the school sector has at its roots a mandated model of leadership rather than the development of educational leadership (Gunter, 2001). As Gunter (*ibid.*:17) believes, 'there are competing versions of the performing school and the one that is dominating promotes leadership as a universal prescription rather than a context-specific professional relationship.' How a school operates is clearly defined by government, its purpose preordained according to the particular objectives set. Within that environment, therefore, being a leader – carrying out leadership, undertaking educational leadership – is highly political and context-specific (*ibid.*).

Thus, any exploration of context needs to acknowledge that the label covers many things, and it is how these contextual matters interrelate and interact which makes each school different from the rest, which is why education cannot be regarded as simply a different context for the application of general management principles, but is a special case justifying a distinct approach. What follows is an understanding of the complexity and contribution of contextual factors that influence and shape leadership practice within a primary schooling sector.

3.3 Understanding contextual factors of leadership

Context for educational leadership is important, but it is also open to debate and is empirically and conceptually under-explored (Barker, 2001; Berry and Cartwright, 2000; Jepson, 2009; Bolden et al., 2011; Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014). Very few reviews of context have appeared within the leadership literature however in the most recent review of the literature, Porter and McLaughlin found that only 16 per cent of articles (373 in total) published in the leading journals on leadership in the

period 1990 to 2005 consider organizational context. In trying to understand contextual factors, they argue that there is no consensus with regard to a set of areas that make up the context for leader behaviour; however, they do highlight from their review of the literature that there is some consensus with regard to a set of components, which they identify as: culture/climate; goals/purposes; people/composition; processes; state/condition; structure; and time (2006). This study aims to contribute to addressing the gap identified through an empirical analysis of the complexity of context for stakeholders' understanding of the leadership practice they are experiencing.

Researchers' choice of perspective will influence how they view context. This study adopts a social constructivist perspective to better understand contextual influences on leadership. Social constructivists view knowledge as unbiased and objective and consider it as Burr (1995) advocates a product of culture and history or as Gergen (2015:30) suggests social constructivism holds 'that we understand the world through mental categories, but we acquire those categories through social relationships'. Therefore knowledge is influenced by social activity and the context where it is constructed (Schedlitzki, and Edwards, 2014).

Therefore, to present this study's conceptualization of the 'context' of leadership, it is necessary to understand the existing theoretical positions on contextual influences on leadership. Furthermore, as this study is taking a D/discursive approach by studying the relationship of language-in-use and meaning-making of leadership within schools, critical focused approaches to understanding leadership contexts will be discussed.

3.3.1 The dynamic interaction of different levels and types of context

Jepson (2009:38), in her exploration of context and how it shapes leadership practice, argues that empirical research has paid little attention to the 'dynamic, interactional nature of different context types and levels and therefore failed to explore the depth and complexity of the very phenomenon of "context" in the process of leadership.' However, drawing on her model for this study, it has been possible to identify three different levels and associated types of context that can aid understanding of contextual influences on the practice of leadership. These three levels are: 'Institutional', in other words identity, structure, power and influence; 'Cultural' – the organizational assumptions, the ways of being, the learning community, the context as constructed through discourse; and 'Governmental' – regulation and policy, historical perspective, etc. These three contextual levels are

interdependent, interactional and dynamic, thereby creating continuously changing contexts for individuals and influences on leadership. This conceptual framework, Jepson believes, provides a starting point to aid the design and analysis of empirical studies in the exploration of leadership-context relationships. Figure 3.1 therefore presents these contextual levels in a conceptual framework as adapted from Jepson(2009). This provides a sorting category for analysing both discursive resources and discursive practices (Rigg, 2005) within the case study sites. This framework will be used as a sorting category for posing situated questions of the participants together with Gee’s (2009) interconnected framework, which is introduced in 3.13 which will enable me to explore and probe taken-for-granted assumptions within the two settings.

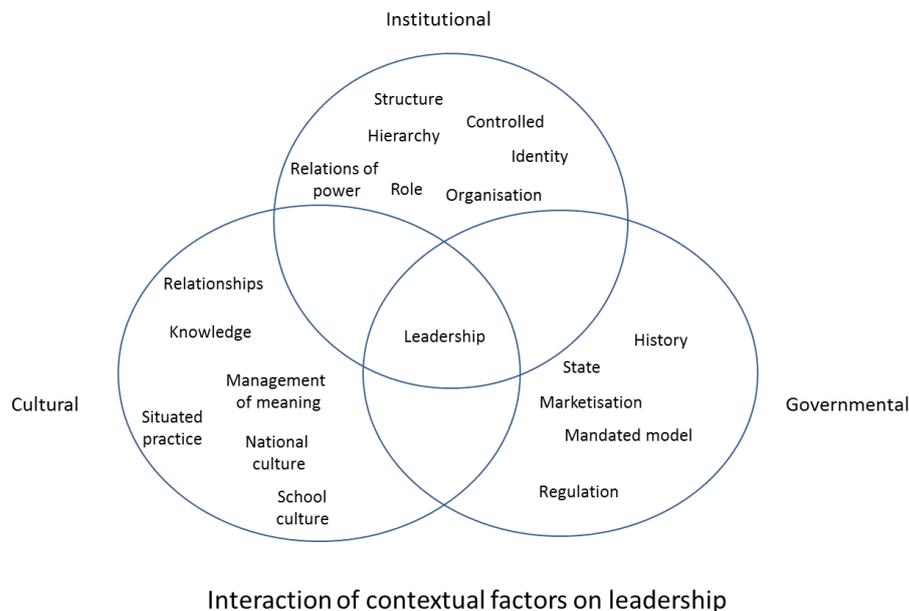


Figure 3.1 Dynamic interaction of contextual factors on leadership

Source: adated from Jepson (2009:39)

The UK educational policy context and its relevance for school leadership have already been reviewed in Chapter 2, and the mandated model of distributed leadership for schools has been discussed above. Before introducing the dynamic interaction of different levels and type of context which are relevant for this study it is appropriate, as this study is taking a social constructivist approach, to now focus on context as structured through meaning making. This will subsequently be followed by contextual factors of power and identity and their relevance in understanding how they, as contextual factors, shape leadership within the school environments investigated in this study.

3.3.2 The context of meaning making

Key theorists such as Osborne et al. (2002), Alvesson & Sveningsson (2003), Grint (2005) and Fairhurst (2009) have all played important roles in contributing to the debate on adopting a socially constructed approach to leadership research. The theoretical lenses of these authors are more qualitative than those of mainstream leadership scholars and are influenced by a linguistic approach. Fairhurst (2009:1608) refers to such authors as 'discursive leadership scholars', all representing a myriad of perspectives, but having as a core belief that language constitutes reality, rather than mirroring it.

For Alvesson & Sveningsson (2003:377), leadership exists and has meaning subject to a number of things, such as 'tasks, organisations, kinds of people and societal and organisational cultures'. Grint (2005) proposes that what is meant by context, a leadership 'situation' and therefore effective leadership behaviour is subjective and contestable.

Jackson and Parry (2008:61) refer to context as 'the place where and the time in which leadership is created [that] influences how the leaders and followers go about co-producing leadership', whilst Schedlitzki and Edwards (2014:83) favour the, 'symbolic space that sets the meaning of the phenomenon of leadership'. In other words, for them, leadership context is relational, time specific, and socially constructed (Jackson & Parry, 2008; Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014; Osborn et al., 2002).

However, to scrutinize the complexity of the processes of leadership it is necessary to unpack individuals' 'language-in-use' (Gee, 1999) as they talk about their daily experiences of leadership within their schools. Or, as Weick et al. maintain, this study will be able to gain a contextual view of leadership by understanding

that the order in organisational life comes just as much from the subtle, the small, the relational, the oral, the particular, and the momentary as it does from the conspicuous, the large, the substantive, the written, the general and the sustained. (2005:410)

With regard to meaning making within organizations, the importance of effective communication not only in transmitting information but in communicating ideas and telling stories is clearly identified by Bratton et al. (2005), who develop further the interactions between leaders and followers. Hatch et al. (2005) further explore the use of storytelling as a means for leaders to communicate in the complex

environment of today's organizations. Spicer and Alvesson (2011) believe metaphors to be a useful tool in understanding the complex meanings at work in leadership and that exploring a range of metaphors opens up ways for researchers and practitioners to think about leadership: 'exploring novel and revealing metaphors associated with leadership helps us to think about the phenomenon in unexpected ways' (ibid.:32). For Spicer and Alvesson, metaphors are 'a crucial element in how people relate to reality' (ibid.:35). They draw on Morgan (1986) in advocating that metaphors are 'a way of seeing and a way of thinking' (Spicer and Alvesson, 2011:35). They argue that 'managers or any other practitioners relate to and work within a universe that is filtered and constructed by the images of what management ... [is] all about' (ibid.). Metaphors help individuals to delve into their unconscious thought processes and confront how reality is framed (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Seeing storytelling as a tool for leaders further enhances the notion of co-construction of reality through a story, metaphor or message. Schedlitzki and Edwards (2014:243) propose that, through the re-storying of a message, 'not only can the past and present be re-storied to meet the current needs of the idea or message to be shared but the leader as storyteller can also demonstrate new, alternative endings to a story and hence co-create with the audience visions for the future'. Communication, therefore, should always be viewed 'as distorted by power, values, politics and status in organisations' (ibid.:244). It is to the contextual influence of power that this chapter now turns to.

3.3.3 Power and context

Bolden et al. (2011) and Schedlitzki & Edwards (2014) draw attention to the fact that one of the important contextual factors that seems to be under-explored within the literature on leadership context is that of the role of power, or 'how power shapes the context out of which leadership emerges' (Bolden et al., 2011:97). Power, along with power relations, is a significant concept in the analysis of education and education policy (Ball, 2013). Furthermore, calling on a Foucauldian explanation of power, Ball presents power within organizations as a modern frame, not in its historical meaning, but rather 'as an interactive network of social relations among and between individuals, groups, institutions and structures that are political, economic and personal' (ibid.:29).

Schools, as organizations, operate according to authority structures and organizational culture defined through the School Improvement Plan and its vision and value statements that specify how power is operationalized and how individuals

act towards each other and their senior management team (Cunliffe, 2014). Educational leadership, as theorized by key leadership researchers (e.g. Leithwood, 2006a; 2006b; Leithwood et al., 2009; Day & Leithwood, 2007), views leadership as critical in achieving school outcomes.

Both teacher and pupil are required for a school to perform. Schooling provides a change that would not exist had it not been there. Within a school individuals are brought together and together form the objects of the activity: 'The discourse suggests that leadership secures more and better school outcomes' (ibid.). Wallace and Hall (1994:29) see power as the means to identify and draw on the resources necessary for this activity 'in order to intervene in events so as to alter their course'.

Resources vary, and include knowledge and skills through to the giving of rewards or sanctions through achievement recognition and mechanisms of consensus or conflict (Gunter, 2001). The discourse presents leadership as involving key ingredients, such as authority and influence (Gunter, 2001; Leithwood et al., 2006; Gillies, 2013); management micropolitics and policy micropolitics (Hoyle, 1999); and vision (Gillies, 2013). Mawhinney (1999:161) defines micropolitics as 'the interaction and political ideologies of social systems of teachers, administrators and pupils within school buildings', also including external systems such as central and local government, 'who strongly influence the context within which schools operate' (Bush, 2003:89).

Theorizing power from a Foucauldian perspective sees it as not something to be possessed, but exercised, and 'knowledge', for Foucault, is not power, 'but is both created and creates it simultaneously' (Gillies, 2013:12). By drawing on a Foucauldian lens, this study is able to investigate, question and challenge the assumptions underlying behaviour. 'The principal tools that Foucault brings to educational discourse are scepticism, critique and problematization' (ibid.:22). (I return to Foucault's contribution and influence on discourse analysis in section 3.5). By approaching this study through this trident it is possible to probe practice within the case study school sites and the educational leadership terrain therein. It is by this means that this study will move away from definitions of school production, for instance the evaluation of school life, to how teachers experience school life, how talk is important in how work gets done (Gee, 2005; 2009; 2011), and how power is exercised in the leadership they are experiencing (Lukes, 1974; Fairclough, 2015).

It is by linking leadership with theories of power that this study will question what is promoted as good leadership practice and the assumptions therein for stakeholders talking and experiencing it within school.

As Schedlitz & Edwards (2014:96) highlight, 'context is linked to power because it allows room for individual agency yet shapes what is most likely to be successful; it both shapes and is shaped by individual actors.' It is this conceptual understanding of power as embedded in the structural, bureaucratic, cultural elements of an organization that this study adopts. For this meaning, power has both 'a constraining and enabling influence on the ability of leaders to pursue their goals and the ability of followers to accept or resist these goals' (Bolden et al., 2011:97). Therefore, that context – what individuals within school see as relevant or important – is shaped by the power structures within their communities and structures within school and the norms and values and everyday interactions they take for granted. As they interact with others within school and make sense of their language in use, power structures, norms and values are created and sustained. Therefore, 'what we see as situation or context influencing leadership is socially constructed and an outcome of power structures rather than determined by the individual' (Schedlitz & Edwards, 2014:96).

According to Cunliffe (2013:81, cited in Thorpe, 2013), '[a] number of authors have taken a Foucauldian perspective to examine how discursive practices, power and ideology combine to perpetuate and maintain systems of domination and oppression'. These authors draw associations between power, knowledge and language, asserting that the most powerful are most likely to be heard and it will be their interpretation of reality that will be most likely accepted. These theorists explore how 'discursive practices constitute both objectivities (social institutions, knowledge) and subjectivities (identities and actions)' (ibid.:81). Within this perspective, it is primarily social relations within school, and especially power relations, that will define the character of the existing social order within the school.

Furthermore, power is not itself a bad thing. For instance, the power of individuals in school to raise the attainment of the children is a social good. This study aims to contribute to the discussion of what Fairclough (2015:26) refers to as 'power to', 'power over' and 'power behind' within primary school settings. For Fairclough, it is necessary to distinguish between 'power to' do things and the 'power over' individuals within organizations. Again, the 'power over' individuals need not be bad as long as it 'is legitimate' (ibid.:26) – for instance, within the schooling system, the power that teachers have over students, or the headteacher over staff, is

recognized. However, as Bolden et al. (2011) suggest, for power to be effective it must be legitimized by followers.

Weber's writing 1978 (cited in Bolden et al. 2011) advocated that there was a difference between power that was forced and power as authority. In the latter, he argues, leaders use persuasion to get their demands accepted. For Weber, power is given legitimacy in three ways: traditional authority, for example that of the Queen through tradition; secondly, legal and rational authority, for example the headteacher has the power to make decisions because followers recognise the right of the headteacher to set the rules and procedures; and thirdly, Weber (ibid.) believes that power is given legitimacy because of what he refers to as charismatic authority – because followers see their leader as inspirational and have special qualities, 'often charismatic leaders act as role models who are perceived to best embody organisational values' (Bolden et al., 2011:75).

Therefore, within Weber's framework, leaders justify their decisions and organizational goals by 'grounding them in a source of legitimacy' (Bolden, 2011:75). For Weber, although legal-rational authority may appear to be opaque because of the very nature of the procedures and rules in place, leadership decisions are political because they are carried out by those who have access to these sources of authority (ibid.). Likewise, Fairclough (2015) suggests that 'power to' and 'power over' should be viewed in a dialectical way, 'a process in which subject and object are so joined that truth can be determined only within the subject-object totality' (Boje, 2013:76, cited in Thorpe et al., 2013).

From a discursive perspective Fairclough (2015:27) makes the distinction between 'power in' discourse and 'power behind' discourse. For him power in discourse sometimes involves 'unequal encounters' for instance where some voices are valued over others. Whereas 'power behind' discourse 'includes the power' over individuals 'to shape and constitute 'orders of discourse' Both of these are for Fairclough 'power over' individuals and 'constitute orders of discourse when individuals are engaging in their work or their every day interactions, the whole social order of discourse is put together and held together as a hidden effect of power' (Fairclough, 2015:83).

For Fairclough, language is socially determined; it is part of society and is a process which is socially conditioned and entrenched in social conventions. In addition, for him, how discourses are structured within orders of discourse and how they change

over time is dependent on changing relationships of power within social institutions for example. For him discourse is a contributing factor to social continuity and change and control over the orders of discourse is a means of maintaining power (ibid.). Within this perspective, social practice is not just a reflection of reality, but is 'in an active relationship to reality and changes reality ... and as the social structures not only determine social practice, they are also a product of social practice', that is, they are rooted in ideological assumptions and as a result both sustain and legitimize power relations (Fairclough, 2015:68).

The case study schools within this study have social orders and particular orders of discourse with their own situations and structures where discourse occurs; for example, classrooms, staff meetings, lesson observations, etc. As well as sets of recognizable 'social roles' in which individuals engage in discourse, for example: headteacher; teacher; pupils; there are also particular purposes for discourse – teaching, learning, monitoring, evaluating etc. Taking social roles as an example, Fairclough refers to *headteacher* and *teacher* as 'subject positions ... are what they do' (2015:68). The discourses of the staff room, class room, or headteacher's office will create these social roles and deem them either to be headteacher or teacher. By taking up a social role, the headteacher or teacher will do or not do particular things, in line with the 'discoursal rights and obligations' of a headteacher or teacher, and this also determines what each is permitted and required to say or not within that discourse type (ibid.:68). Hence the social structure of school with its discourse conventions determines the discourse and, in turn, reproduces the social structure of school.

3.3.4 Identity and context

As discursive conventions construct the social structure of school, so too they construct an individual's identity and that of a leader. There are nominally two strands of leadership studies that focus on identity construction in leadership. The first perspective is drawn from a psychology perspective and considers an individual's identity to be constructed through 'a unitary coherent construction produced by the individual' (Sinclair, 2011, cited in Schedlitz & Edwards, 2014:245) where an identity is a singular one and developed over time.

The second, more recent view of leader identities is that derived from a sociological and cultural theorist perspective, where identities are viewed as being produced, controlled and resisted (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003; Ford et al., 2008). 'This strand recognises and explores the increasing organisational and societal pressure

on managers to perform to the dominant leadership discourses and become the ideal leader depicted in this discourse' (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014:245). It problematizes the notion that individuals have to 'become' leaders 'to become more aware of how they constitute, maintain and thereby retain some control over their realities and identities' (Ford and Harding, 2007:489).

Some of the dominant identities promoted within the wider leadership discourse problematize the notion of the leader as 'heroic', for example, Grint (2010) puts forward the argument that within leadership there are 'three elements of the sacred: the separation between leaders and followers, the sacrifice of leaders and followers, and the way leaders silence the anxiety and resistance of followers' (2010:89). Others are promoting non-traditional leader icons resulting from leadership practice and presenting popular theories, in particular Alvesson, who suggests leaders can be considered as 'saints' (2011:51), or Huzzard (cited in Alvesson and Spicer, 2011:76), who promotes leaders as 'gardeners.'

Ford (2010), in her research on female senior managers in a UK local authority, identified how these managers complied, through self-regulatory means, with the 'ideal' leader identity in their organizations: 'these managers adopted the language of dominant discourses of leadership' (ibid.:62). In her findings, Ford identified that the perception of self is 'not only entwined within the context and the situations in which they are performed, but also within the hegemonic discourses and culturally shaped narrative conventions' (ibid.:47). This ideal identity 'is often a masculine, competitive, heroic one' (Schedlitzki and Edwards, 2014:235).

Wenger (1998) understood this perspective to be framed by an individual's community and the experiences they have of what leading looks like and means within the context of that community. These experiences will not only shape their own identity and that of the identity of a leader, but also influence the wider community's shared view of what their self identity and leadership practice look like (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014). This view of shared identity has key implications for teacher leadership within schools and for this study.

Cunliffe (2014:xviii) refers to this as 'relational', believing that individuals 'are always in relationship with others who are not the same as us' and this 'relates to notions of identity, culture and organizing'. So taking a discursive approach to identity would, through a Foucauldian lens, see practices within school as 'riddled with power, because they privilege particular ideologies, social structures, institutional practices

and groups over others' (Foucault, cited in Cunliffe, 2014:68). For Cunliffe, this structures an individual's behaviour, ways of talking and turns us into a 'subjectivity, a site where D/discourses of power and control meet and organize identity' (ibid.). It follows, therefore, that teachers are discursive subjectivities where D/discourses of power meet and organize their identity which may cause conflict when individuals may conform or resist and as they are shaping their identity, or what Cunliffe refers to as identity-work, in their everyday activities (2014:3).

Additionally, discursive practices within school, such as continuing professional development, performance review, lesson observations, and becoming an outstanding teacher regulate the identities of individuals within school by requiring specific actions and behaviours. For example, with regard to school effectiveness research, despite the fact that it still has the head as pivotal in importance in school development, a number of theorists along with the Department for Education advocate the relevance of teacher leadership (Harris, 2003; Spillane, 2006; Muijs & Harris, 2006; Harris, 2014; DfE, 2010).

3.3.5 Summary

So far, this study has introduced the relevance of contextual factors on three levels: that of the Governmental and policy context, as discussed in Chapter 2; the Institutional level and the influence of the contextual factors of structure, the role of power; and finally, the Cultural, identity-work level of context was discussed, where the influence of the context of management of meaning in shaping an individuals identity in school was reviewed. The study has examined both leadership and context as products of social interaction, and additionally has examined the changing, relational and symbolic nature of such context. Furthermore, through highlighting the contextual factors of leadership and the issue of it residing with many and not the one individual, the study has shown how leadership is fluid and co-constructed within the community.

To complete the conceptual framework, I will next set out to establish the theoretical and analytical role of not just discourse analysis, but critical discourse analysis and the various theorists. Firstly, however, I outline why I have chosen Gee's methodological approach for this study, situating my own research using his interconnected framework.

Fairclough (2011:495) advocates that 'not all social constructivists are interpretive (and) critical...but discursive leadership scholars typically are'. Critical discourse

researchers are interested in a critical theory of the social world, the relationship in the construction and representation of that social world and hence a methodology that enables them to interpret, describe and explain those relationships (ibid.). For that reason critical approaches to discourse analysis and critical social theory contribute to the conceptual framework for this study.

3.4 Why I am using discourse analysis in this study.

According to Rogers (2004), there are areas of commensurability that exist between educational research and discourse analysis. She believes that, firstly, educational practices are 'communicative events', and secondly, that 'discourse studies provide a particular way of conceptualising interactions that is compatible with sociocultural perspectives in educational research', a multimodal social practice constructing meaning within our social world 'linked to socially defined practices that carry more or less privilege and value in society' (2004:1) and which therefore cannot be considered neutral. Furthermore, Rogers (ibid.) advocates that both discourse and educational research are socially committed paradigms, the study of which must examine issues through a range of theoretical perspectives. Discourse analysis enables the researcher because of its reflexive nature, its specific tools and 'its constitutive relationship between discourse and the social world' (Rogers, 2004:1) to view issues in very different ways.

A discourse perspective highlights the possibilities of researching practice through studying the talk in use – how participants 'talk-about' the practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991). This focuses attention on how discourse is put together and what is gained by this construction. This highlights that language does not just describe things, it *does* things (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

My interest lies in how educational leaders provide individuals with possibilities and resources, and also, by association, deny these. How does leadership practice produce both beneficial and detrimental effects? By looking at effective leadership as discursive practice, a means of critically analysing what is being said, by whom, how, and what happens as a result was achieved. Through a critical (Gee, 2005) approach to discourse analysis, the focus will be on investigating patterns in language use and related practices (Gee, 2011), and from this perspective discourses help to determine social practices.

3.5 Foucault – his influence for discourse analysis and this study

In the following section, Foucault's theoretical frameworks are discussed along with why they are relevant for this particular study.

Foucault gave discourse a different meaning; for him it was the rules and practices that produced meaningful statements and regulated discourse in different historical periods: 'a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – a way of representing the knowledge about – a particular topic at a particular historical moment ... discourse is about the production of knowledge through language' (Hall, 1992:291).

Foucault was interested not in language per se, but in language and practice, which is a particular focus of this study. Discourse, Foucault believed, constructs the topic, 'it defines and produces the objects of our knowledge.' (Hall, 1997). In this sense, it controls the way we talk about topics and reason about them. It also, according to Foucault, influences how we put ideas into practice and it is also used to regulate the conduct of others. By definition, then, just as discourse gives us 'rules' of how we talk, reason, write about a topic etc. at any one time – what Foucault refers to as '*episteme*' – so too, by definition, it limits, rules out ways we talk about topics or how we conduct ourselves in relation to the topic, or even construct knowledge of that topic (ibid.). When the same topic is 'talked' of in the same way across different sources, i.e. texts, discussions, policies, then they are said by Foucault to belong to the same '*discursive formation*' (ibid.).

Meaning, and meaningful practice, is therefore constructed through practice and Foucault as a 'constructionist', 'where-by all human knowledge is warranted by our social processes' (Spender, cited in Thorpe and Holt, 2008:56), was concerned, unlike the semioticians, with the production of knowledge and meaning, not through language, but through discourse. Nothing has any meaning outside of discourse (Foucault, 1972). The concept of discourse is not about whether things exist, but where meaning comes from (ibid.). This premise is what lies at the heart of the constructionist theory of meaning and representation. If Foucault argues that we only have knowledge of things if they have a meaning (Foucault, 1972), it is discourse, not the things in themselves, that produces knowledge. It therefore follows that subjects like 'leadership' only exist meaningfully within the discourses about them. The 'practices', the 'rules', how the 'knowledge' about the topic acquires authority, ways of 'talking' about the subject (and not other ways), statements about

'the topic', the knowledge that a different 'episteme' or 'discursive formation' will occur at a later historical moment, will all be part of this study investigating the discourses of leadership.

Young (1971a) indicates that there is a clear relationship between 'elite' groups and how knowledge is organized. 'Knowledge', according to Young (1998:15), 'is stratified' and he advocates that the value of knowing one thing rather than another is linked to power structures that determine what is to be known and what is worthwhile knowing. What is selected to be included in the curriculum and 'the power of some to define what is "valued" knowledge leads to the question of accounting for how knowledge is stratified and according to what criteria.' (ibid.). He expands on the point by referring to the 'stratification' of knowledge in terms of 'property' and 'prestige' components. With regard to the difference in 'prestige', he is referring to the different kinds of knowledge that are valued, e.g.: applied/academic/vocational knowledge. The 'property' aspect of stratification of knowledge refers to how access to knowledge is controlled: 'In different societies the dominant conception of knowledge is likely to be associated with dominant ideas about property in general – whether this is private, state or communal' (ibid.:15).

Foucault (1972), however, was less interested in the 'truth' about knowledge and power but more interested in the effectiveness of power/knowledge. He argued that not only is knowledge a form of power, but power is associated in the questions of whether and in what circumstances knowledge is to be applied or not.

Knowledge linked to power, not only assumes the authority of 'the truth' but has the power to make itself true ... Knowledge, once used to regulate the conduct of others, entails constraint, regulation and the disciplining of practices. Therefore, there is no power relation 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, 1977:27)

For Foucault, power does not 'function in the form of a chain – it circulates. It is never monopolised by one centre. It is deployed and exercised through a net-like organisation' (Foucault, 1980:98). In other words, we are all complicit in the power and it operates at every level: 'Power is not only, (therefore) negative, repressing what it seeks to control. It is also productive' (Hall,1997).

Foucault believed power:

doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, butit traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms of knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be thought of as a productive network which runs through the whole social body. (Foucault, 1980:119)

Foucault, seeing everything as historically specific, views power/knowledge as rooted in contexts and particular histories. As discussed in section 3.3.3, Foucault does not see it as something to be possessed, but exercised. Through a Foucauldian lens this study is able to probe practice. Furthermore, by relating the production of knowledge to power structures within the settings, it was important to help explain the issues of hierarchy in the case study sites 'so leadership (could) be seen to have been reworked and developed over time to sustain political and economic interest' (Gunter, 2001:9). Moreover it was pertinent to position knowledge and truth and to probe their neutrality and whether they were 'directly related to powerful interests, and intellectual work' (ibid.).

However, Foucault (1972) argues that power is diffuse and visible through discourse. Earlier in this chapter it was asserted that leadership activity, the rules surrounding it, how the knowledge about the topic acquires authority, ways of 'talking' about the subject (and not other ways), and statements about leadership all contribute to the conception of leadership. Thus meaning comes from power relations, there are exclusions and inclusions, particular positions are taken, and so on. In this sense, a teacher does not therefore create and communicate knowledge about leadership separate from context, and 'practice is linked to issues of power, status, recognition and value judgements about worth and validity' (Gunter, 2001:9).

It is helpful to consider this view of power/knowledge because, through discourse, the structure of power is visible and so 'seeing,' 'being' and 'doing' (Gee, 2011) can be seen to be complicit with what are accepted as particular forms of leadership within educational organizations. (Ball, 1994b). A key aspect of Gee's perspective is that the 'form of language cannot exist independent of the function of language and the intention of speakers' (Rogers, 204:7).

Before moving on to the influential theorists within discourse analysis, it is appropriate to outline the two main paradigms within linguistics and the study of language and expand upon why I have chosen one over the other.

3.6 Linguistic definitions of discourse: formal and functionalist paradigms

3.6.1 Formalism

There are many frameworks, concepts and methods available for the analysis of discourse within linguistics. Schiffrin (1994), however, outlines that there are two paradigms in linguistics that provide different assumptions about the general nature of language and the objectives of linguistic and it is important for this study to outline which framework is applicable. These two paradigms are sometimes labelled differently but are in the main referred to as the formalist and the functionalist paradigm. For Schiffrin (1994), the differences in the two paradigms are reflected in their differing assumptions, methods for studying language and the nature of data and empirical evidence. As with all paradigms, each has a distinct concept and pattern of thought and therefore also views definitions of discourse differently. The Formalists view discourse as 'sentences ... a particular unit of language (above the sentence)'. Hymes (1974b) suggests that the formalists (or in his words, *structuralists*) view language (code) as grammar, and this is the 'classic' definition of discourse.

Van Dijk (1985:4) states that 'structural (*formalist*) descriptions characterise discourse at several levels or dimensions of analysis and in terms of many different units, categories, schematic patterns, or relations', whereas Stubbs (1983:1) refers to formalistic linguistics as 'attempts to study the organisation of language above the sentence or above the clause and to study larger linguistic units such as conversational changes or written texts'.

Leech (1983:46) further suggests that 'formalists study language as an autonomous system, whereas functionalists study it in relation to its social function.' Formalists acknowledge that language may have 'social and cognitive functions' (Schiffrin, 1994:22), however they do not affect the 'internal organisation of language' (*ibid.*).

The emphasis here is the different ways units of language function in relation to each other. This approach disregards 'the functional relations with the context of which discourse is a part' (van Dijk, 1985:4). Although formalist linguists have altered their views over the years, what is still critical to this view of discourse is that discourse comprises units (Harris, 1988). In other words, the importance is in the ways in which different units of language operate in relation to each other, relevant for an analysis of the language-in-use (Gee, 1999) within the settings.

3.6.2 Functionalism

Functionalism, on the other hand, is based on two premises: firstly, 'language has functions that are external to the linguistic system itself and secondly, external functions influence the internal organisation of the linguistic system', in other words, how external processes impinge upon language (Schiffrin, 1994:22). Functional linguistics fundamentally looks at how language is structured for use and

the systemic-functional and social-semiotic linguistics of Michael Halliday, whose linguistic methodology is still hailed as crucial to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) practices because it offers clear and rigorous linguistic categories for analyzing the relationships between discourse and social meaning. (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000:454)

Halliday (1978) espoused the bigger picture of the nature of language as an aspect of human experience and as a crucial element in building human experience. He believed that it is

a myth to disassociate language and experience ... dissociate language from meaning – form from function, or form from 'content' ... meaning, and the critical role of language in the building of meaning, [would be] simply overlooked. (Halliday & Hasan, 1989:5)

This is the position that this study adopts: how we use the language of leadership and what we do with language. Language is not just repeating, but actively constructing our view of the world. This is further expounded in the work of Fairclough (1989) and his work on the study of language, power and ideology where he advocates a dialectical conception of language and society whereby 'language is part of society; linguistic phenomena are social phenomena of a special sort, and social phenomena are linguistic phenomena' (Fairclough, 1989:23). In other words, analysing language as an autonomous subject would be a contradiction in terms. Therefore, this research has taken Rigg's (2005) argument and investigated discourse as both noun and verb within the case study sites.

To recap, functionalists move away from the study of the unit to look for patterns in talk and for what purpose they are used in certain situations/contexts. Functionalists do draw on a variety of methods of analysis, however it is not the grammatical utterances as sentences that functionalists are concerned with, but rather the way utterances are situated in contexts. In other words, how the participants use language to 'say things', 'do things' and 'be things' in school to accomplish 'social goods', a 'doing' or 'becoming' that situates them as co-producers of leadership.

It is for this reason that this study has adopted Gee's approach to discourse analysis. However, before looking at his approach, it is relevant to compare it with other approaches and therefore ascertain its appropriateness for this study.

3.7 Critical approaches to discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis emerged in the late 1980s, spearheaded by Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak, Teun van Dijk and others. Despite their different disciplinary backgrounds and diversity in methods, these authors have at least seven dimensions in common (Wodak, 2009:2), and because of the points of overlap, Rogers (2004) advises against a strict categorization distinguishing between these approaches. It is useful, therefore, to provide an overview of the main thrusts of this movement after first outlining the meaning of discourse within discourse analysis.

3.8 The Hallidayan influence within critical discourse analysis

From a linguistic point of view, Halliday's (1978) systemic functional linguistics, which is both a representational system and a theory of language, is considered highly influential and is embedded in critical discourse studies today.

This approach to the study of language is one that focuses upon the social functions that determine what language is like and how it has evolved. In other words, how human beings communicate, build knowledge and information and therefore represent experience, values and attitudes (Halliday & Hassan, 1989). Halliday and Hassan (1989) believed that the path to understanding language lies in the study of texts, putting 'CONTEXT' and 'TEXT' together, that is, the text with the con-text. For them, what went with the text was also very important, 'it includes other non-verbal goings-on – the total environment in which a text unfolds. So it serves to make a bridge between the text and the situation in which the texts occur' (Halliday, & Hassan 1989:5).

Systemic functional linguistics, as a methodological approach, is concerned with the choices that individuals make about the social functions of their language use. Social semiotic theory advocates that meaning is always invented as opposed to inherited; discourses, according to this school of thought, both construct and create reality and thus are referred to as 'constitutive, dialectic and dialogic' (Rogers, 2004:6).

There are many definitions of discourse in addition to being social practices, processes and products. Discourses are studied and also theoretical devices for meaning making. Discourse means many things to many people, such as language use; social identities, practices; relationships; etc. In order to understand how the social and 'language bits' (Gee, 2011) interact and build identities and relationships and narratives of the social world, it is appropriate to understand the various stances regarding the term.

The two theorists who have drawn upon a Foucauldian influence of seeing discourse as a social rather than a linguistic classification and who have influenced the field of critical discourse studies, and who are therefore relevant for consideration within this study, are Norman Fairclough and James Gee. The following section will illustrate their various definitions of discourse. I end the chapter by situating my own study in line with Gee's methodological framework as part of my conceptual framework.

3.9 Fairclough social analysis, discourse analysis, text analysis

A central focus of Fairclough's work is that 'language is an irreducible part of social life, dialectically interconnected with other elements of social life, so that social analysis and research always has to take account of language' (Fairclough, 2003:2). According to Fairclough it is not a matter of reducing everything to 'discourse', rather this is just one of many analytical tools to use in conjunction with other forms of analysis. Fairclough's approach has been to combine analysis of text and the language of texts together with an analytical approach to take into account social theoretical issues, 'the socially "constructive" effects of discourse' (Fairclough, 1992:3). He expounds that discourse analysis is about 'oscillating' between a focus on specific texts' and a focus on what he refers to as the 'order of discourse' (ibid.).

'Order of discourse' and 'dialectics' are key concepts and analytical tools for Fairclough. His interest lies in the semiotic resources people draw upon for meaning making, as they are designing and interpreting social practices, 'through ways of interacting (*genres*), ways of representing (*discourse*) and ways of being (*style*)' (ibid.:2). Put another way, interacting refers to the texts that individuals draw upon, for example classroom discourses, whilst genres are different ways of interacting, for example interviews. For Fairclough, discourse sits alongside behaviour in representing 'ways of being' or styles, for instance the particular style of a leader, his or her way of using language to form their identity. This 'order of discourse' provides

the means for understanding the relationships between the textual and the social (Fairclough, 2003:26). In other words, individuals use their own representations for making meaning and, in Fairclough's belief, struggle over political and ideological practices.

By drawing on the concept of dialogicality, Fairclough, using Bakhtin's (1981) view of language, provides us with the view that all texts, both written and spoken, set up, in one way or another, relations between different 'voices' (Fairclough, 2003:214). Fairclough highlights that, for him, 'dialogicality' is a measure of dialogical relations between the voice of the author and other voices, but more importantly not all texts are equally dialogical, so it is the extent to which these voices are represented and responded to or excluded or suppressed that is of importance within critical discourse analysis. According to Fairclough (2001b:19) therefore, as language is part of society, so 'linguistic phenomena' are 'social phenomena of a distinctive type' and consequently it follows for him that 'social phenomena' are to a certain extent 'linguistic phenomena'.

3.10 The reason for choosing Gee's methodological approach for this study

Gee, like Fairclough, offers a critical approach to discourse analysis and offers both a methodological framework and a method for this study which bridges the gap between more linguistic-orientated studies of language and the socio-cultural approaches of language as a social practice.

Gee defines discourse in these terms:

a *Discourse*, (with a capital 'D') ... is a distinctive way of ... thinking, being, acting, interacting, believing, knowing, feeling, valuing, dressing, and using one's body. It is also distinctive ways of using various symbols, images, objects, artifacts, tools, technologies, time, places and spaces ... so as to seek to get recognised as having a specific socially consequential identity.' (Gee, 1996; 1999; 2001; 2004; 2005)

and,

discourse with (lower case 'd') is language in use or stretches of oral or written language in use' (Gee, 1996:144).

Whilst both Gee and Fairclough have been influenced by 'post-structuralist' thought (e.g. Foucault, Bourdieu) and Neo-Marxist critical theory (Gramsci, 1971), the linguistic side of Fairclough's work is based on his version of a Hallidayan model of grammatical and textual analysis (Halliday, 1978;1989). The linguistic side of Gee's

work is based on his own version of an American, non-Hallidayian model of grammatical and textual analysis and sociolinguistics combined with influences from literary criticism (Gee, 2009).

Like Foucault, a key aspect of Gee's work is that 'discourses' are always historical and connected across place and speakers. Both Gee and Fairclough recognize how discourse functions play an important role in reproducing society through its social structures, relationships and value structures, but on the other hand also have a hand in metamorphosing society as people use discourses in creative and agentic ways. For Gee, the form of the Language ('discourse –Grammar) cannot exist separate from the function of the language ('Discourse) (Rogers, 2004:7; Gee, 2009; 2005; 2011).

Gee (2004:23) makes a distinction that is important from a linguistic point of view and therefore for this study – a distinction between '*utterance-type meaning*' and '*utterance-token meaning*', advocating that any word, phrase or structure has many possible meanings – this is, its '*utterance-type meaning*'. For Gee, utterance-token meaning (or situated meaning) is more specific in its meaning and in actual contexts of use. I will expand upon these two concepts in Chapter 4 as relevant for the analytical process (see 4.4.7 and 4.4.8).

3.11 Situating my own research using Gee's approach

Gee (2011:113) identifies that there are 'important connections among saying (informing), doing (action) and being (identity).' In order to gain an understanding of any matter fully, you need to know who and what someone is saying and as a result what the person is trying to achieve. Gee's approach to discourse analysis provides a framework to enable us to analyse how leaders use language to 'say things and be things' (Gee, 2011:3), to analyse the dominant and competing discourses within the field of Education Leadership. Within the research design chapter I have elaborated on how using the methods of interviews and cognitive mapping is appropriate and consistent epistemologically with Gee's analytical framework.

For Gee, language is a way through which we create or break down our 'world, our institutions, and our relationships' through how we deal with social goods, with 'social goods being a want or a value' and where 'Grammar is used as a set of tools to bring about this integration' (Gee, 2011:12:8). Within this study, when teachers talk about 'practice', it is never just a decision about saying (informing), it is a decision about doing (and being as well) the practice of being a 'good teacher'. The

notion of how we use language to say things (informing), do things (action) and be things (identity) plays a significant part within this study; the way individuals integrate language; doing; behaving; and ways of thinking will inform the analysis of the data and will draw heavily on Gee's interconnected framework. I am interested in what words, phrases, ways of explaining individuals use to convey their identity and acting and therefore, consequently, the identity of those around them.

I take Gee's (1999; 2005; 2011) position within this study of how discourse is framed. To summarize, he advocates that language is not just about 'saying' things to communicate, rather it serves many functions. Saying things in language is about doing things and being things, it allows us to engage in actions and activities. It allows us to have different identities. To take on those different identities we therefore have to 'talk-the-talk'. For example, when the headteacher says to the Deputy Head, 'you look tired' is he speaking to him as a friend [who] making small talk, or is he speaking to him as his line-manager [who] making a professional judgement [what] about his current behaviour in work?. Language in this sense didn't get its meaning from dictionaries or words but the way we talk within work, the rules and how and what we do. 'In a sense all language gets its meaning from a game, though we don't typically use the word "game". We use the more complex word "practice"' (Gee, 2011:5).

Schools have a set of rules for how they play 'games'. Activities like taking part in Book scrutinies, staff meetings etc. are not games as in the general sense, but are carried out within certain 'conventions' or 'rules'. The interest is not in winners or losers in the traditional sense, but rather who has 'acted' normally or 'appropriately', who has shown they are an 'effective practitioner', therefore this can be construed as winning or losing. If you follow the rules, and use them to your advantage, you are accepted and considered an 'outstanding teacher', an 'effective leader'. Who is therefore an insider within the community or is not? This consideration of wanting to be accepted or considered 'good' is for Gee a 'social good', what is considered in 'society' as a want or value (ibid.).

Therefore, in using language, 'social goods' are always at stake. When speaking or writing, there will always be a risk of being a winner or loser in a given practice. By the act of speaking, writing, being within the community of school, individuals accept others as winners or losers in the practice that they are engaged in, they can give or deny that 'social good'. How they talk about their practice, 'it is not only a decision

about saying (informing), it is a decision about doing and being, as well' (Gee, 2011:7).

It follows, therefore, that by using language and the distribution (or not) of social goods, then language must be 'political.' How a 'thing' is phrased has implications for social goods like guilt, blame, and ability (or lack of it). In other words, what is being communicated determines what is taken to be 'normal'. This view of language (discourse) as a political entity is also held by Fairclough:

discourses as a political practice establishes, sustains and changes power relations, and the collective entities between which power relations obtain. Discourse as an ideological practice, constitutes, naturalizes, sustains and changes significations of the world from diverse positions in power relations. (1992:67)

The aim of this study is to shed a discursive light on distributed leadership and the constraints of context within a primary school setting. The intention is to examine, explain and analyse discourse as used by stakeholders within two case study primary school settings in their understanding of the leadership they were experiencing. Gee's model provides a link between a linguistically-orientated study of language and a social cultural approach, hence providing robustness. This therefore would aid the study in a systematic framework for both the study of form and function, or, as Rigg (2005) advocates, discursive resources and discursive practices.

Figure 3.2 below presents Gee's (2011) interconnected framework, a set of concepts which form the basis of Gee's methodological framework and which will aid in understanding the phenomenon that is leadership within the case study sites. The other interconnected part of this framework, Gee's tools of analysis, will be presented in Chapter 4, methodology and methods. The following sections present the concepts which form part of this framework.

3.12 Gee's approach

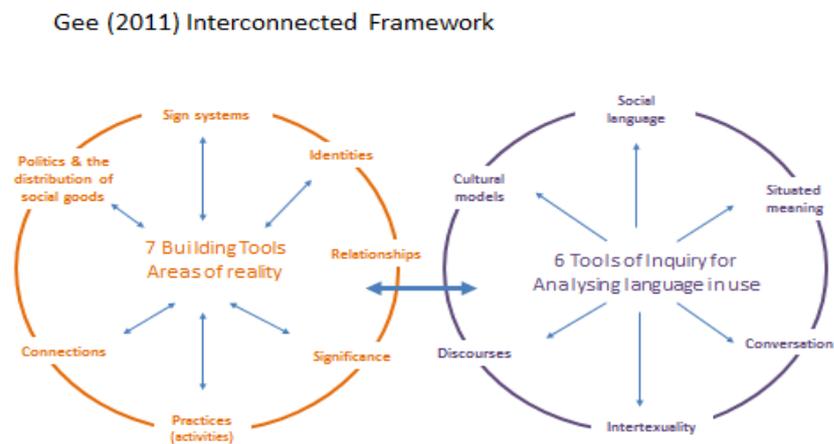


Figure 3.2 Interconnected Framework

3.13 Seven building tasks used to build reality through language

Gee's 'seven building tasks include seven entry points that aid the analyst in constructing meaning from a network of discourse patterns' (Rogers, 2004:12). His distinction between 'd'iscourse and 'D'iscourse has 'brought together a theory of language with theoretical devices of inquiry' (ibid.). The 'seven building tasks' are the kind of things that individuals within school are building as they make and interpret meanings of the leadership they are experiencing. As Gee (2005:10) argues, 'we actively build the world of activities (e.g. meetings), identities ... around us'. For each discourse within school an analytical question can be posed of each of the building tasks with the aim of explaining it.

Through research methods of cognitive mapping and semi-structured interviews, participants within school 'talked' about the leadership they were experiencing within school. The research methods will be discussed in Chapter 4. What follows is an overview of the concepts from Gee's (2011) theoretical framework below, coupled with appropriate questions to be asked of the discourse.

3.13.1 Politics – the distribution of social goods

Language is used to expound and build upon a particular perspective on the nature of the distribution of social goods. A social good within this framework is anything a person or group in a society wants or values, for example things like 'status, money,

love, respect, friendship'; however, within small groups such as a community within school, other things are social goods, such as 'right, outstanding, effective'. For the purposes of this study, how individuals build a reality of a social good within school has implications for acceptance, guilt, blame, being effective, being outstanding, being ineffective, being poor, labelled as 'Requires Improvement', etc.

The question on the distribution of social goods for this research: What perspective on social goods is this unit of language communicating? (In School – what is being communicated as to what is taken to be a good teacher, the ways things should be in your class, accepted as effective or not as a teacher? etc.).

3.13.2 Part of the community – (identities)

Within this framework, identity is used not in the traditional sense of how individuals see themselves, rather in this study identities mean how individuals see themselves as being part of the community that is school. How individuals speak or write in school is how they want themselves to be identified. Furthermore, it is by building an identity for others that individuals build one for themselves.

How were identities built and what influence did they have in shaping and forming the discourses around leadership?

The question for identity-work for this research: What identity or identities is this unit of language attributing to others and how does this help the speaker or writer enact his or her own identity within school?

3.13.3 Relationships – (sense of belonging)

Language is used within Gee's framework to signal what sort of relationship individuals have or want to have with others or with the group/institution they are part of. Language in this sense is also used for building social relationships as part of the community within school.

For this study I am interested in the role that relationships have in shaping the discourses around leadership within school.

The question concerning relationships for this research: What sort of relationships is this piece of language seeking to enact with others (present or not) in school?

3.13.4 Significance

Within the framework, language is used to signal whether something is significant or not. For this study, I ask what is classed as significant in school, and what part do these significances have to play in shaping discourses around leadership? Like the sign systems they draw upon, what for them forms part of their cognitive models within school, and therefore reality?

What metaphors are being used and why?

The question concerning what is being made significant for this research:

How is this unit of language in school being used to make certain things significant, or not, and in what ways?

3.13.5 Practices – (sense of becoming by engaging in certain activities)

Language is used to become recognized as engaging in a certain type of activity, to build an activity, or, in other words, a practice ('a socially recognised and institutionally or culturally supported endeavour', Gee, 1999:17).

The question concerning activity to ask for this research: Within School what practice (activity) or practices (activities) is this unit of language being used to enact, in other words, what make it recognizable to others?

3.13.6 Connections

Language is also used within this framework to make things relevant to other things (or not). Matters are not always clearly connected or inherently relevant to each other. Language can be used to break or moderate such connections.

The question of connections to ask for this research: Within this unit of language, how does it connect or disconnect – how does it make one thing relevant (or irrelevant) to another?

3.13.7 Sign systems and knowledge

Within school what sign systems are individuals using through language to build reality? For the purposes of this study, what cognitive models do they draw upon in order to frame their understanding of what constitutes leadership?

The question to ask concerning sign systems for this research: How does this unit of language give credence or not to specific sign systems? What sign systems

are contributing to the metaphors of leadership within school to accomplish social goals?

3.14 Summary

Within this chapter, my aim was to establish a conceptual framework which draws on a complementary range of theorists whose ideas support my study aims of situating my participants within their schools as sites of social interest, enabling an interpretation and analysis of their talk, and therefore enabling me to contribute to knowledge about that world.

I have presented a theorization of a discursive practice of leadership which is located in and bounded by a social environment that is a primary school which is shaped by context. Central to my theorization has been my attempt to highlight the importance of language as a discursive tool and the theoretical concepts used for the construction of leadership within that environment. Within this theorization, relations and practices of power were presented.

The focus within the study is on 'talk' or as Gee refers to it as the language-in-use (1999) about the leadership that stakeholders are experiencing; however, this study acknowledges that the individuals within the case study sites are both products of and producers of discourse in their interactions. A discourse perspective, however, opens up spaces for discussion about knowledge claims and production of leadership activity within the settings, in other words discursive resources and discursive practices (Rigg, 2005). When individuals call on representational systems, they intend to accomplish something – build relationships, knowledge, identities, and ways of being within school.

The focus within this study is on how discourse is put together and what may be gained by its construction. This highlights that language not only describes things, but builds things, and has implications, both in terms of individual identity and social practice, and politically in terms of the distribution of power (Gee, 2005; 2011; Lawless et al., 2011). This research was also informed by critical discourse analysis. A critical perspective takes the position that no knowledge is value neutral and all reality is shaped by conditions, for example, political, historical, cultural, and economic. This draws attention to leadership within the settings and how dominant discourses about what is said and by whom can shape meaning and have implications for individuals and for social practice. These concepts are discussed further in Chapter 4 as part of the methodological framework.

4. Chapter 4: Methodology and methods

Introduction

My question stems from a desire to understand, how do leaders make a difference? As discussed previously, this research is an interpretive discursive study grounded in critical social philosophy which is located in two strands of research a 'practice approach' and a 'critical approach'. Discourse theories which draw on a Foucauldian lens. A practice approach provides the opportunity to study the language-in-use of the stakeholders as they 'talk' about the leadership they are experiencing. A critical approach allows for the possibility for the researcher to use their work as social criticism and is influenced by social construction.

My 'methodological strategy' (Mason, 2007) has been built around assembling data, evidence and argument, which was used to generate ideas and propositions. My strategy was to operationalize what stakeholders' articulated leadership looked like and how it can be observed, known and measured. This was achieved by describing, interpreting and explaining the discourses of the stakeholders in the two case study site schools. An overall picture will be presented of the relationships between the stakeholders' discourse their language-in-use and their ways of being in school, their ideologies and social practices within their settings.

In this study, my research does not lend itself to one method, but two research methods, as 'by having a cumulative view of data drawn from different contexts, we may be able to triangulate the "true" state of affairs by examining where the different data intersect' (Silverman, 2010:133). However, Punch (2006) warns that a naïve view should not be adopted in thinking that 'an aggregation of data' will provide you with a clear complete picture. He advocates that it should be attempted as a dry run for your main study. With my data I have to corroborate one source and method with another. There was a need, however, to be constantly aware of what the different sets of data were telling me about the same phenomena. I was conscious of how they are linked at the differing levels of knowledge and explanation, and furthermore of the varied factors that these different data sources and methods contribute towards a convincing argument in my intellectual puzzle, hence the contributing factor of choosing Gee's (2011) approach, which provided not only theoretical concepts but a robust set of analytical tools, which will be presented and discussed later in this .

4.1 Critical Social Theory

As stated in the previous chapter, critical discourse analysts are interested in a critical theory of the social world, the role of discourse in the building and representation of this social world and a methodology that allows them to describe, interpret, and explain such relationships (Rogers, 2004).

Critical Social Theory (CST) is suitable as a methodology for this study as it provides a foundation for a critical approach to a discourse analysis. It is orientated to question established power relations, it challenges assumptions (Rogers, 2004, Davey & Liefoghe, 2012; Alvesson & Deetz, 2000) and develops a specific form of critical thinking and engages more in critique than criticism (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000; Mackenzi Davey & Liefoghe, 2012). Although critique is an important part of the process, it is not the end goal.

A critical perspective takes the epistemological position that there is no knowledge that is value neutral, hence reality is shaped by conditions such as political, historical, cultural, or economic. In the main, empirical studies conducted in educational leadership have been undertaken from traditional perspectives and most practice in schools reflects this non-critical stance (Grogan et al., 2007:47). Critical researchers use their work as social criticism and are influenced by social construction. Critical research is interpreted in a number of ways that overlap, and in particular Kincheloe and McLaren (1998, cited in Mackenzie and Liefoghe, 2004) identify a number of assumptions that are shared by most critical researchers and which are pertinent to this study, namely that ideas are embedded within historical power relations; knowledge is value laden; and some groups are privileged over others. For them, context and ideology, power and language are significant and the role of the researcher has to take in to account their own ideological position within the research process and potential impact, something, as a Governor of one of the case study sites, I am very aware of (ibid.).

As Blommaert (2005:1) points out, 'it is commonplace to equate "critical approaches" with "approaches that criticise power"', however, Blommaert further suggests 'power is not a bad thing – those who are in power will confirm it'. He suggests that critical discourse studies should offer an analysis of the effects of power, the outcomes of power, what power does to people/groups/societies and how this impact comes about. For him, it is the inequality of power, the ability to include and exclude the analysis of the conditions of power that should be the focus

of critical studies. Likewise, Fairclough advises researchers to consider the effects of power, in other words, 'power to', 'power over' and 'power behind' (Fairclough, 2015:3), as a way to understand and see the nature of power. For Gee, power is entrenched within the distribution of social goods, in other words who gets what in terms of money, status, power, etc. (Gee, 2011:7), therefore language for him is always political.

Critical theory nuclei are the connections between politics, values and knowledge (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009). As a result, critical theorists are engaged in understanding how practices and structural conditions of management are established and are accepted within relations of power and authority, in other words probing into the every day social practices within school. At the heart of this paradigm is the belief that systems or structural conditions can be changed to enable 'emancipation' and hence self-reflection and therefore change. (Prasad and Caproni, 1997; Duberley et al., 2012). Prasad and Caproni (1997:284) identify four broad themes fundamental to critical theory: 'social constructionism, power and ideology, totality and praxis.' For them, all reality is socially constructed and at any one time certain patterns of meaning have more importance than others and therefore become objective reality.

For Prasad and Caproni (1997), critical theory offers a fundamentally different perspective of management and organizations and can be traced back to the Frankfurt School of which Horkheimer and Adorno (1947), Benjamin (1969) and Fromm (1955), to name only a few, are members, as well as the work of Habermas (1971, 1973). What these theorists have in common within the paradigm of critical social theory is a set of assumptions that provide a conceptual framework applicable to this study, specifically, asymmetrical power relations, the role of ideology and the commitment to change (ibid.:286).

For critical theorists, all reality is socially constructed. For instance, within this study it became an inescapable social 'fact' that all teachers should incorporate '*effective practices into their practice* (to achieve) *effective teaching* (to become) *outstanding teachers*', irrelevant of the consequences for those individuals. This social construction, that all teachers needed to be '*an outstanding teacher*', remains fully entrenched as an objective social reality within school. Nor do critical theorists regard reality as arbitrary, unstructured activity; rather, these social constructions of reality are influenced by power relations within that culture – in Fairclough's words, 'power to', in terms of bestowing membership of the leadership team; 'power

behind', in terms of supporting an individual in professional development; and 'power over', in terms of who is accepted as 'effective teacher' and who is not.

Within the framework of critical theory, established patterns of meaning such as those described above are shaped by interactions within organizations, within school. To operationalize these complex relationships, critical theory uses the concept of 'power and ideology' (Prasad & Caproni, 1997). In other words, a set of beliefs, values, and opinions that shapes the way groups and individuals think, act and understand their world. For critical theorists, 'dominant ideologies dictate societal members' conceptions and expectations of organisations, work relations, standards of managerial effectiveness, measures of personal success and so on' (ibid.:287). For individuals within school this could be an established 35 hour week with the acceptance of marking and planning of an evening and Sunday afternoons.

When these ideologies are questioned, they are subjected to a series of rationalizations and institutional defences designed to preserve the status quo and the logic that supports it. With regard to the third fundamental concept, that of the principle of totality, critical theorists understand management as a cultural and social practice influenced by not only internal forces, but external societal ideologies, economic and political influences, as well as an individual's life experiences (ibid.), for example performance management. Therefore the concept of totality questions many taken-for-granted boundaries, and so is appropriate to generate questions for this research.

The fourth fundamental concept (social constructionism, power and ideology, totality and praxis) is concerned with challenging and unmasking these 'systems of domination' or 'praxis' (Prasad & Caproni, 1997:287). This involves a means of change; not in a cynical way, but engaging with and challenging a mind to influence it for the better, create opportunities for change – a focus of this study – and enable an engagement with the phenomenon of what is considered effective leadership within a primary setting and the discourses surrounding it. For Habermas (1974), it is only by recognizing the interests that researchers can understand the criteria for what is being taken as 'real' and hence evaluate its validity. Following this Habermasian way of carrying out research enables the researcher to understand the processes and outcomes of relations of power.

Therefore, as Duberley et al. (2012:24) encourage, 'qualitative researchers should be concerned to develop new modes of engagement that allow participants to

pursue interests and objectives that are currently excluded by the dominant management discourses.’ Thus, following this critical conceptual framework, this study has adopted a range of appropriate methods, which will be expanded upon within this chapter, to investigate the micro-practices of everyday life in school. Furthermore, the research methods used within this study were cognitive mapping and semi-structured interviews. These were used to understand ‘the richness, depth, nuance, context (specific) ... complexity of the socially situated practice of school’ (Mason, 2002:4).

4.2 Cognitive Mapping as a method

Within this study, I have used Cognitive Mapping as a tool for investigating the conscious or unconscious micro-practices of individuals within school. Cognitive mapping is ‘intended to represent meaningful relationships between concepts in the form of propositions’ (Novak & Gowin, 1984:15). In other words, it is a technique for externalizing concepts. It is a term, however, that has been applied to many methods which does make different assumptions about method, methodology and epistemology. Eden (1992:261) believes the term to be misleading and cautions against its use and believes that two aspects need to be taken into account, whether the modelling technique is a ‘good reflection of the theory’ and also to consider ‘the method of elicitation of cognition’. He advocates us of it as ‘an artefact’ to represent subjective data more meaningfully than other models’ (ibid:261). For him they may be seen as pictures of mappers’ understandings of particular thoughts, group or organisation.

In her seminal text, Huff (1990:15) believes cognitive maps can be placed on a continuum and identifies a five-fold classification for cognitive mapping dependent on the level of interpretation required by the researcher. They are, maps that assess attention, association and importance of concepts – whereby the map maker might look for frequent use of related concepts; maps that show dimensions of categories – whereby map makers may wish to explore complex relationships between concepts; maps that show influence causality and system dynamics – where map makers are searching for causal relationships; maps that show the structure of argument and conclusion – whereby maps attempt to show the logic behind conclusions and finally maps that specify schemas and frames.

It is her fifth category, which contains methods that are designed to ‘specify schemas, frames and perceptual codes’ (ibid.:16), that forms part of the research

design for this study. The objective behind her fifth mapping choice is to explore value and meaning systems. For Huff (1990), the reason why a particular classification of map is chosen is the purpose of the map and the subject of inquiry. In her view, this fifth category requires 'the greatest leap from text to map ... if the map maker wants to understand the link between thought and action, understanding this deeper structure is essential' (ibid.:16).

Cognitive mapping has been used within this research for its ability to represent rich and complex information without imposing a linear structure, to investigate the participants' everyday 'theories'. Describing and understanding leaders and leadership in education is about knowledge production; who does it, what they do, how they do it and why they do it (Gee, 1999; 2005). What, in other words, is and is not done. The emphasis is not so much on the production of knowledge in the form of a fact or theory, but rather the process by which there is 'a selection and organization from the available knowledge at a particular time which involves conscious or unconscious choices' (Young, 1971b:24) and being critical of this – by which I mean opening up spaces for discussion about knowledge claims and production. When individuals call on representational systems – images, gestures or words – they intend to accomplish something; to build relationships, knowledge, identities, and worldviews. I am particularly interested in school effectiveness and school improvement, and the processes that bring about improvement – characteristics of an effective school.

Using cognitive mapping will enable me to stay close to the participants' perspectives of their own situated meaning and context during analysis and, as such, will form an important part of the discourse-orientated conceptual framework as part of that framework.

4.3 Semi-structured interviews

In addition to the methods described above, I have chosen interview questions for data collection as my epistemological position is to strive to gain meaningful ways to generate data. Therefore, according to my ontological position, I want to talk interactively with teachers, to ask them questions, to listen to them, to gain access to their accounts and articulations (Mason, 2007) and possibly to analyse their use of language.

According to Punch (2006), Mason (2007) and Bassey (1999), qualitative studies vary greatly and the design and 'procedures' of them will develop during the

research. This type of research is exploratory and, in Mason's words (1996:24), 'fluid and flexible, data-driven and context-sensitive.' Decisions relating to research methods, for example about design and strategy, are ongoing and 'are grounded in the practice, process and context of the research itself' (ibid.).

I do not intend to take the viewpoint that 'one-size-fits all', but rather will explore 'specific experiences'; 'ascertain their reasonings and judgements' in certain areas by focussing on events and situations and furthermore providing the means for what Mason (2007:62) refers to as 'free association'. My aim, ontologically and epistemologically, is to, 'ensure that the relevant contexts are brought into focus so that situated knowledge can be produced' (Mason, 2007:62) and, further to cover a set of starting points for discussion in order to gain a perspective on the respondents' meanings and understandings of their reality, including what they consider to be an effective leader.

4.4 Document analysis

The only form of document analysis which this study chose to analyse were the schools' inspection reports (Office for standards in education children's services and skills) and the relevant school HMI (Her Majesty Inspector) report following an Ofsted inspection, as this was pertinent to external assessment of leadership and management within the schools.

4.5 Information gathering and the criteria used to ensure 'quality' and 'validity'

The data gathered is based on interactions with stakeholders in two different schools, using cognitive mapping, interviews and my research journal.

According to Bush (Briggs et al., 2007), the authenticity of educational and social research can be judged by the procedures used to address validity, reliability and triangulation. As Easterby-Smith et al. (1994:89) point out, 'there has been some reluctance to apply these ideas to phenomenological ... research because they might imply acceptance of one absolute (positivist) reality.' However, Hammersley (1987) believes that the issues apply to both positivist and interpretivist traditions.

Reliability refers to the extent to which a method is repeatable, in other words, the extent to which respondents will consistently respond to it in the same way, something which again Gee's (2005) framework supports. As an interpretivist researcher, I am also concerned with the 'suitability' of the methods for 'eliciting

qualitative, accurate and detailed accounts from each respondent' (Burton et al., 2009).

Validity relates to the 'truthfulness', the accuracy of research data. If my data results are to be considered accurate, then the research tool must measure what it claims to measure: 'An indicator is valid to the extent that it empirically represents the concept it purports to measure' (Punch, 2010:100). Positivists advocate the standardization of data collection in their typically large samples, therefore piloting in this method is vitally important for accuracy. Interpretivists, on the other hand, place the emphasis on the 'final account' and how the researcher is able to defend their interpretations (Punch, 2010). Therefore I will need to show and defend the interpretations I make from my data and what evidence I am basing my findings on. Gee (1999:122) argues that validity is not constituted by arguing that a discourse analysis 'reflects reality' in any simple way...(it) is an interpretation of the interpretive work' which I will carry out within the case study sites. Like all analyses my findings will be open to further discussion and debate. The stance that this study takes is that this discourse analysis is an empirical inquiry which is 'built around making arguments for specific claim(s)' (ibid.). The use of Gee's (2005) interconnected framework based on systematic tools of inquiry, questions in other words, which can be asked about seven areas of reality of the data within the settings plays an important role in making a claim for validity of my findings.

In my semi-structured interviews, I aim to explore 'specific experiences' and 'ascertain their reasonings and judgements' in certain areas by focussing on events and situations and exploring 'free association'. Validity was therefore appropriately addressed in my interview process based on 'the degree to which findings correctly map the phenomenon in question' (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998:186).

In addition, the main potential source of non-validity in interviews is bias. Cohen and Manion (1994) suggest 'careful formulation of questions and interview training' as possible solutions, something which as a tutor I have considerable experience of. Silverman (2010) raises another issue when he refers to the researcher avoiding the 'special temptation of anecdotalism', in other words where the researcher chooses a few special examples to illustrate the findings. He believes a way to overcome this is through triangulation. This will be addressed through the use of cognitive mapping, semi-structured interviews and Gee's (1999; 2005; 2011) interconnected framework.

4.6 Case study

The research will focus on a headteacher and those who have and do work with him based within two primary school sites. Case study research involves the careful examination of a particular issue or phenomenon. In this research, the phenomenon being examined is how contextual factors shape discourses of leadership within primary education. The analysis of the data within this study will be underpinned by a social constructionist perspective and critical discourse analysis theory to develop an interpretivist theoretical framework based around meaning-making. Yin (2009:18) describes a case study as, 'an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident'.

Silverman (2014:72) argues that 'if cases are appropriately chosen with regards to theoretical factors...they can yield unique insights by revealing regularities between categories ...the researcher may explore in-depth the contextual dimensions that influence a social phenomenon'. Stake (1995) concurs and supports the view that a case might be studied because of its uniqueness or for the issue and so building an in-depth understanding of the case is worthwhile. However Punch and Oancea (2014:155) offer a cautionary note that although a case can be a valuable approach in its own right it nevertheless needs 'to be integrated with other approaches to the subject matter and not simply a description of "facts"'. For them therefore it is important that the researcher is clear on the rationale behind the case study and on its purpose. In 4.7 the clear rationale for choice of case study is expanded upon. This coupled with the use of Cognitive Mapping and use of Gee's (2005) interconnected framework ensures that the study seeks to ensure robustness in gathering data.

I therefore used case study research as a form of inquiry, exploring and understanding the unknown, and not as a form of learning tool, as is often associated with business. Moreover, Bassegy (1999) urges all researchers using case study research to be mindful of the question, 'where do you think you are going?' My end result was to tell a story and draw a picture of the leadership practice that stakeholders were experiencing in two case study school sites. According to Bassy (cited in Briggs et al., 2007:145), 'story-telling and picture-drawing case studies are both analytical accounts of educational events ... or systems aimed at illuminating theory.'

The story-telling is the narrative account of the exploration and analysis of the case, whereas the picture drawing is the descriptive account drawing together the results of the exploration and analysis (ibid.). My case study research was based on interviews with teachers, headteacher, deputy headteachers and teaching assistants. It was descriptive and I kept asking myself, 'how do stakeholders talk about the leadership they were experiencing?' As has been mentioned previously in the study, owing to the pressing political scrutiny that schools find themselves under, issues of educational leadership and management are considered important. According to Bassey (cited in Briggs et al., 2007:154),

we need case studies of good practice and bad, of the competent and mediocre – not simply of the story-telling or picture-drawing kind, but theory-seeking/theory testing studies .to try to tease out why a situation is good, bad or mediocre. This is the contribution case study can make to educational leadership, which surveys cannot touch.

Bassey (1999) also believes that very often a subject is chosen as the case study for reasons of easy access. This is partly true for the two schools that I have chosen in which to do my research, as the reasons include that I have known the headteacher for a number of years having taught beside him and latterly having become community governor of his second school and secondly and more importantly, because the headteacher was head of both primary schools, allowing me to perform purposive sampling as I was able to observe and investigate the phenomenon over a four-year period.

4.7 Purposive Sampling

Therefore after careful consideration of the above interest, practical issues and theoretical stances this study adopted 'purposive sampling' as the criteria for selection of a case study. For Silverman, "purposive sampling allows us to choose a case because it illustrates some feature of process in which we are interested." (Silverman, 2010:141). He advocates that this requires careful consideration and a critical analysis about the 'parameters of the population we are studying' (ibid.:141).

Thus the criteria for selecting these schools can be summarized as below:

- The schools are considered by Ofsted as 'effective' with regard to leadership, as clearly stated in the Ofsted reports for the settings.
- The schools each have a non-teaching Head who therefore devotes most of his time to leadership and management.

- The Head has been in the school for a period of time sufficient for school procedures and leadership processes to be well established.
- Both schools have been transformed from ones that are struggling to being good or outstanding.
- I am a Governor of the second school – my own involvement contributing to a ‘socially situated practice’ (Gee, 1999:30).

With the above as the criteria within the design process, these two schools were selected for singularity of study. For Merriam (1998), the reasoning behind a case study is a ‘thick description’ that illustrates the reader’s understanding of the phenomenon being studied. Furthermore, the choice of a single study (in this study, the headteacher being head of both schools) to gain ‘thick description’ is further endorsed by Southworth’s (1995) study of a primary school headteacher, which demonstrated how case studies could enable the researcher to study school leadership in context and in sufficient depth, to illustrate understanding of its complex and embedded nature.

Bassey (1999:62) believes ‘singularity is chosen because it is expected in some way to be typical of something more general’, and also that a case study, ‘conducted within a localized boundary of space and time’, should be used to ‘explore significant’ features of the case; to create ‘plausible’ interpretations; to be trustworthy in the interpretations; to provide a ‘worthwhile’ story; to relate it to any ‘relevant research’ and above all ‘to provide an audit trail’ (Bassey, 1999:65).

Bassey (1999:62) moreover argues that ‘singularity is chosen because it is expected in some way to be typical of something more general.’ He believes that a case study ‘conducted within a localised boundary of space and time’ should be used to ‘explore significant’ features of the case; to create ‘plausible’ interpretations; to be trustworthy in the interpretations; to provide a ‘worthwhile’ story; to relate it to any ‘relevant research’ and above all ‘to provide an audit trail’ (ibid.:65).

The first case study site is a smaller than average sized school situated to the south of a town in northern England. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is a little above average. In January 2008, the school became part of a local authority Improving Schools Programme. The headteacher was confirmed in post in October 2008, having previously worked as the acting headteacher (Ofsted, 2009). A new senior leadership team was formed, comprising a non-teaching head, two assistant heads and an Assessment Manager. The school was further chosen since ‘the new headteacher’s drive and determination have been key factors in the recent

improvements. He has quickly won the respect and confidence of staff, pupils and parents alike and successfully created a common sense of purpose and teamwork' (Ofsted, 2009:5).

The second case study site is a much larger than average sized primary school. The large majority of pupils are of White British Heritage and the proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is average. The present headteacher was confirmed in post January 2013 at the same time as significant changes were made to the school's governance and a new senior leadership team was formed, comprising a non-teaching Head, one non-teaching Deputy Head, a Business Manager and two Heads of Key Stages, who complemented the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The most recent Ofsted inspection report (2014:4) stated that, 'the school has an accurate view of itself and school development planning is a model of excellent practice ... the outstanding leadership by the headteacher and other leaders has resulted in rising standards'.

4.8 Limitations of approaches and methods

Cohen et al. (2007) advocate that it is difficult to generalize about a case except where other researchers see the relevance. Case studies, in their opinion, are not open to cross-checking, hence they may be subjective and could therefore be open to observer bias. In answer to these limitations, a consideration must be that I as the interviewer am aware of the part I play in the social interaction of the interview and case study process. The data generated must be open to scrutiny and honest in its interpretation.

A second limitation is that natural discourse conversations and wider texts were not captured as part of the data gathering process, however I consider these a minor part of the data set as the cognitive mapping and interviews formed the main data set.

With regards to the choice of research approach for this study, at the outset of the investigation it was considered that an ethnographic approach might best suit the study's research question(s) for as Punch and Oancea (2014:160) advocate, 'the point of ethnography is to study and understand the cultural and symbolic aspects of practices and discourses, and the context of these practices, whatever the specific focus of the research'. Furthermore researchers adopt an ethnographic approach when detailed descriptions of culture are required (McAuley, 2008; Yanow et al., 2012; Punch and Oancea, 2014). However an ethnography means carrying out an

intensive and time demanding study with the investigation and data collection running over a long period of time (Punch and Oancea, 2014). In addition as Van Maanen suggests ethnography involves more than interviews it involves, 'living with and living like those who are studied' (1998:2, cited in Yanow et al. 2012). Yanow et al. warn against 'airplane', quick and short-lived ethnography. They advocate 'being there' not only in the sense of being in the field but also in the writing in detailed descriptions of events, stakeholders, actions etc. (2012:332 cited in Cassell and Symon, 2012). An ethnographic approach therefore as a discursive scholar is hugely attractive but due to work constraints is not feasible in this instance. So I choose to 'borrow ethnographic techniques' (ibid:163). As ethnographers study individual's actions and institutional practices and therefore the symbolic worlds associated with them, through my cognitive mapping tool it will be possible to focus on their 'talk' and then explore this further within the interviews. It is essential therefore that the the methods of cognitive mapping and semi-structured interviews together with the analytical process be rigorous and relevant to capture their talk of institutional practices and symbolic worlds.

4.9 Generalizability

Whilst the generalizability of a single case study may be limited, the ability to get beneath the surface, understanding the complexity of meanings and interactions among the concepts, will only be completely understood in context.

4.10 Metaphors

In conjunction with cognitive mapping, the respondents use words based on stories of what for them is normal or typical and these are often typified by metaphors. Therefore within the tool of inquiry of social languages, it is relevant to look for typical stories and phrases of what is being communicated and what is assumed within them, as a result inviting others to assume the same, for instance, '*Strategically he knew how to get us out of the mire*'.

4.11 Relationship with my participants

With regards to the interviewees I was conscious of the power balances that could exist because of my reputation I held within the first case study site as a previous colleague of the headteacher and therefore was respectful of the participants' feelings and professionalism. I therefore will be very explicit in the process of informed consent in both case study schools.

With regards to the second case study site being known as a Governor of the school might cause anxiety or trepidation on the interviewees part, however I will strive to reassure and again a respectful appreciation of their positions I will be vigilant that a professionalism will be achieved.

I am conscious at the outset with regards to a 'true' reflection of their understanding because of this relationship however through the use of cognitive mapping, semi-structured interviews and the robust systematic nature of exploring the data I am confident that I will have a true representation of the phenomenon that I seek to explore.

4.12 My approach

Numbers involved

18 semi-structured interviews

18 cognitive maps

OFSTED and HMI reports

As part of the preparation for cognitive mapping, I will introduce the concept to the respondents and provide a clear explanation of what is expected. In this instance, the interviewees will already be familiar with the procedure. The respondents will then be given a large piece of paper containing the question, 'how do you articulate "effective" with regard to leadership?' They will then be asked to think about, and write on Post-its, the words that they believe to be central to being an effective leader of a primary school (as illustrated in Chapter 5). As the process will be recorded, they will be asked to think aloud. This is important as I am seeking what the respondents think along with their meanings and understandings. This will hopefully prove to invaluable as the respondents will hopefully speak more around the concepts than they write on the map as they are describing their associations, their inferences and what is behind their reasoning. After the respondents are happy with the map they will then be asked to link the concepts as they see fit and add any words/phrases to describe the relationships between the concepts, in their opinion. All of this process will later be transcribed.

For the semi-structured interviews, which follow the concept mapping, I will develop an interview guide based upon Figure 3.1 The dynamic interaction of contextual factors on leadership, as according to Mason (2007:62), 'no research interview can be completely lacking in some form of structure.' Again, this will be recorded and transcribed on the day of the interview.

Once I had gathered my 'information', the question then become, 'how do I wish to "read" my information? How do I turn it into data? What will count as evidence in relation to my research question?'

4.13 What counts as data or evidence in relation to my research questions?

The aim of the cognitive map is to gain an understanding and representation of the respondents' 'mental representations' of the leadership they are experiencing, and recording and asking them to 'think-aloud' allowed will allow me to gain a valuable insight into how their interactions have influenced the development of their concepts. With regard to conducting the semi-structured interviews using the interview guide and the cognitive mapping a thematic approach will be attempted, putting forward a set of starting points for consideration. The intention is for it to be 'fluid' (Mason, 2007) so that unexpected themes can be developed following numerous readings of the data.

In using my 'fieldnotes' (Mason, 2007), my intention is to provide an account of my interpretation of the interaction that will be happening at the time.

4.14 The context and 'line of reasoning' and reducing the data

Alvesson (2003) states that what really interests him is, 'what "really" goes on in organisations: how people act, interact, talk and accomplish things', in his words the 'micro-anchoring'. Within my study, in the making of my argument, 'the micro-anchoring' of the schools, and the 'stories' this involved, became a very interesting exercise.

According to the latest Ofsted inspection report (2014), leadership and management were classed as 'outstanding'. The report elaborated further, stating that 'strong and decisive action by school leaders has brought about exceptional improvements to the curriculum along with rapid improvements in standards.' What then could I infer from my findings with regard to telling this story? Gee's (2005; 2009; 2011) interconnected framework, his seven areas for questioning aided in this process of reducing the data. This is further explored in Chapter 5.2 in the interpretation and explanation of the data.

After each session, as mentioned above, the recorded interviews and cognitive maps will be transcribed verbatim, to capture participants' answers in their own words and to maximize connections, propositions, language-in-use, etc. Through the

process of interviews and cognitive mapping, with the object of stimulating 'talk', the researcher will be able to question the participants on the same issues, thereby achieving a high level of comparability and ease of initial coding of the corpus. This will enable the researcher to follow up on previous constructions to ascertain further clarifications and contradictions.

The basic theoretical point of discourse analysis is that the participants' 'talk' has many functions. Any statements made will be interpreted as saying something about norms, and the results of these will be given attention. The process of reliance upon interpretation for the analysis of the data concurs with the aim of exploring the discourses of effective leadership. This will involve searching for patterns in the data – exploring consistency from the different accounts of the participants.

In addition Figure 3.1 The dynamic interaction of contextual factors on leadership, will aid as a sorting category in this process of reducing my data until themes begin to develop from the data. I will then cross reference with the full transcripts from my participants.

4.15 Ethical Issues

Ethical issues are an integral part of this study, in accordance with the University's guidelines and especially with regard to the underpinnings of social interactionism, with its emphasis on participants' meanings and their relationships to the researcher, and especially as the researcher may know some of the participants. Therefore, trust is a vital part of this study. All practical steps will be undertaken to guarantee anonymity of respondents. Letters will be sent to all respondents advising them that all the information given will be treated in the utmost confidence and that they could withdraw from the process at any point.

4.16 The importance of utterance-type and utterance-token meaning

In 4.20 the analytical process will be presented, in particular an explanation of Gee's (2011) second part of his interconnected framework, his tools of analysis, which form the basis for the analysis and interpretation of the data collected in this research. This process will elucidate the connections between the concepts according to Gee's framework (as presented in Chapter 3) and critical discourse analysis, as a tool used for the explanation, interpretation and evaluation out of the research findings. Chapter 5 then presents the findings for this study.

Chapter 3 identified the importance for this study of the distinction between the two different types of analysis discourse analysts can carry out, the ‘utterance-type meaning’ and ‘utterance-token meaning’ (Gee, 2009). It is important to reiterate that significance for a critical discourse analysis perspective.

4.16.1 Utterance-type meaning

A phrase or word will have different meanings or a range of meanings, what Gee (2009) refers to as ‘meaning range’. Utterance-type meaning is the general meaning that is taken from a word/phrase. This particular task looks at the relationship between form (structure) and function (meaning) (Gee, 2004; 2009; 2011); the form being items like parts of speech, nouns, verbs, or types of phrases, for example, noun and verb phrases, or types of clauses, for example, main and subordinate clauses in a sentence, or the subject position of a sentence. Function relates to the communicative purpose of the form, the ‘meaning potential’ (Gee, 2005:57).

4.16.2 Utterance-token meaning

The other related task that is closely related to ‘utterance-type’ meaning is that of ‘utterance-token’ meaning, or the situated meaning task. This relates to the specific contexts in which forms are used. For example, the word ‘cross’ is an arbitrary form that relates to meanings having to do with two intersecting lines, cross (this is its meaning potential). To be specific, context is needed to determine what the word means in any situated way. In one context, ‘cross’ may mean a holy replica, in another it may mean someone is angry with someone, in another it means an arithmetical symbol, the use of numbers in a calculation, and it means other things in other contexts, for example a hot cross bun, crossing the road, etc.

A further example of ‘potential versus situated meanings’ (Gee, 2009), but not in a singular word, can be given at sentence level. Consider the following sentence taken from an interview with a participant from the senior leadership team in one of the case study sites:

If there is not that clear vision you can't trust that person to do it as you wish, I suppose in terms of the trust element that vision has got to be clear.

This sentence is made up of two clauses, a main clause (I suppose in terms of the trust element that vision has got to be clear) and a subordinate clause (If there is not that clear vision you can't trust that person to do it as you wish); the conjunction ‘If’ here marks this clause as subordinated to, dependent on, the following main clause.

A clause 'has as one of its functions (at utterance-type level) that it expresses an assertion, that is, it expresses a claim that the speaker is making', or a subordinate clause 'has as one of its functions that it expresses information that is not asserted, but, rather assumed or taken-for-granted' (Gee, 2009:11). These are accounts concerning meaning.

4.17 Thinking devices for conducting the analysis

What follows are the thinking devices and tools that will be used in order to look at the structure of the language (the little 'd' of discourses) to uncover the patterns, words and phrases in the language generated by the recording of the cognitive mapping and interviews. Chapter 5 will present the findings and interpretation of the corpus to uncover the different ways that the participants said things, did things and were things in the 'D'iscourses of how they built ways of being in school.

Using Gee's interconnected framework (1999; 2005; 2011), specific questions will be asked of the data. Each question will enable a closer look at the details of the language-in-use, examining what the participant mean, intend and seek to accomplish by the way they use the language. It is by combining a critical discourse analysis with the analysis of language within a particular social and cultural context, focusing on the language associated with leadership practice within school, that 'we can draw attention to how new terms enable people to talk about different things' to demonstrate how 'language is constitutive. It creates what it refers to, it is the site where meanings are created and changed' (Lawless et al., 2011:266). Moreover, validity within the study will be established by using Gee's set of tools (2011) to systematically analyse the language-in-use within the context of the case study sites. By using linguistic devices, it will be possible to demonstrate the communicative functions of the language used by the participants.

4.18 An interconnected framework revisited

Gee's interconnected framework is built up of seven 'building tasks' – seven areas or things that language is used for in order to build things in the social world (the methodological concepts of which were presented in Chapter 3) and six tools, the 'thinking devices' that can be used to analyse 'the workings of these building tasks', these areas of reality, 'in specific instances of language-in-use' (Gee, 2005:28). In Figure 4.1, the interconnected framework is presented again, and a description follows of how the 'thinking devices', the six analytical tools from the framework,

interconnect and were used within this study to explore how the contextual factors functioned and shaped the discourses of leadership within the case study schools.

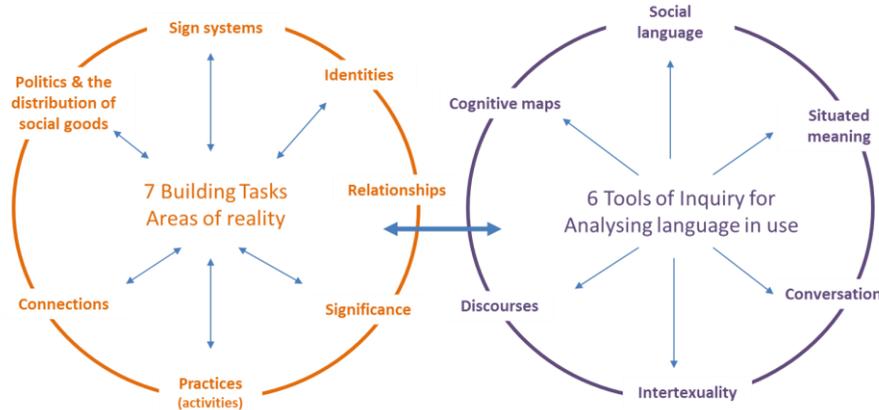


Figure 4.1 Interconnected Framework

Source: Gee (2011)

4.19 Seven building tasks

Chapter three presented the seven areas of reality, a theory about the nature of language-in-use, and outlined the position of this study that language-in-use is about saying, doing and being and that it 'gains its meaning from the ... practice it is part of and enacts' (Gee, 1999:11).

These seven areas of reality help participants within school to build their 'practices' 'significance,' 'activities,' 'identities', 'relationships', 'connections' and 'power relations'. These seven areas are all closely interconnected to actively build and rebuild social worlds not just through language, but through actions, interactions, ways of valuing something, ways of feeling and believing. The way things are built might be similar to before, or they may not, but it is always an active process (Gee, 2005). 'Language-in-use is a tool, used alongside other tools, to design or build things' (ibid.:11); language, however, only 'has meaning in and through social practices' (Gee, 1999:12).

The six tools of inquiry as presented in Figure 4.1 aid in analysing the workings of these building tasks. They are appropriate for understanding how individuals in schools build identities and activities and for understanding how others build such identities and activities around them (Gee, 2005:20).

4.20 Six tools of inquiry

The six tools of inquiry that will be used to ask questions of the corpus in order to understand how contextual factors functioned and shaped discourses of leadership are: 'situated meaning', 'cognitive maps', 'discourses', 'intertextuality' and 'social languages'. Each of these will be presented and discussed within this chapter in order to begin to understand how the reality of leadership is experienced and understood within the case study schools.

4.20.1 Situated meaning as a tool of inquiry

Situated meaning relates to how individuals understand the same words differently – not only within a particular discourse (namely those involved with education), but also across different discourses, for example, teachers and other individuals. Within a situated meaning, words and structures take on specific meanings. More importantly, when individuals speak they assume that their listeners share enough knowledge, beliefs, values and experiences to be able to situate the meanings of their words.

Through the means of transcripts and the process of the semi-structured interviews, the context and meaning making from the participants, their set of core beliefs, values and opinions that shapes the way they behave, think and act and therefore understand the process of leadership they are experiencing will be explored. This will partly be achieved through the means of the situated meaning tool as it informs the analyst to question what words and phrases mean within given contexts.

As speakers assume, through the means of situated meaning, that individuals share knowledge of the discourses they are part of, they also assume a shared understanding of the cognitive maps that form part of these discourses.

4.20.2 Cognitive maps as a tool of inquiry

As well as situated meanings, words are associated to various 'cultural models' (Strauss & Quinn, 1997): 'These are everyday "theories" – storylines, images, schemas, metaphors, about the world that tell individuals what is normal from the perspective of a particular discourse'. Gee prefers the term 'Discourse Models' (2009:34), a term that is used to describe conscious or unconscious concepts existing in the minds of individuals and that can therefore help them to understand everyday life without really having to think about it. These understandings are simplified in view of individuals' own local context and situated meaning. Individuals

rely on this understanding to normalize their behaviour. These Discourse Models are replicated, consciously or unconsciously, through written, spoken, social and other interactions with those with whom individuals come into contact (ibid.).

Within this study, as identified in Chapter 4.2, Huff's (1990) term 'Cognitive Map' is used in place of 'cultural models' or 'discourse models' as this encapsulates the way respondents specified their 'schemas, frames and perceptual codes' (ibid.:16) as they drew and thought aloud their maps to reveal their lived understanding of experiencing leadership within their schools. Figure 4.2 is one such Cognitive Map that acts as a tool of inquiry in this understanding.



Figure 4.2: Cognitive Map

4.20.3 Discourse as a tool of inquiry

Individuals within school, as in wider society, build identities and activities through both language and other means. For instance, if an individual wants to be recognized as part of the teaching community, then they have to not only speak in the 'right' way, but also act and dress in the 'right' way, as to be recognized as a good teacher or good leader requires the participation of others. Furthermore, individuals will have to engage in the appropriate ways, or at least behave as if they are. This will be demonstrated by their ways of acting, interacting, thinking, etc. (Gee, 2005).

There is a dominant discourse that everyone is part of. This discourse is a result of something that exists and has existed for a long time. Discourses with a capital 'D' are embedded in the wider societal influence, such as Teaching Standards, the mandated model of leadership found in schools, etc. 'We do not invent our language, we inherit it from others. We understand each other because we share conventions about how to use and interpret language' (Gee, 2011:175).

Through the means of the interviews and cognitive mapping using the big 'D' Discourse tool of inquiry, it will be possible to understand the discursive situations of the respondents. This will be made possible by searching for what the individual is saying about how they act, think, and value and how they enact their part within the community. In addition, the tool will be used to understand what discourse this language is part of, what beliefs and values are associated with this sort of language, what ways of performing are necessary within this particular discourse to 'pull off (or recognize someone as)' an effective leader, an outstanding teacher (Gee, 2005:27).

4.20.4 Intertextuality and Conversation as tools of inquiry

A text whether it be written or spoken will comprise words which have been 'borrowed' (Gee 1999:46) from other written or spoken texts. This process is what Gee (1999) and Fairclough (1992) refer to as 'intertextuality'. For instance school policy documents will be written in such a distinctive social language borrowed from governmental policy documents, thereby giving it an authority by being incorporated into the written or spoken texts.

Conversations on the other hand are what Gee (2005) refers to with a capital 'C' are the debates, themes, etc. that have been the focus of deliberation within some social groups and which large groups of people recognize with regard to what side of the debate they are on and what kinds of individuals tend to be on each side; for example, should we practise National Standard Assessment Test papers with our Year 6 students every Monday? Or primary school league tables – compare your school's performance. The themes and debates of such Conversations structure and play a role in how language is interpreted within the case study sites.

In keeping with this line of thought, 'effective leadership' can therefore be framed as a Conversation, for example, 'excellent leaders create excellent schools' (Clarke, 2004:24), 'good leadership is at the heart of every good school' (DfES, 2005:99). As a tool of inquiry, thinking about the different Conversations a piece of language relates to forms another tool within the discourse analysis toolkit, and poses the question, what public debates or issues are relevant to understanding this language and what does it contribute to this social group within school?

4.20.5 Social languages as a tool of inquiry

Previously, it was suggested that in order to study language-in-use it was necessary to study more than just the language. In additions, it was appropriate to study

discourses, the words, interactions, thinking, values, etc. that enable identities to be enacted and recognized in different socially situated meanings (Gee, 2005). However, as discourse analysts, it is also appropriate to pay attention to language and study this alongside the other elements in order to 'pull off' a discourse.

For Gee (2005:33), 'social languages are different varieties of language that allow us to express different socially significant identities' (for example, talking and marking as a teacher, a sister, etc.) 'and enact different socially meaningful activities' (for example, teaching a literacy lesson or teaching Latin, prescribing a drug as a doctor). Social languages, as a tool of inquiry, pose the question of how words and grammatical structures in associated words, phrases, clauses and sentences are used to enact a particular social language. It may be that social languages are a mix from different languages or are made up of dialects. However, when using social languages as a tool of inquiry, it is pertinent to understand who is speaking and what the identity of that person is. When the headteacher asks the deputy headteacher who is working in their classrooms when the school day is finished, is he asking as a concerned friend or is he speaking as a focussed, driven headteacher? Social languages, then, are associated with particular social identities (Gee, 2005).

There are two important grammars to social language, the first being units such as nouns, verbs, phrases and clauses. The second important grammar for social languages consists of the 'rules' by which patterns are created from the units of nouns, verbs, phrases, clauses, etc. Through these patterns, it is possible to discern situated identities and specific activities (Gee, 2005). Using social languages as a tool, the analysis will focus on whether there is a preponderance of, for example, one form of words over another, and will look for the linguistic patterns of those units to help understand the 'meaning potential' of words and therefore the situated identities and meaning that is being experienced within the leadership that the respondents are experiencing.

4.21 Grammatical constructions which perform communicative functions

What follows are examples of language-in-use taken from the interviews and cognitive maps, and, by illustrating examples of linguistic patterns, it will be possible to demonstrate how these grammatical constructions perform communicative functions. The interpretation and analysis in Chapter 5 will be as a result of systematically analysing these linguistic patterns and grammatical constructions.

4.21.1 Germanic and Latinate words

Germanic words are used more often in an informal and everyday context , Latinate words mark a more formal style and therefore can appear aloof and a barrier to certain groups

4.21.2 Co-locations

How words pattern together to indicate formal or informal social language to achieve, for instance solidarity, for example patterns of words such as swimsuit, sunscreen, a towel etc. (Gee, 1999)

4.21.3 Lexical verbs referring to state

These words belong to the main part of speech and comprise of nouns, verbs and adjectives for instance when someone is pleased that others follow their way of doing things such as, nice to see them do it the way I would etc. (Gee, 2011)

4.21.4 'I' Statements

Speaking in the first person ('I') is a means of building identity. For Gee (1999) it is the part of a sentence or clause that contains the verb which accompanies the 'I' statement that will indicate the reality being experienced within school, for example, cognitive I statements: I think, I know, I saw etc.

Or 'I' statements which indicate a desire or want, what Gee (1999:153) refers to as 'Affective statements': for instance I would especially like etc.

4.21.5 Lexical words or content words

Content words belong to the main parts of speech – nouns, verbs and adjectives – and drawing from the interviews and cognitive maps it is possible to demonstrate that some words are used more often than others, for example, achieve, accountability, monitoring, effective, etc.:

4.21.6 Pronouns

When speakers want to identify the speaker or the person spoken about in grammar they use pronouns. Furthermore, pronouns may be used to indicate solidarity and consistency of messages for instance, I think we all know why she is good etc (Gee, 1999). Furthermore the shift to personal pronouns indicates agreement of shared message.

4.22 Discursive Practice approach/analysis

The unit of analysis within this study is how stakeholders within two primary school settings 'talk' about the leadership they are experiencing. A discourse perspective opens up a space for researching leadership practice through studying the 'talk' and 'activity' in use, in other words the discursive practices of school and the language-in-use and discursive resources individuals within school use (Rigg, 2005). The selection of this material will be guided by this unit of analysis.

It has only been within the last 20 years that scholars have expressed a desire to move away from the dominant approach embraced by leadership models and theories focused on effective leadership to perspectives which recognize the contextual and discursive nature of leadership practice (Grint, 2001; Osborn et al., 2002; Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003; Porter et al., 2006; Fairhurst, 2009; Edwards, 2011). What links this perspective is the theoretical movement of social constructionism which has expanded in qualitative methods over this period to include a linguistic perspective. These methods draw on social constructionist beliefs that 'language is a means of constituting reality' Cunliffe (2013, cited in Thorpe et al., 2013). Bergman and Luckmann (1966:61), in their seminal work, advocated that the philosophical assumptions of this approach are based on the premise that reality is socially constructed and produced, believing that 'society is a human product. Society is an objective reality. Man is a social product.'

Burr (2003) further argues that social constructionism draws its influence from a number of disciplines including psychology, sociology, philosophy and social linguistics, making it multidisciplinary in focus. From this perspective, individuals take a critical stance towards 'taken-for-granted ways of understanding the world and ourselves' (Burr, 2003:2), hence it is relevant for understanding taken-for-granted assumptions of ways of being for my participants in the study settings. For her, social constructionism views knowledge as biased and subjective and therefore a product of culture and history (ibid.). Within this tradition, individuals daily create their own reality based on interactions with others. What is considered 'the truth' is historically located, culturally situated and is a current view of accepted norms and ways of being, and hence is a result of social processes and interactions which individuals engage with on a daily basis (Burr, 2003). A 'truth' at that given time which I as the researcher must reflect upon throughout the process. Knowledge is a product of social activity and is embroiled within the social context within which it is constructed (Gillespie, 1991). 'Concepts and categories are acquired by each person

as they develop the use of language and are thus reproduced every day by everyone who shares a culture and language' (Burr, 2003:10).

There are now many different forms of social constructionism or constructivism for a number of reasons, for example whether proponents see reality as a cognitive (seeing reality in the mind) or as a discursive process (linguistic practices), or see reality as viewed in the individual or through relationships. Social constructivists value individual cognitive processes and look for the meaning individuals construct through social situations, but do not see themselves as part of the constructing process (Cunliffe, 2003, cited in Thorpe et al., 2003). Social constructionists focus on how meaning and understanding of a situation are created between individuals in their taken-for-granted ways of talking and in dialogue with each other; 'language as epistemology (as method)' (ibid.:202). This perspective encourages researchers to question those taken-for-granted assumptions, their own part within the research process and the possibility of change through the 'possibility of creating alternative realities' (ibid.:201). Researchers working within this lens are interested in codifying the language used, the stories told, the metaphors used and the structure, culture and leadership of organizational life (ibid.:203).

4.23 Conclusion

This chapter has included a discussion on the methodological issues relating to this study. The procedures for the study have been outlined and related issues from the literature have been touched upon. I presented the theoretical and methodological foundations for the 'critical approach' as adopted by this study. Furthermore, the research design, detailing the methods of cognitive mapping and semi-structured interviews, research validity, and ethical issues were presented. The above are examples of how the tools of inquiry are used in the analysis to articulate the thinking, beliefs and meanings of the respondents when they are experiencing leadership within the case study schools. Chapter 5 will explore these features further and illustrate how they contribute to building the seven areas of reality, identity, connections, power and social goods, relationships, activities and significance. The chapter concluded with an overview of the unit of analysis.

By focussing on this analysis the following research question will be addressed:

- What does the discursive analysis reveal about effective leadership discourses that stakeholders within school adopt as ways of becoming which are accepted as normal and natural and taken for granted?

5. Chapter 5: Interpretation and Explanation

5.1 Introduction to the chapter

Within the previous chapter, the interconnected framework and tools of inquiry for conducting this analysis were presented. This chapter, by making use of those tools of inquiry, will present the findings and interpretation of the data to address the following research aim:

- shed a discursive light on distributed leadership and the constraints of context within a primary school setting.

In order to address the above purpose, this chapter will engage with the research questions:

- What are the contextual factors that shape discourses of educational leadership?
- What does the discursive analysis reveal of how stakeholders talk about ways of becoming in the leadership they are experiencing within a socially situated practice?

5.2 The objective of this chapter

This chapter aims to provide a systematic analysis to bring out the significance of the data gathered from the two primary school sites by following and utilizing the concepts and analytical tools offered by Gee's (2011) discourse theory and discourse analysis. In so doing it will be possible to explore, understand and interpret the data collected about the phenomenon – that is, leadership – being experienced within the two case study schools.

As discussed in Chapter 4.3, interviews, as a methodological technique, provide the opportunity within discourse situations for the participants to talk about the issues of leadership within their schools. Furthermore, in Chapter six, seven hypotheses were introduced utilizing Gee's (2011) theory of building reality. This is unlike quantitative research, where hypotheses are used at the outset (Silverman, 2014:). Using Gee's (2011) seven areas of reality helps to reduce the data and aids in the exploration of the transcripts to transform the interactions into what is considered information for the purposes of this study, and thus 'induces hypotheses from the data' (Silverman, 2014:15).

These questions from Chapter six are recapitulated below so as to be clear about the criteria used for the exploration and interpretation of the stakeholders' language-in-use and the Discourses within this chapter. The purpose is 'to inductively generat(e) novel theoretical ideas ... from the data as opposed to testing theories specified beforehand' (Gibbs, 2007:49).

By applying the questions below to the interactions from the interviews it was possible to reduce the data in order 'to render the information from the more useable' (Trowler, 2014:15) and hence address the research questions:

- What perspectives on social goods (what for instance is being communicated as to what is taken to be a good teacher/good lesson) is this language-in-use communicating?
- What identity is this language-in-use attributing to others and how does this help the speaker to enact their own identity within school?
- What sort of relationships is this language-in-use seeking to enact with others (present or not) in school?
- How is this language-in-use in school being used to make certain things significant or not and in what ways?
- Within school what practice(s) (activities) is this language-in-use being used to enact, make recognizable to others?
- Within this language-in-use how does it make one thing relevant or irrelevant to another?
- What sign systems are contributing to the metaphors of leadership within school to accomplish social goals?

As a result, the analysis within this chapter is divided up into stages. Firstly, five key themes are identified from an interpretive and reflective reading and re-reading of the transcripts based on the sorting categories adapted from Jepson's (2009) interaction of different levels and types of context. This initial analysis looked for commonalities across the interviews, as identified according to the levels, to see 'how the signs relate(d) to one another in order to create and exclude particular meanings' (Silverman, 2014:363) – in other words, exploring the semiotics within the participants' discourses to reveal the common themes.

Secondly, by drawing on samples from the data, the little d 'd'iscourse, what is actually said, the language-in-use, was explored. In this instance, examples of pronouns, Germanic and Latinate words, co-locations, lexical verbs, 'I' statements,

content words, metaphors – in other words, grammatical and linguistic features – were explored to see how participants talked about everyday things in school to enact what they believe, value and live in order to build their identities and recreate the discourses of leadership within the school. 'This distinction stresses that the form of language cannot exist independent of the function of language and the intention of speakers' (Rogers, 2004:7).

It was necessary throughout the analysis to move backwards and forwards between the structure of the language-in-use and the Discourses, the situated meanings that are being created, as they are mutually interlinked and mutually dependent upon one another. For ease of analysis of the vast amount of information, the themes were developed one at a time, but because of the nature of the topic connections were inevitably drawn.

Finally in this chapter, an interpretation and analysis of the key findings will be proposed along with how this is situated within the study as a whole before moving on to Chapter seven, which presents the discussion of the findings.

The following sections identify the five themes generated from the data: pivotal role of the headteacher; leadership activity; relations of power; commodification of education; culture; and identity-work. They are in no particular order and are all mutually interconnected, but for ease of reading they are clearly distinguished in this first stage of the analysis of the data.

5.3 Themes from the data

5.3.1 The pivotal role of the headteacher

A constant theme throughout the data was the central role of the headteacher and how it was he who determined when and with whom leadership was shared throughout the organization. It was apparent from the language-in-use that the distributed leadership was as a result of purposeful planning and the expectations as set and modelled by him. In addition, language-in-use within this framework was used to make things relevant to other areas of practice, making connections within other areas of activity such as tackling underperformance within school.

5.3.2 The theme of leadership activity

Participants, when articulating the leadership they were experiencing, drew on language that illustrated how leadership was carried out within their schools, the

reasons why it was carried out, and when they thought it was being carried out. The respondents were explicit in their articulations of the actions and processes of leadership within school.

The theme of leadership activity when articulated by the respondents was epitomized by developing teams and structures, by building relationships, by managing communication and by bestowing staff development. This theme was communicated by the respondents as important for leadership within both schools. It involved the use of key personnel, which often proved hierarchical.

5.3.3 The theme of a commodification of education

Participants drew on the language of the common good and discourses of the awareness of themselves in relation to others within school, all working towards the common good in order to gain 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1993).

By engagement with and commitment to the community, and by investing in the group (as cultural capital), they are achieving and fulfilling their roles as professionals, as good teachers who educate children well.

5.3.4 The theme of relations of power

The central influence and power of the headteacher was a recurring theme throughout the data gathered. Respondents perceived 'effective', with regard to leadership, as engendering democracy as bestowed by the headteacher. Democracy in schools was part of what was often perceived as fostering participation in school decisions. It was the accepted norm that the headteacher set the parameters for individual engagement in the leadership of the school. Staff were clear in their 'talk' about the difference between the 'management' (the senior leadership team) and themselves and the sphere of influence of those in formal and informal leadership roles. Participants drew on the language of power and influence in their language-in-use regarding what was accepted as the norm in order to carry out their roles.

5.3.5 The theme of Culture and Identity-Work

Across the data, participants were shaping understanding of their practice through their language-in-use. They created stories, narratives to organize their actions and to help them in interacting with others within the organization and engaging in identity-work.

5.4 Summary

What has been presented so far is an overview of the themes as derived from the data gathered from individuals within the two schools who have spoken words to accomplish actions and therefore enact their identities and reveal the dominant discourses of leadership they are experiencing (Gee, 2011).

What follows is a close analysis through examining the grammar as a set of tools to understand the integration of these dominant discourses in order to uncover how these individuals are saying (informing), doing (action) and being (identity) in the case study sites (Gee, 2011). This study is not interested in simply describing the data, but in going beyond description to illuminate a theory to help understand how and why language in the schools is working the way it does when it is put into action to help understand 'effective' leadership as experienced by the stakeholders involved.

5.5 Analysis and interpretation of the themes

5.5.1 Introduction

Presented below is the language-in-use of the participants within the schools, their different discourses that they take on in the construction of their ways of being, the discourses. I have separated the grammatical tools for analytical purposes in order to analyse the language and the interactions, which will then act as evidence for the discourses shaped by the individuals involved.

5.6 The theme of the pivotal role of the headteacher

The mandated model for leadership within primary school settings within England is that of a distributed model of leadership. Throughout the data, however, was the recurring theme of the pivotal role of the headteacher within the case study sites and it was at his discretion that participation within this distributed leadership was allowed.

What follows are the discourses, the particular words and phrases, the metaphors, figured language, and the accepted common sense assumptions, interlinked with each other to represent the discourse of the pivotal role of the headteacher.

The discourses surrounding this recurrent theme comprised matters such as the bestowing of leadership by the headteacher and how it was seen as a distribution of a social good in school, how he was seen as central to goal setting and raising

standards and expectations, and how he was instrumental in modelling and enabling individuals and in setting the vision and strategy. These matters were intertwined with other issues such as hierarchy, outstanding performance, effective teaching and learning, and being family-oriented, which all sat side-by-side in the lived experiences of the participants.

5.6.1 The pivotal role of the headteacher discourse

The discourses of the stakeholders within the case study sites referred to matters that individuals considered central to the role of the headteacher and the resultant effectiveness of leadership within their schools. A recurring theme, despite discourses surrounding distributed leadership, was that of the central role of the head and that it was he who retained overall influence over how leadership was distributed throughout the school. In order to demonstrate the pivotal role of the headteacher, a number of linguistic devices were applied within the critical discourse analysis. These included devices such as repetitions along with content words, sometimes called lexical words (Gee, 2005), which refer to major parts of speech such as nouns, verbs and adjectives, which help in analysing the tense, voice or mood of the participant and which all contribute to identifying the significance of the language-in-use.

5.6.2 Headteacher's role in engaging in certain practices of leadership

One way in which to engage with the practices of leadership was to focus the staff and to communicate a clear sense of what the schools should aim for and to gain a commitment to a vision. Such a vision was often articulated through spoken goal setting and the reinforcement of the headteacher when speaking about the school's mission. The following are extracts from the information taken from the interviews with participants within school. For ease of explanation I have underlined the lexical function of relevance to this particular motif.

Ht (headteacher) *Erm it is reminding people about what expectations are, through regular briefings and meetings and more formal things like observations and monitoring exercises.*

Ht *Giving feedback to people*

bb *You have got to be out living the vision that you are expecting everyone else to live*

ab *Pats on the back or kicks up the backside*

- cb *Motivating staff to kind of erm share that vision and go beyond the norm*
- ab *He sees what is effective teaching and if what a model of teaching is presented to him is not quite as he sees fit, that's the whole part of feedback*
- db *I think the Head is also very good at allowing us to carry out our leadership roles*
- Ht *Once we have finished looking at every child in terms of reading, writing and maths we specifically look at the children, free school meal (fsm) children to make sure they are making as much progress as their peers and if that is not the case we make sure that the interventions and extra teaching and support that can happen takes place for those children*

In these extracts, the headteacher's central role in getting recognized is evidenced, as it is he who sets the standards that form the acceptable norm, the lexical verbs of 'reminding people', 'expectations', 'giving feedback', 'expecting everyone else to live' create the leadership practice of feedback and monitoring and set the expectation that the staff will 'pull together', thereby creating patterns of influence that permeate all aspects of their practice.

In addition, elements such as 'allowing us', 'as he sees fit', 'pats on the back or kicks up the backside' are associated with the words like 'sharing the vision', 'making sure they are making as much progress'. Language-in-use in this framework is making a clear link between the vision as the headteacher sees it and the right to tackle underperformance in his way. Responses from the participants demonstrate their belief of sharing the headteacher's vision and his feedback enables them to achieve this vision.

The phrases and actions of the participants above are typical throughout the data. They are re-emphasized often in different permutations. All, however, contribute to the discourse of the central role of the headteacher as a socially constructed active process involving negotiated meanings with individuals as they experience the illusion of consultation for new management strategies, neatly exemplified in the extract below:

- eb *I think HI has his clear picture of where he wants us to go and how he wants the school to be ... and we know our staff very well and so we know where maybe we get some of that opposition and what we need to do to ... erm achieve that vision.*

5.6.3 Achieving solidarity in sustaining the practices of leadership

Using the linguistic feature of co-locations (Gee, 2005), it is possible to indicate how formal and informal social language achieves solidarity, for example, 'regular progress meetings', 'projected to rise above average', 'impact of teaching', 'learning to learn', initiative', 'giving feedback to people', 'book scrutiny', 'prioritizing on the most effective practices', 'ensuring that the leadership will be effective', all co-locate together to signal leadership practices and the situated identities that the individuals take up in such situations. This is their way of being, their discourse of being an 'effective teacher' and demonstrating their 'effective teaching'.

5.6.4 Speaking in the first person ('I') to build identity of the pivotal role

It is the verb that accompanies the 'I' statement that indicates the reality being experienced within school, such as the cognitive I-statements. In the instances below there are both cognitive I-statements and affective (desire) I-statements made by the headteacher in his desire for achieving the vision for the school.

Cognitive I-statements:

I think the ethos has changed

I think people are more accountable

I think people are enjoying things a lot more

I think it is important that leadership, that my senior leaders as in Heads of Key Stages have confidence to lead their areas knowing what I would expect

I think what sets me aside from other leaders certainly in this field now is I know the key things that are going to make the biggest difference

I think there is effective factors of leadership in our school

The cognitive I-statements the headteacher is making are explanatory claims in an assumed argumentative structure as assumed under the new management strategies. The headteacher is setting the parameters for leadership engagement. He is not engaging dialogically, these extracts are as a result of his cognitive model. Throughout, he is focussed on his own and others' self-assessment and evaluation. His opinions, reflecting the theories as presented within his cognitive model, are those of an effective headteacher sharing responsibility, ownership and delegation and that through distributed leadership actions the school will improve. At the same

time he is actively promoting himself as the pivotal role in this process enacting his identity as an effective headteacher.

Affective/desire I-statements:

what I would want for my own children

and they see what I do and what I want

I said the first dayI want the education in any school I lead to be fit for my own two children

... and they see what I do and I want my senior leaders to act in the same way

I want standards expected for my own children

With regard to the affective I-statements, the headteacher is talking about relationships and activities outside of the school environment, a discourse which is repeated often throughout his interview. HI's shifting position in this instance is expressing a direct and indirect alignment with family, trust, adult and school in terms of the discourse of norms, values and goals of what any good parent would want for their children. His discourse is one where families and schools create trajectories of achievement starting in the home through to a successful school (this one) and therefore, by association, successful lives. His discourses of family are a means of sharing ownership, developing a common purpose leading them to take more shared responsibility. Furthermore, his ability to shift positions comes naturally to him.

5.6.5 Goal setting and raising standards as part of the pivotal role

As indicated above, the headteacher uses the I-want statement repeatedly within his discourse to secure what he wants for the school. He also consistently promotes this throughout his leadership practices. The impression given through his consistent language-in-use is one of strength and determination in seeing through his vision and, through his actions in his words, his commitment, '*to improve quickly how external bodies will see effectiveness*'.

The language-in-use of others within the school shares this reality and consistency of message, their 'ways of being' are consistent with the headteacher's words of '*really working on those things that will erm make the biggest difference*':

- Cb *Mr H. has got it absolutely perfect, I do think that his and our expectations are so very high*
- ab *He is trusting the Assessment Manager to do that but he is obviously overseeing what is going on*
- aa *He has a clear vision of what he wants and is quite ruthless in obtaining it*

The use of plural pronouns further indicates solidarity and consistency of the discourse of working united, together on the 'things that work':

- db *We need to tackle grammar ...*
- aa *We had the iron hand lifted in December ...*
- cb *You have to be on your toes ... you have to remember why you are here ... why we are all here*
- aa *That is what we are here for ... to nurture these children*
- ab *Our key is to have the right subject knowledge and expectations*

The shift to personal pronouns additionally indicates agreement with this shared discourse, 'I think someone at the top encourages you to do a good job, inspires you to do it', 'I felt as Head of Key Stage 2 valued by Mr H ... I felt valued in that structure'. Buying into the vision symbolizes acceptance and ultimately success and empowerment.

Furthermore, the use of the informal parenthetical device 'you know' patterns together and signals that these utterances are in an informal social language used to further achieve solidarity (Gee, 2005:42):

- db *You know you need to listen and take on board others ideas*
- kb *It's just that he instils something in them that you know, 'this is my job and I just have to do it'*
- ac *You know you have to be on your toes and you know you have to remember why you are here and why we are all here is because of the children and a strong leader like Mr H. in a primary school puts the children first*
- db *So if Mr H. brings in something you know, maybe even if I wasn't sure it would work with Reception I would say, but I always have to try because he wants it that way*

For Gee (2005), each social language has its own distinctive grammar, what Gee refers to as Grammar 2, not the traditional rules of how sentences etc. are constructed but more of 'whos-doing-whats-within-Discourses' (ibid.:41). In other words, the situated identities and specific activities that are attributable to utterances. It makes visible the discourse that the participants are members of, which, in this instance, is one of school improvement through a Head who has ultimate responsibility for setting conditions for staff to develop a positive regard for improvement, for raising standards and for each other's abilities.

5.6.6 Enabling, modelling and guidance

Looking at the metaphors that participants used with regard to the leadership they were experiencing helps to clarify their thinking about that leadership. The different references to the headteacher as gardener see the leader as a 'growth-facilitator' (Alvesson and Spicer, 2011:93) promoting growth and development to elicit desired behaviours:

*We soaked up all of the words like daisies in the rain
We have been in a really dark place, like a bulb until he came along*

Maybe like a flower – the same way that a daffodil would grow and prosper but go and come back the year after

and as a pruner when performance doesn't meet expectations:

If they don't buy into what you are doing, they won't do it, ... that practice needs to grow either by adapting or changing.

Furthermore, the use of figurative language throughout the interviews and cognitive models demonstrates the thoughts and actions of the participants. The examples are rich in description of a clear focus and a preoccupation of needing to be an 'outstanding' teacher, demonstrating 'effective' practices, with a threatening underlying theme of having to improve ones practice or needing for move on, for example:

'past regimes', 'come back in the future to bite you', 'no hiding place in school' 'continued on the path of underperformance', 'have the drive to get out of the mire', 'headed for the hills', 'carry the can'

or with a strong sense of determination and focus:

'spread his wings', 'broaden his horizons', 'ahead of the game', 'direction you want to travel', 'walking the walk, talking the talk', 'drive and determination'

What seemed evident, however, was the fact that individuals relied upon authorization from the headteacher to act, and then only within agreed strictures.

5.6.7 Distributed leadership in the gift of the headteacher

Distributed leadership within both sites was in the gift of the headteacher. It was the head who, either directly or in a supervisory role, had the overview of all leadership within the schools, as a result of 'purposeful planning' (Torrance, 2014:58). Furthermore, hierarchy pervaded the interviews, as the following extracts illustrate, either when the participants were using language when referring to the headteacher/SLT or in ways of being that were made visible through their language-in-use:

- aa *he needs to command respect and I think he does*
- gb *I think they need an overriding knowledge at the top*
- bb *They have to be sort of (pause) it's like a strength*

Staff also made a clear distinction between themselves and the senior leadership team:

- lb *It's done (leadership) on a Monday afternoon in a Senior Leadership Meeting, then that dictates what is done in meetings, staff meetings all together in a briefing meeting on a Monday morning to all staff*
- cb *Adapt to the times as well for instance when new initiatives are thrown at us and new frameworks for learning and things like that*

Furthermore, within the senior leadership team, their discourses of hierarchy were also evident:

- db *You need to move forward and he gives you the confidence to do that*
- ab *It is like a politician, Prime Minister, it's the face and person that you buy into you know, it may seem shallow but you are not looking at a policy or procedure but people do pick up a lot from your persona and your personality and leadership is about getting through the good and hard times and if they do not buy into you they are not going to go with him*
- gb *We have the perfect complement because we have a leader who has got the strength and steel and the personality and he*

is also a human being that cares and who recognizes that people have homes and families and problems that affect their life in school

Deference to the headteacher is made visible not only in the use of figurative language – ‘strength and steel’ – but also by referring to the headteacher as ‘Prime Minister’, and furthermore by the use of the informal parenthetical device ‘you know’, which signals solidarity and acceptance. These all pattern together and signify that these utterances are a taken-for-granted assumption that it is a conferral from the head to ‘give confidence’, ‘to care’, ‘to recognize’; it is he who holds the overview that demarcates clear restrictions and that is their accepted norm, their discourse model, their ‘way of being’ within school.

Interestingly, hierarchical language from the headteacher towards his staff was not overly evident in either his interviews or cognitive model. The expectation would have been that he would refer to his staff using the pronoun ‘my’ or even more emotively ‘the team’, however, his choice of language-in-use was more detached, suggesting a logical view of his staff. The only time ‘my’ was used was when he was referring to his senior leadership team:

People tell me that they think I am a really approachable person

I think people are more accountable

The people who are here now

His discourse is one of evidence based, seeing his staff as a resource in order to fulfil strategic considerations:

I would have something really difficult to do I would still do that in a nice way but just present the evidence to say, making the other person understand that this is why I have to do it. I think you have to be a normal person just doing that job and I think if you do that people will come and approach you as a person.

His use of the cognitive I-statements making his explanatory claims of assumed priorities, his rationale for his choices – that evidence dictates what he must do – and his detached reference to ‘people’ indicate that he sees his staff as a resource. His focus is on achieving priorities from the school’s strategy through the use of his finite resources.

This discourse is evident and made visible through language-in-use of the teachers:

aa *Hi is very good at the motivational talk, 'I know you're all working really hard but..' the 'we're all in it together' sort of thing. A programme of staff meetings was organized to help staff to implement the best practice initiatives in literacy and numeracy. All good, but too much in too short a time. On more than one occasion I witnessed staff in tears following them.*

The discourses within the schools evidenced that the distribution of the social good of being 'good enough' was ultimately in the gift of the headteacher:

Hi *I think that it is important that leadership, that my leadership, my senior leaders as in Heads of Key Stage have confidence to lead their areas knowing what I would expect*

Hi *I think you have to live it every day erm if people need to be brought in line about something you have to have that conversation*

5.6.8 Summary

What is evident from the language-in-use from the participants is the ubiquitous presence and influence of the headteacher. His vision and focus for the school was clearly understood by all. His determination in achieving this was a message of a clear social influence within school. Distributed leadership was as a result of careful purposeful planning and his expectations were set by him, modelled by his senior leadership team

and you know you get the success when the flower is in full bloom and you get the success of it being a happy bright sunny day enlightening that to the end of a school year when we get a good set of results and everyone has done well and that sort of celebration, then that sort of dies away a little bit. It comes back and that sort of reborn sees me as giving life into the future – that sort of cycle of new leaders being created and of effective teaching being embedded and moving on and moving on and moving on.

Illustrated next is the discourse of leadership practice where respondents talk about how developing teams, structures and building relationships are the leadership activities that they experience within school.

5.7 The theme of leadership activity

Introduction

The discourse of leadership practice when articulated by the respondents was epitomized by developing teams and structures, by building relationships, by managing communication and by bestowing staff development. What follows are the discourses, the particular words and phrases, the figured language, the metaphors, the accepted common sense assumptions, interlinked with each other to represent the discourse of leadership practice as talked about by the participants.

5.7.1 How leadership practice was carried out

Discourse of the leadership practice that the participants were members of was made visible by the language-in-use of colleagues working with and through each other within the two case study schools. They drew on language-in-use that illustrated for them how leadership was carried out within their schools, the reasons why it was carried out, and when they believed it to be carried out. The participants were clear in their articulations of the actions and processes of leadership.

Through a close-up analysis of the words and grammatical devices used within the discourses of leadership activity as it was being experienced within school, it is possible to see how language was used to build or destroy relationships, the gift of professional development, and to make visible what leadership communication was seeking to get others to recognize as important within school.

In order to demonstrate how leadership activity was experienced by the participants, a number of linguistic devices were applied within the critical discourse analysis, devices such as analysing sentence construction for what is chosen to be in the main clause, what is foregrounded information, information that is important for what needs to be communicated in the immediate, what needs to be focused on at that particular time. In contrast, what is chosen to be spoken in the subordinate clause is background information, assumed, taken-for-granted information. Other lexical forms, for instance, nouns, verbs, adjectives, repetitions, etc. will also reveal the significance of the language-in-use and will aid in making visible an understanding of the discourse of leadership activity within the case study sites.

5.7.2 Developing teams and structures as a form of leadership activity

It was felt by the senior leadership team that where teachers share best practice, learn together and build teams the likelihood is that better quality teaching will result.

Using the linguistic feature of analysing what participants choose to talk about within the main clause of a sentence indicates the significance of what they are trying to build, in this instance teamwork:

- da *Where Mr H. has it right is developing teams.*
- ab *The first thing that springs to mind is the importance of teamwork that which underpins all of the other elements is relationships.*
- bb *Team working is so important that could be just team working within your own school environment or networking and team working with our cluster schools.*
- ab *It takes more than one person to bounce around ideas, as part of your leadership plan.*

Throughout the interviews and cognitive mapping, the theme of team working and its importance was evident, as the topics in the main clauses above indicate. Furthermore, within discourse analysis the subject of the sentence is referred to as the topic and whatever comes before the topic is referred to as the theme, so in the following utterances:

- dn *Collective purpose (pause) what I want to say is that what hasn't been measured here is er in terms of the development of the ethos in the school and I think that is really important that it is a really nice place to be and everyone buys into that vision.*

and,

- ch *Part of it is to do with being a coach, obviously being a leader we do team teaching, co-teaching (pause) we did this learning to learn creatively initiative, a lot of that was going in working with other teachers sharing good practice throughout the school.*

It is clear that the participants believed in promoting a collegiate atmosphere and team effort, a theme that was consistent throughout the interviews, even if this was negatively viewed by the following participant:

- lwb *A programme of team meetings was organized to help staff implement the best practice in literacy and numeracy. All good, but too much in too short a time. On more than one occasion I witnessed staff in tears following them.*

The topic, as identified by the pronouns 'I' and the collective 'we', 'everyone' and 'other', indicates a clear link between the assumption of the importance of teamwork and the importance of the teachers acting on their belief in their teaching to improve their practice. .

In support of this, it is possible, using the linguistic feature of subordinate clauses, to indicate what is considered assumed and taken-for-granted understanding. Below are the subordinate clauses of the language-in-use (underscored), that which is assumed and taken for granted as ways of being within the case study sites:

- kb *Other behaviours are key such as reflecting, looking at interpersonal skills as well as intrapersonal skills, that ability to reflect on your own practice.*
- ab *Part of that is erm our constant reflecting and reviewing that erm are we being successful?*
- cb *Collaboration with SLT that's the important thing, so I suppose collaboration with staff, children parents, governors.*
- ab *The first thing that springs to mind is the importance of teamwork that which underpins all of the other elements is relationships.*
- eb *It is a three form entry school, office staff, across two key stages, huge amount of teaching staff, welfare staff, cleaning staff, a huge team, it's about valuing that relationship.*
- fa *Erm the key is the ability to be part of the strategic thinking, the ability to look at analysing the data, that erm put together action plans to improve the school.*

The subordinate clauses as underlined above may have a subject and a finite verb but they depend on the first clause to become a complete statement and, as such, are providing background information that is assumed. The language-in-use of the subordinate clauses used above makes visible the assumptions of the participants within the schools. These assumptions include: *everyone reflects on their practice* as a given, that *action plans* are part of everyday lived experience as the school has to improve and so, by association, does their own practice; that collaboration with others is a given; and that *relationships* are bound up in the fact that everyone pulls together because teachers develop professionally by working together.

The discourse of teamwork as a leadership activity is indicating a predominance to practice in ways that would appear self-directed, but in reality may be taken as an

acceptance of the overall master plan, that is, *'I think everyone has bought into what we are trying to do as well so we have that collective (pause) do you know what I mean, everyone is in'* (headteacher).

5.7.3 Developing relationships as a form of leadership activity

Furthermore, by using figurative language and lexical analogies to emotions, the intertextuality, the references in other words to what others have said or alluded to, it is possible to identify further how individuals build and sustain, change, or destroy social relationships within school for the benefit of the collective:

ab *The first thing that springs to mind is (pause) which underpins all the other elements is relationships (pause) that is what I would consider strongest element of it you have to build them*

ab *Without buying into relationship all of the other factors would fall down for you*

Ht *A good teacher has to have a really strong relationship with the children and not everyone has this*

ab *Empathy (pausing) going back to relationships*

lwa *With Mr M. I thought that he did value some relationships but he didn't value all relationships like Mr H.*

Ht *He has spread his wings and other people have come to watch him and he has broadened his horizons and I think that he trusts what I am doing and he has the trust of others now (pause) they go to him for advice and support*

Moreover, in the extract below, Db expresses her thoughts using repetitions: 'you need', 'sharing', 'your job', expressing her actions; *'it's just that it instils something in them'*, *'this is my job and I just have to do it'*, and her opinions and fears, *'I have seen what can happen to the people that don't engage with others'*, *'a healthy fear'*, *'you have to be on your toes'*. Her language-in-use is full of examples of the discourse of everyday experiences within school. The discourse below intimates that being good enough, committed to the vision and sharing best practice will help achieve the vision and is therefore the only course for individuals within school:

db *Ht has it in bucket loads, steel and strength.*

That is why we are here now, for the children for each other, sharing good practice, sharing skills.

I think a little bit of that, I wouldn't say it instils fear in people, 'you might lose your job if I don't do that'.

It's just that it instils something in them that you know, this is my job and I just have to do it.

I have seen what can happen to the people that don't improve and I think there are one or two maybe one who feels that now and is brought up short sometimes.

I think you need people to accept change, you need to improve, you need loyalty and you need healthy fear.

This is what they as leaders need to do, to inspire coping with change, inspire loyalty and they need to inspire the healthy fear, ultimate respect, always to be mindful that this is your job.

It is suggested that, through making visible the discourses of building relationships within school, it is possible to assert that this is a leadership manoeuvre, deployed as a means to achieve measurable outcomes.

5.7.4 Managing communications as a form of leadership activity

Using figurative language and symbols as an important aspect of communicating and providing guidance and direction as leadership activity was articulated by the respondents as crucial, as exemplified in the comment, *'being an excellent communicator just is a major thing'* (bb).

When communicating the vision to the school, the headteacher repeatedly drew on affective I-statements that referred to his own children, communicating his apparent attitude of, if it isn't good enough for his children then it isn't good enough for school: *'if I come across any aspect of practice that I wouldn't be happy for my own child to be in, well it's not good enough'*.

However, there appears to be a contradiction within these proclamations, and if the linguistic device of nominalization is used, then instead of the above utterances being heartfelt claims, they are a deliberate means to an end. By the use of the verb 'be' and applying the linguistic device of theme and topic, *'if I come across'* (is the theme) *'any aspect of practice'* (is the subject and topic), it could be claimed that the focus of the communication in this respect is not empathy with 'his children' and by association 'the teachers' children'; rather, the theme guides the listeners to what is being communicated, which is in this instance is all about practice. At face value, the headteacher is seeking empathy with his message by drawing on his children as

examples, when in fact the communication is all about best practice and the achievement of that.

Moreover, when asking the participants to name a metaphor that illustrated for them what epitomized the values of the school, there were different answers, but all portrayed a sense of togetherness, achievement, potential:

- da *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe – when the White Witch was in charge, everywhere was kind of miserable, there was hardly any movement, there were no plants, no light. Now very quickly, everything is green and growing. The sun is coming out and the flowers are starting to grow.*
- ea *A monkey – something that climbs, maybe something that goes off in different directions but climbs to the top. I definitely have seen loads of changes to the place in my four years here because things were bad and it wasn't a particularly nice place to be and I think within a year things have very much changed, it is like reaching the top and seeing the sun.*
- db *A ship and it is sailing to the horizon and beyond. Always finding new places to land.*

By using the linguistic device of repetitions, the following words illustrate significance of what the focus of communication is within the schools: '*reminding*', '*feedback*', '*whole part of feedback*', '*evaluations*', '*monitoring*', '*observations*', '*pupil outcomes*', and similarly, collective action-statements such as '*where we are going*', '*where the organisation is moving towards*' all make visible the discourse, the ways of thinking, acting and what is valued within school. These are all everyday leadership activities that are communicated as normal, taken for granted assumptions that the participants within school accept as the norm. Through making these discourses visible, it is suggested that communications are designed to present leadership within school as a way as to continue its professional existence.

5.7.5 Bestowing staff development as a leadership activity

As previously discussed, language is used to build and destroy that which individuals think is worth having, a 'social good' in Gee's (2011:90) words. For instance, treating an individual with respect is a social good, and not giving them respect is not. This is achieved by speaking and acting respectfully to each other, therefore distributing that social good to individuals. Within the case study sites, the distribution of social goods, the claims about individuals (goods), are distributed in the terms of individuals being taken as acceptable, important, normal, respected,

and an 'insider', and the result is what gives individuals within school, status. In the example below, ab is making it clear that the distribution of the social good 'development' is an honourable act. She is making it clear that the 'opportunity' to undertake professional development is a good thing which is prized amongst the staff as it gives them confidence and raises their profile within the school, giving them that added status.

Ab *You know, you need to move forward, we're all given the opportunity and he gives you the confidence to do that (pause) he has given him as much opportunity here to develop himself and I think that's honourable (pause) as a result they then pass that on to the rest of us.*

Ht has completely spotted that from the beginning and Ht knows that he will probably move on in a few years but he has given him as much opportunity here to develop himself and I think that's honourable. What happens to you if you don't get it? Well you know, that goes without saying.

Ab expresses a theory about professional development as a social good which is available for everyone, which leads to success and future career chances, and consequently a lack of professional development, 'what happens if you don't get it', has negative effects, not only within school, but also on the individual's future chances. Furthermore, the use of the parenthetical device 'you know' signals that this utterance is in an informal social language insinuating solidarity with this basic assumption. Ab believed that I, as the researcher, had a full understanding, without having to verbalize it, of the consequences of a teacher not having professional development.

Ab seems, however, to contradict this view when she expresses, 'you know, you need to move forward we're all given the opportunity', because in the same statement she is acknowledging that it is 'he' that gives the opportunities, 'he', being the headteacher, and it is the head who has granted the opportunity for professional development to her male colleague. Ab is therefore expressing a very different view of how social goods are distributed in school. Furthermore, within her articulations, ab is asserting that being given the opportunity for continuing professional development (CPD) is being recognized as a good teacher, a recognition that she wants.

Throughout the interviews, the discourses of the interviewees were rich in the language they used to express professional development. The next examples focus

on how they repeatedly used the terms, 'honourable', 'confidence' 'develop', 'tools', 'opportunities,' 'motivated', 'want to', etc., in association with CPD. By the choice of these words and by association of development and status, participants are making these issues significant.

- db *It is important that other people have responsibilities for their own personal development. The head has had the foresight to bring in people who are sort of learners for the future and want to move on and I think that is important for the school.*
- jb *You need to move forward and he gives you the confidence to do that*
- fb *Erm with the younger staff he develops them because he can see that there is one member who is going to be a good leader of the future*
- eb *And the same with another teacher and he is giving them the tools to develop*

5.7.6 Making connections to build leadership activity

In the world, things can be seen to be connected and relevant to each other in many ways. Similarly, within school some connections are easily visible, however others are not, but they can be rendered visible through language-in-use and therefore viewed as relevant and significant for individuals.

The claims by participants of being earmarked for professional development are what they consider of importance for their practice. Therefore participation within staff development is part of being an effective teacher, something for which they want to be recognized: 'that will be good for such', 'being provided with opportunities, gave me responsibility', 'appropriate CPD to develop my teaching practice', 'a way of challenging myself'.

By pairing 'providing opportunity' and 'development of teaching practice', the headteacher is positioned as an authoritative figure whose conduct is for the betterment of individuals. The discourse of a supportive, knowledgeable headteacher knowing what is best for individuals within his school is enacting the teachers' identity and constructing their discourse. By making visible these connections, it is possible to question the assumptions underlying the conduct.

- bb *When courses come up Ht says that will be good for such and then approaches them and asks them would they like to go on that*

- cb *Being provided with opportunities. Mr H. does, other schools might want me to provide training for them, I think it is by being given opportunities it is a way of challenging myself to become a better teacher and leader*
- ab *Under the current regime in my previous role as class teacher Mr H. saw me daily, weekly and asked me how things were going you know, developed me as a person and gave me responsibility, appropriate CPD to develop my teaching practice and beyond that into leading Key Stages now a Deputy and am well motivated person because of that*
- bb *It is important that everyone has responsibilities for their own development and I think that is where Ht does well is that he does develop his staff*
- eb *Power to develop people effectively, see peoples strengths, forward thinking*

Particular cognitive models are obvious within these remarks. One is that there is professional autonomy and there is the expectation to develop and reach ones potential for the benefit of one's practice, and hence the school. Another possible model is on what grounds these goals have been chosen, why certain people have been selected where others have not, and in whose interest do they act, as the following statement makes visible:

- lwb *The career progression is a bit haphazard, there is no thought to where people are going. There is not much advice. There is no encouragement to expand your career but some people are supported more than others. I don't think the school uses people's skills as effectively as it could (pause) certainly no encouragement to go for self-improvement.*

5.7.7 Situated meaning as endorsing the pivotal role of the headteacher

For instance,

- HT *I give feedback to my staff in terms of when I go and watch what they are doing and I give them feedback whether that is in lines with my expectations or not, that makes it clear to staff what I expect in that way.*

The above is communicated by and through the senior leadership team within the case study sites. For the teachers, 'being watched' means they are being assessed, and there are high expectations, and hard work on their part is expected. There will be a set of core beliefs, values and opinions that shapes the way they behave, think and act and therefore understand the community of

practice they are part of. To the headteacher, it is a means of saying that his 'watching and feedback' is the only one that is important, and if they do not take this on board then there will be consequences. Given only the utterance-type (general) meaning of 'watch' then at face value this is innocent, as in watching a football match. However, the remark is consistent if the individual knows how to situate the meaning of 'feedback' in it and if the individual shares with the author (which they will) knowledge about classroom observations and grading of lessons.

5.7.8 Summary

What has been illustrated above is how the respondents were explicit in their articulations of the actions, activities and processes of leadership that were carried out within school. This was embodied in the compelling support for developing teams and relationships between the staff within both case study sites. This was all facilitated by clear consistent communicative activities that were focused and relayed the expectations of the staff and students.

Futhermore the respondents were clear in their talk of an ethos of continuing professional development. However from the language-in-use it was clear that the headteacher's willingness to promote growth and empowerment was for instrumental ends. A carrot for eliciting desired behaviours.

What is presented next is the discourse of marketization and how being part of the community of practice that is school is seen as a desired commodity, something to strive for.

5.8 The theme of commodification of education

Introduction

Within the discourses of the participants, what was illustrated throughout was their desire to be members of the community of practice within school. By highlighting various linguistic characteristics, it is possible to illustrate the discourse of marketization, within which being part of the community of practice in school is seen as a desired commodity and something to strive for. Similarly, participants within the schools built connections between their reasoning and market thinking (they have aims, goals and targets which they can use to measure effectiveness against). In

addition, being members of this community appeared indistinguishably woven into the ways individuals conceptualized their schools.

By looking at the discourses of how individuals used language-in-use, it is feasible to see how individuals built mutual senses of belonging. By making visible the discourses of sharing 'good practice' and 'what works well', by looking at what was hailed as 'achieving effective teaching and learning', it is viable to see what was communicated as to what is taken to be an effective individual. Therefore, making apparent the ways individuals talk about engagement and commitment to the community will make apparent the ways they see being part of the community as stock in cultural capital.

5.8.1 Making connections to build a sense of belonging

Throughout the data, it was evident that participants had an awareness of themselves in relation to others. By analysing the data from across all the interviews and the cognitive models, it is clear how participants built connections between a mutual sense of belonging amongst members and the network of leadership. The following extract from ba was in response to a question on what influenced her teaching:

Erm I would say the children are the main (pause) underpin what everything goes on in the school, the children's safety and the care that underpins everything. That is what we are here for to nurture these children and for these children to learn. There is a strong focus for all on the learning side here, the ethos that this is a lovely place to be and a good place to learn, a good atmosphere to learn. That is what we are here for to nurture these children and for these children to learn (pause)

People who are dedicated and put the children first and want the school to move forward and I think we have got those people now. I think it encourages us to do well

I think someone strong at the top encourages us to do a good job. It inspires us to do it. I don't think you would value yourself as much and want to develop and progress yourself as much if you didn't.

In the above extract, ba is using different voices to enact a specific social identity; however, there are a number of social languages at play here which feel very different to each other. In the first instance, she is using distinctive lexical and grammatical means to speak as an official voice of caring knowledgeable teachers putting the children first. By the use of the collective noun 'we are here for' and the emphatic repetition of 'that is what' and 'children', the situated meaning is that the

reason why the school operates is to nurture and care for the children. Although the question was directed at Ba, her utterances are representative of her discourse of a collective view.

Ba moves from a collective cognitive we-statement to a detached plural noun of 'people', consciously or subconsciously referring back to previous times when teachers within the school were considered not to be putting the 'children' first. Now, however, the repeated use of 'learn,' the cognitive I-statement and the earlier statement of 'underpins everything' pattern together to present an assumed shared opinion amongst 'dedicated' staff.

The second social language from the extract above, however, sits in contrast with the first. This voice is making visible the network of leadership and its influence on performance. Ba is making a common-sense assumption by patterning together 'want the school to move forward' and 'someone strong at the top encourages us', 'it inspires us to do it', which reflects the reasoning behind her caring, nurturing role. The situated meaning being made visible is that doing a good job equates to moving the school forward and therefore having value within the community.

5.8.2 Talking the market

The discourses of the participants revealed strong indicators of the nominalizations of market rationalities in schools and the cognitive models of the participants who inextricably linked to and understood their school in market terms. For instance, when discussing with the headteacher what makes an effective leader, his response was:

So, know what quality teaching is and taking quality teaching from a range of external factors such as Ofsted ... such as external accountability and making sure that all of the basics of that erm sort of are in place in my school.

When discussing the same with the Deputy Head, his response was:

Erm the ability to be as part of the strategic thinking, the ability to look at data the analysis that erm to put together action plans to improve the school erm.

Within the discourse of the senior leadership team, therefore, 'accountability', 'strategic thinking' and 'data' are means to an end. Accountability and statistics are

means of implementing management activities for the purpose of scrutiny and assessment of the wider school community. As the headteacher asserted:

I think the most important thing is the direction you want to travel in terms of how external bodies will see effectiveness.

The discourse within the school becomes one of who is improving, and who is not: *'members of staff have left the school ... I think in some cases it came down to an inability to meet that expectation'* (headteacher). This discourse was also evident across the participants' discourses, which show that they themselves took personal responsibility for improving the school's financial situation: *'Doing best by children. In practice – bums on seats, finance, Ofsted'* (lwb); taking on accountability: *'I think the ethos has changed since Ht came in. I think people are more accountable'* (ab); or taking responsibility for *'tackling underperformance again – are children getting value for money?'* (db).

(db) *Erm, empathy with others, first of all again kind of going back to relationships it's understanding the ability to see the bigger picture and see strategically clear things the bigger picture not what is just relevant to your class ... it is about having that oversight and seeing the implications of all things across the school, the whole staff erm to have a broad view is erm certainly something I would add to my cognitive map to see the bigger picture, how do we compare to other schools.*

5.8.3 Celebrating success as part of the community

Talking with the participants, it was evident that, in addition to engaging with their pedagogic roles, they also, through school-wide practices, assumed collective responsibility for ensuring the success of the school. This was both in terms of longevity within the community: *'St Peter's around the corner has a waiting list, we used to have that'* (fb) – and as effective practitioners themselves: *'I think that would be very difficult wouldn't it, if you were not an effective teacher because our expectations are very high'* (eb).

The headteacher in both schools celebrated success as a matter of course, whether that be in a school-wide assembly for the children or championing staff as experts within their subject: *'headteacher can develop you know, can see people's strength and use them you know and put them up there'* (ba). Use of the parenthetical device *'you know'* patterns together the taken-for-granted assertion that the leadership team develop key staff they have identified and then *'use them'* to drive forward everyone else to *'up their game'* to achieve desired school outcomes. In addition,

through this informal language, by use of the parenthetical device the speaker is building solidarity with the listener.

Moreover, across the interviews, emotive words and phrases were repeated to illuminate how empowerment strategies worked within the case study sites, phrases such as, '*massive*', '*biggest*', '*need to*' and '*always*', when the participants were using language-in-use to talk about their practice and the practice of others, and examples of such discourses are shown below:

- eb *We have a massive focus on the learning side here*
- ab *It's the biggest way of how you motivate staff by always linking it back to the experiences the children are having.*
- db *I think then that is an effective role model for all the people in their team they need to see that people are walking the walk and talking the talk.*

Within both schools, success really mattered. By looking at the social language of the participants and the grammatical means of subject, topic and theme within sentences, it is viable to make visible what topics the participants are making significant and what situated meanings they are creating about the subject they are talking about.

- fb *He sees what is effective teaching and if what a model of teaching is presented to him is not quite as he sees fit, that's the whole part of feedback*
- eb *The problem would be if you didn't see the benefit of doing a, b, c but Ht has always made that clear that by doing a, b, c it will benefit the children in this way and it makes sense to you.*
- db *He likes to develop his staff, development is another thing, kind of having faith in people to develop them if they feel well trained and well informed they feel well motivated and therefore they are going to be successful.*

The subject, '*he*' and '*Ht*', in these utterances is the headteacher. Making visible whom the interviewees choose as their subject steers how the listener should view the topic that is being discussed. In this instance, the participants are making significant that the headteacher knows what it takes to be successful and the trust and positive ways in which they assert these utterances leaves the listener in no doubt that this is the discourse model throughout the school. By applying the linguistic feature of subordinate clauses, which are underlined in the statements

above, it is feasible to indicate what is considered assumed and taken-for-granted understanding within school. In this instance, the way of being the participants are making visible is that doing what the headteacher suggests will result in success for both the individual and for the children, a trusting stance.

Furthermore, with regard to *'feedback'*, in this utterance it is used both as a verb and a nominalization. For example, whenever the senior leadership team carry out an observation of a lesson, as a management activity for assessing a practitioner's teaching, it is followed every time with formal oral and written feedback. In this instance, *'feedback'* coupled with *'that's the whole part of'* is also a nominalization as in both case study sites *'feedback'* is both feared and celebrated as it represents success or failure as an effective teacher. It is all part of the ways of being within school life, preparing for teaching, teaching, being observed and being rated, and being accepted as good enough or needing improvement.

5.8.4 Commitment and engagement with the community

By making visible the repeated lexical words as used by the participants in response to *'what does it mean to be part of the school community'*, it is possible to make visible informationally salient discourses about commitment and engagement with the school community. Across the interviews, feelings of value and desire were evident: *'I want'*, *'value the people you are working with'*, *'got it right'*, *'it's really important'*, *'I did it'*, *'what works well'*, *'effective'*, etc. Moreover, their language-in-use was filled with figurative language and metaphors that made significant their feelings towards a collegiate attitude and a desire to be part of that collegiate group: *'we need to tackle grammar'*, *'we soaked up all of the words like daisies in the rain'*, *'strategically he knew how to get us out of the mire'*, demonstrating a shared narrative of the need to tackle particular areas of the curriculum within school in order to achieve set outcomes – a way of being that demonstrates whose voice is valued: *'if they are not coming to you for support then they might be underperforming because they have not been able to come to you for advice'* (ca).

When looking at the lexical verbs which Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) used on an official visit to the school, both orally and in her written report, it is possible to illuminate that she makes explicit connections between practice, which *'has improved markedly'*, and a collegiate effort:

'teachers and leaders I met were well aware', furthermore, 'I would especially like to congratulate you on achieving high accountability and high morale'.

In addition, by analysing the grammatical device of her sentence construction, the HMI may change the order of the subject, verb phrase and object, but what she is signifying as important remains the same, as illustrated in the extracts from her discourses below that echo the discourses of the staff within school:

HMI School evidence pointed to the impact of teaching
The role of middle leaders for mathematics, English and ITC
has also improved markedly
School action planning is exemplary
Display right sort of beliefs

Much of the language of this data is in an academic–authoritative social language with no vernacular language used. The function of this language, using patterns of words and grammar that are pretty distinctive 'teacher talk', is to endorse what the school is doing and how well it is doing, to congratulate the headteacher and his team of staff on their success. Her language conveys no vague phrases; she is explicit about what she is saying. She is authoritative, conferring acceptance of a school doing well, issuing a social good – *'a good school with outstanding aspects'*. Together with intertextuality from the Ofsted report, using lexical phrases such as *'high accountability', 'high morale', 'improved markedly'*, that is, using explicit language, endorses the ways of being that is accepted as the norm for a Primary School in England . By her changing a clause into a noun phrase, 'Impact of teaching improved markedly', she is taking a particular perspective on the information she wants to communicate, a successful team on its way to becoming an effective school.

Using figurative language, it is viable to see how individuals valued membership of the community within school, but also the, at times the contradictory, ways in which they understood being part of this community showed how they positioned themselves within it. (That is, the education market and how they position themselves within it.)

Ht It will come back in the future to bite you

Ht Previous leadership took their eyes of the ball

Sort of trailblazing

Ahead of the game

Lead from the front

So it is making sure the ladder is leant against the right tree and you are climbing the right tree of success

Could have headed for the hills

Moreover, each person has 'positive face needs' and wants to belong and be involved and not left out. By using the linguistic feature of affective collective pronouns, it is possible to make visible the ways of thinking within school:

Ab No I think things need to develop and people need to have the tools of the trade and training erm and we have had that here looking back in the last two years Ht came in

Lwb One where those led feel that they are listened to and that impact on them of decisions made is considered. Where there is transparency and consistency.

Cb I do think Mr H. has got it absolutely perfect, I do think that his and our expectations are so very high but it is also fair, everything is fair about it and realistic.

The English language comprises both Germanic and Latinate words. Germanic words are used more often in everyday contexts but Latinate words mark a more formal context and therefore can appear aloof and a barrier to certain groups. Across the data, when receiving feedback, it was evident the language-in-use in talking about an individual's performance appeared more formal, using such Latinate words as 'attitude', 'action', 'benefit', 'support', 'observe', 'important', etc. Whereas when interviewees were asked about how they viewed the support they received from each other, the language-in-use portrayed a much more informal situated meaning, displaying Germanic lexical terms such as 'belief', 'mindset', 'ahead of (the game)', 'behaviour', 'truth', 'buy (into)', 'friendly', denoting a solidarity and a mutual sense of supportive network or relationships.

5.8.5 Summary

What has been presented above is how the participants drew on discourses of the awareness of themselves in relation to others striving towards the common good – which is an 'effective teacher', an 'effective school'. Their talk relayed building connections which gave them a sense of belonging and a commitment and engagement to the community of practice within school.

In addition language-in-use displayed a preoccupation with the requirements of being 'accountable', 'statistics' and 'data' all underlying concepts of the marketization of education.

What follows is the discourse of the relations of power that existed within the schools.

5.9 The theme of relations of power

Introduction

Just as the pivotal role of the headteacher in engaging in all practices of leadership within the school was a central influence across the interviews, so too the relations of power of the head was a recurring theme throughout the data. It was a taken-for-granted assumption that the headteacher set the parameters for participation and empowerment, despite participants' perception of working within a democratic environment.

Using such linguistic features as metaphors, comparisons, lexical functions and the language of hierarchy, it is possible to illuminate how respondents constructed their lived understanding of authority (power) within their schools.

5.9.1 Distributed leadership and managerial power

Participants across the interviews portrayed a sense of working within a democratic environment for the benefit of all:

eb *Part of it is to do with being a coach obviously being a leader but being a coach*

cb *As a middle leader in school it is important that we have someone like Mr T. to look up to and guide us as a mentor*

They were also willing to try new things to please:

db *So if Ht brings in something you know maybe even if I wasn't sure it would work with Reception I would say but I always have to try because he wants it that way*

Yet their discourses were full of hierarchical language such as 'expectation', 'allowing us', 'evaluate', 'monitor', 'strong leader', 'he wants it'. It was a taken-for-granted assumption that individuals saw the headteacher and by extension his senior leadership team as those responsible for direction and the upholders of

standards throughout the schools through a process of 'constant reinforcement of expectations through SLT meetings, staff meetings and evaluations' (ht).

Moreover, authoritative cognitive I-statements were often used to convey explicit or assumed argumentative structures about what the staff themselves believed the headteacher's role was:

I think Mr H. has a clear picture of where he want us to go

I think someone strong at the top encourages you to do a good job

I think the head is also very good at allowing us to carry out our leadership roles

I think it encourages us to do well

These statements are very focussed and assured. They are not in response to any direct questions from the interviews or reactions to what has been said. There is nothing in the interviews, in fact, which suggests that these statements are in response to any debates on the matter, however they are clear in their acceptance of the role, the position and the taken-for-granted mandate.

When participants used affective/desire I-statements within their interviews, it was evident that they were referring to success and expectations as something outside of themselves. The statements below are again not in response to any direct question, but the individuals are focussed on achievement and evaluation. They are building, through their language-in-use, socially situated identifiers and portraying a discourse of alignment and trust in the processes that form part of their everyday experiences, for example, statistical analysis and assessment is part of everyday life as a teacher. Moreover the norms, values and goals of a middle leader within school are made explicit:

ab *I love it because I come from a maths background and it is my sort of bag. It is an area that I have moved into that I never thought teaching would take me in, in terms of analysis.*

ca *I like to push myself in this area so say if there is a term when I am not doing any training or observing, or leading a staff meeting, I feel that I need to so that I am challenging myself as a leader.*

In addition, when asking the head of Key Stage 2 how staff feed back to the senior leadership team, his talk was a discourse of accountability rather than one of interaction and discussion. His language not only conveyed his belief in the

importance of achieving outcomes, but his actions echoed that of performance management practices, in other words to meet set targets:

They feedback to the key stage leaders so that they are always available from the start of the day to the end of the school day and as previous head of key stage that was the biggest challenge really. Head of Year 6 with a kind of directive that results needed to improve in a very short period of time so there was a massive pressure there (pause) but I still had to find time to make myself available to the other three year groups that I was responsible for and hand on heart, I think I didn't do as well as I wanted to but that sort of became my priority to get Year 6 results to a standard for Ofsted.

Furthermore, this viewpoint may have been a result of the cognitive model that he holds of effectiveness, success, improvement and pupil outcomes. In fact, the following excerpt from the same interview clarifies his way of thinking, valuing and being within school, something that is preordained and outside of his control but part of his lived experience:

But you know it was clear from the moment I came in the morning to when I left, every lunch and any spare moment was spent in trying to drive success in that year group because that was what was needed at that time.

5.9.2 The cognitive model of success, empowerment and achievement

Through the linguistic device of repetitions, the following words illustrate the situated meanings that are part of the lived experience of the participants within school, words such as 'make it clear', 'make sure', 'expectations', which work together to illustrate the discourse of success, empowerment and achievement.

ht *I make it clear to my senior leadership team what I expect in that way*

ht *I monitor regularly to make sure those expectations remain and stay high*

ht *They understand what I expect erm and I expect from them that they are sort of excellent practitioners themselves and that they lead from the front*

ab *It's being I suppose aware that you are failing at something. There are periods that you are failing at something, that you don't realize you are, you kind of have to realize it.*

ht *If a school is effective the head will take the credit*

What is evident from the above discourse is that connections can be made between a desire to be seen to be offering autonomy while in reality maintaining control, and between success and empowerment (*expectations remain and stay high*) and achievement (in the realisation that you are not *failing*). Through repetition it is evident what the objective is and that adopting that discourse will empower individuals to realize their potential and the potential of the school.

5.9.3 Power and influence

Participants drew on figurative language demonstrating strength and influence and how opposition was dealt with in school to elicit desired behaviours: *'sort of trail blazing', 'ahead of the game', 'I could have headed for the hills', 'present the evidence to say, this is why I have to do it, it is the right thing to do and the evidence shows that'*.

The inference here is that the outcome is inevitable and necessary because the evidence says so, and to suggest otherwise would be counter-intuitive to good practice. Being ahead of the game is a means to an end.

This figurative language may be in contrast to what was earlier noted: *'we soaked up words like daisies in the rain', 'we have been in a really dark place, like a bulb until he came along'*. What is distinctive are the metaphors of developing, on the one hand, and on the other, control and cutting back of specific practices, demonstrating leadership influence.

When individuals are communicating they do a lot more with language than just give information. By making visible the language-in-use of the following communication from the headteacher, it is possible to see what he is trying to achieve:

I as the leader of the school's expectations because ultimately it comes back you know if a school is really successful the head will take the credit for that but at the same time if a school is not successful everything comes back from the top and if the leader has got the right vision, the right expectations that needs to be shared right throughout the school erm and that person needs to know exactly what is going on in that school so if a school is failing the person most at fault is the headteacher I would say.

In this utterance, the headteacher is making connections between his actions, *'right expectations that needs to be shared right throughout the school'*, his beliefs, *'the*

leader has got the right vision, and the nominalization of *'comes from the top'*, which illustrates government-driven objectives, which are mandatory. It is not necessary to point out that he is *'the leader of the school's expectations'*. This statement was uttered after the headteacher was in possession of a report from the HMI stating that the school had been assessed as *'good with outstanding features'*. In this statement the headteacher moves from an impersonal *'school's expectations'*, whereby it is a collective belief, to the leader having the *'right expectations'*. The headteacher in this instance is illustrating his actions of influence and success.

5.9.4 Influence resulting in actions

What was communicated how and by whom?

- ab *That action of getting year 6 that came from Ht and it was to myself but alongside the teachers in Year 6 but I would be that regular driving force and kind of strategic 'let's have a look at how things are going here' but it came from ht*
- db *Influence is spread out again really I suppose its driven from the head*
- ab *We always have the agenda, it is set between Ht and myself (pause) the focus of the meeting is focused and directed by Ht and myself*
- ht *That practice either needs to adapt or change. If it's not possible to adapt or change well then that is when difficult conversations need to be had and question marks over whether that particular member of staff should continue*
- cb *I would be setting the agenda for my key stage and we are going to be discussing this and this but the actions and outcomes from that are driven by them*
- ab *So input from different year groups would dictate the action*

What about your Monday morning meetings?

- ab *That's more for just information sharing really, it is kind of here is the diary for the week, here is what is needed to be done, these are the visitors coming in and out*

5.9.5 Structure, agency and stifling of dissent

It is suggested that, through making visible the discourses of how the participants talk about the practices they undertake it is possible to assert how they shape themselves in particular ways in relation to the discourse. In other words how the structure influences their own agency and stifles dissent and conflict.

How words pattern together what Gee (2011) refers to as co-locations, indicate formal or informal social language to achieve, for instance solidarity for a particular way of being within school, for example patterns of words taken from the HMI:

Regular progress meetings – results – projected to rise above average – robust school evidence

All co-locate to signal to the participants the activity and the situated identities they must adopt in such situations.

Similarly by making visible the lexical verbs referring to state it is possible to see how individuals are shaped to a particular way of being:

Teachers and leaders I met were well aware

Achieving high accountability and high morale

You have that trust that someone else is...

Nice to see them do it the way I would

Speaking in the first person ('I') is a means of building identity. For Gee (1999) it is the part of a sentence or clause that contains the verb which accompanies the 'I' statement that will indicate the reality being experienced within school, for example, cognitive I statements: I think, I know, I saw ecetera, or 'I' statements which indicate a desire or want, what Gee (1999:153) refers to as 'affective statements': Which when making visible the language-in-use of the headteacher demonstrates how he wants to be viewed:

I certainly saw

I would especially like

I want to see

Furthermore as previous discussed in Chapter 4 - content words belong to the main parts of speech and drawing from the interviews and cognitive maps it is possible to demonstrate that some words are used more often than others, for example,

achieve, accountability, monitoring, effective, etc. All making visible acts of compliance and agreement of ways of being:

db *Achieving high accountability and high morale*

I was impressed with what I saw achieved

In terms of my monitoring

Ab *We must have effective teaching and learning*

To be an effective leader

When speakers want to identify the speaker or the person spoken about in grammar they use pronouns. Furthermore, pronouns may be used to indicate solidarity and consistency of messages in these instances practices that ensure an acceptance of the role of the senior leadership team within the settings to achieve the vision:

ab *I do think we as the leaders we are all approachable..*

cb *They need to monitor erm aspects of school life...*

The shift to personal pronouns indicates agreement of shared message of ways of being within school, even if they are expressed in fear;

db *I have seen what has happened to someone who hasn't put their heart and soul in and haven't prepared to change*

db *They need to inspire the healthy fear, ultimate respect, always to be mindful that this is your job.*

What is distinctive from the language-in-use of the participants above is how the contrast with the comments below. What is distinctive with regards to the comments above is the nominalization of compliance, the structures in both schools were aided by the culture of the perpetuation of a particular way of being, a particular identity that was need to be accepted within school and the prevalent culture of the absence of dissent. The comments below hint at the solitary instances of conflict and protest.

lwa *As it happens with such a strong leader, it takes someone equally strong minded to challenge him and I don't think there is anyone on the management team who would do so*

lwa *There is not much advice. There is no encouragement to expand your career but some people are supported more than others.*

dw *A timetable of classroom observations and book/planning scrutiny ensured people aimed to up their game especially*

when it was combined with a number of staff leaving to avoid undergoing capability procedures. They were always followed by face-to-face feedback sessions with ht. On more than one occasion I witnessed staff in tears following them.

5.9.6 Summary

The central theme of the influence of the headteachers was a recurring theme within the participants' language-in-use. They drew on figurative language demonstrating strength and determination. Their talk illustrated how through relations of power it was decided who would participate within activities and who would be listened to. Their discourse elicited a desire on the headteacher's part to be seen to be offering autonomy whilst at the same time maintaining control. As Willmott (1994, cited in Huzzard & Spoelstra, 2011:94) 'plants, like those led, are seen as infinitely malleable and expendable' the respondents were very precise in how opposition was dealt with in the case study schools.

What follows are the participants talk of how they shaped their practice and their identities by the symbols and stories they created with each other as they experienced the leadership practice within school.

5.10 The theme of Culture and Identity-Work

Introduction

On a daily basis, participants shaped their identity through their everyday activities and made their positions meaningful to themselves and to others. Across the interviews, it is possible to identify linguistic resources, particular attributes which they use in their language-in-use such as narratives and story-telling, metaphors, symbolism, and grammatical structures which help reveal the implicit or explicit theories they hold of the cognitive models they apply to their own identities in school. Moreover, through analysis of their talk, their actions and how these shape meaning will be made visible through the discourses of daily life in school. The discourses of the participants will be a useful lens to understand not just words but what actions the interviewees enacted to display their beliefs and practices of ways of being within their schools.

5.10.1 Sensemaking through story-telling

Leaders, like all individuals, make meaning through story-telling. By looking at the following extract it is possible to see how *ab* shapes meaning about his experiences, shaping his actions and also shaping his identity. By looking at the following

narrative it is possible to see how the deputy head tells a story about his way of being as a means of connecting himself and others to the organizational culture and practice:

There is an element, you know I have always lived my life in that way, you know, I was brought up an Altar Boy. I am not religious now but do live my life in a Christian ethos and everything else. It is always something that I have had and even under the old regime if I was told something that I didn't like, I had to stick to my own personal values. Like I said Ht has had difficult conversations with me and I have acted upon them and turned them around.

His rhetoric is one of an upstanding individual who believes in what he is doing, has strong morals, and is willing to stand up for them. In the past, with his symbolism of the 'old regime', a figurative phrase, he is alluding to a former headteacher not with deference but with an allusion to what the phrase represents, an authoritarian administration. Now, however, he is making a connection between Ht and the high status and moral ground that he believes him to be worthy of, and that as a result he warrants the reprimand as he believes he has to change his actions in order to live up to the present high standards. In addition, through use of the parenthetical device 'you know', he has assumed a solidarity that this is a taken-for-granted assumption of the present discourse within school that I as the researcher also share and understand.

Moreover, when asked about what techniques he employs when talking to others within school about actions that need to be carried out, it is interesting to see in the extract below that he explains by making connections and pulling on individuals' feelings and emotions. Drawing on such lexical functions as 'we have a staff', his alignment with the headteacher is evident with the use of 'we' as opposed to alignment with his team in 'we need to do this'. He is distancing himself as a strategic lead driving forward the school's vision. His nominalization that the staff are 'on board' leaves little room for those who are not, as he pulls on their emotions by expanding upon a narrative of the 'impact of' their actions if they do nothing.

That action of getting Year 6 up, that came from Ht and it was to myself and then me to them but I would be that regular driving force and kind of strategic, 'let's have a look at how things are going here, right we need to tackle grammar, we need to tackle etcetera.' To be fair we have a staff that are very much on board, there wasn't a blocker or a resistance to it but if there were again, if I was say about the data of the boys versus girls writing for instance, I would say this is something that we need to discuss and the impact of not doing so would be this –

it's about delivering that message out to make sure that you are an ear to the staff as well.

In this narrative, ab is engaging in identity-work; he is the main character in this story and *'the driving force'*, as he sees himself, behind the school's vision, ensuring he is *'delivering that message out'* – a message given to him as an action by the headteacher. In addition, he positions himself as a supportive leader who *'make(s) sure'* that he is available to support others in carrying out these directives.

5.10.2 Creating stories with a moral plot as central to the school ethos

One way in which the senior leadership team engaged with the practices of leadership within the case study sites was to create narratives with a moral plot. These narratives were centred on reasoned action, demonstrating the common good for the children and school. Applying the linguistic device of figurative language makes visible the rationality of school actions for the achievement of school outcomes, as the following statements illustrate. The nominalizations of value, tools and development are patterned together to reveal the discourse within school, the norm of what is accepted as what is right and wrong, that outcomes for children are used as a tool, all interweaved with the concept of improvement and value:

cb *I have mentioned values in terms of vision but I suppose values – having erm sort of beliefs of what is right and wrong. It is kind of outcomes for children that is a useful tool. It can be data attainment and progress, are children getting value out of their day? Developing them as a person but also in today's generation it must also be about Literacy and Numeracy levels.*

This discourse is evident within other discourses across the data where participants are talking about what their values are within school. It is all about *'having faith, belief in people'*, the respondents aligning themselves with providing good educational opportunities and developing pupils:

eb *You have to be on your toes and you have to remember why you are here and why we are all here is because of the children and a good leader in a Primary School puts the children first.*

Having a collective purpose, in contrast to not buying into the values and vision and not sharing the collective purpose, is rooted in fear. Having *'a healthy fear'* is an accepted norm:

db *I have seen what has happened to someone who hasn't put their heart and soul in and haven't been prepared to change*

Respondents therefore take up or have enacted upon them different subject positions. The taken-for-granted, putting '*your heart and soul in*' equates to success and achievement, whilst not doing so is not achieving the vision, the desired outcomes. Furthermore, not being willing to change will result in not being an effective practitioner, and there is no place in school for someone who is not willing to embrace or have the belief – as the deputy head believes and promotes it, '*backing the right horse*' (ab). The headteacher positions himself as a determined character: '*I think drive and determination is my mantra as a leader*' (headteacher). The discourse of the headteacher was to be specific about practice, about what was acceptable or not. The accepted norm within this discourse was that group-held norms were acceptable, whilst individual ones were not: '*I am absolutely determined there are no hiding places in school*' (headteacher).

In addition, using the linguistic device of repetition, the following words illustrate the significance of the values as held within the schools: '*empathy*', '*relationships*', '*trust*', '*approachable*', '*family*' and collective plural action-statements such as '*we expect a lot*', '*we did this*', '*are we being successful*' all make visible the thinking, acting what is valued in school. Relationships and family values pattern together to achieve success.

5.10.3 Inspirational and transformational

Across the interviews, the participants drew upon charismatic and inspirational discursive resources to interpret their discourses of their view of an effective headteacher. Thinking aloud when drawing her cognitive map, db was explicit in her thinking: '*I should put the qualities together so erm the strength and steel and the inspiration go together*'. Together with her repeated words of '*respect*', '*inspire*', '*valued*' and her cognitive I-statements, '*I think they need to be well organized*', '*I think they need to compartmentalize*', '*I think they need to have a clear vision*' as in her view they need to '*juggle a lot of balls in the air at the same time*', these all signal the importance she places on a headteacher who is able to be not only inspirational, but transformational:

db *They need to be inspirational because if you can't bring all your colleagues, teaching staff and non-teaching staff on board then you are not going to get anywhere, you need a team and leaders of teams need to be inspirational and transform us into what they want.*

5.10.4 Using sensemaking to create identities

The linguistic device of analysing what respondents choose to talk about within the main clauses of their sentences indicates the significance of what they are trying to build, in this instance the identities they are creating and what those identities signify:

- db *I try to lead by example, I certainly put children first*
- eb *I haven't got his steel and strength and that is why I am not sat in his chair.*
- nb *I feel we go way above what we have to do because we do it for the children*
- fb *I am thinking of eb, a very inspirational person who goes that extra 150 miles*
- gb *I think in our school now it is a very collective thing.*

As shown above, the respondents use a mixture of linguistic devices within their main clauses, such as a mixture of cognitive and affective I-statements and figured language to position not only themselves but also those they hold in esteem.

Similarly, using the linguistic feature of subordinate clauses, it is possible to make visible what is considered assumed and taken-for-granted understanding of what 'effective' subject positions within school look like.

- db *We had people who wanted to get out the door at 4pm because they didn't care.*

The assumption is that now the staff do care, and this relative clause also signifies the situated meaning within school that in order to be effective and to care you need to do that extra work, 'I am thinking of eb, a very effective person who goes that extra 150 miles'.

Moreover, within the subordinate clauses below it is possible to make visible what is being made significant and how this contributes to building identities within school. The significance of monitoring and guidance, ability to see the bigger picture and the acknowledgement that the senior leadership team, 'they', decided who to earmark for development because of the taken-for-granted assumption within school that, as the deputy head points out, 'It's not about what they have rather what they are missing.' The respondents, through their language-in-use, built not only their own identity of striving to be a more effective teacher, but were in acceptance of the

leadership practices of monitoring and guiding their practice for the better. In turn, through their talk they are building identities of those who are in positions of leadership, it is 'they' who know what is required to improve an individual's practice.

- bb *They need to monitor erm aspects of school life to make sure that things are running smoothly so that we all know we are on the right path, so that I know I am doing well.*
- eb *I think it is important to develop people because they have that power.*
- fb *Their ability to look at their class data because the analysis of that helps put together action plans to improve the school.*

5.10.5 Summary

Participants within school created stories and narratives to organize their actions and to help them in interacting with others, in the process, aiding them in their identity-work. Their stories were of moral plots and an ethos of caring, family devotion, reinforcing the image of wanting the best for the children and themselves in terms of results, professionalism and development.

Their sensemaking not only aided them in the creation of their own identities as they experienced the leadership activities within school but they were actively co-creating the identity of the headteacher. An identity as one of a transformational and charismatic character who through their language-in-use demonstrated how they believed he wanted the best for the school. Furthermore how he knew how to achieve this and how that was acceptable.

Guided by the analysis, interpretation and explanation of my data and the development of the themes of pivotal role of the headteacher; leadership activity; commodification of education; relations of power and the theme of culture and identity-work what is presented next is a discussion of these themes and my contribution through this empirical study to shedding a discursive light on the leadership that was experienced within two primary school settings.

6. Chapter 6: Discussion, Implications and Contribution

Introduction

The intention throughout this study was to collect data in an interpretive manner through the means of cognitive mapping and interviews. Therefore I have attempted to 'read' the cognitive mapping process and the interviews for what they mean, or rather what I may infer from both and not just the interview interaction itself. The overall aim of the study was 'shedding a discursive light on distributed leadership and the constraints of context'.

The preceding chapter presented the findings, the interpretation and explanations from the case study sites, through which key issues and discourses emerged from the data. This chapter draws together that analysis, drawing on the literature as reviewed within this study to help inform the analysis and discussion. Within this chapter the implications of the five discourses and the study's claims to academic contribution made clear.

This study collected oral discourse from a range of stakeholders within two primary school settings for the purpose of conducting a critical analysis of the phenomenon that is leadership. It was evident within the case study sites that leadership was suffused with values, beliefs, routines and practices: 'leadership [does] not occur in a vacuum' (Jackson and Parry, 2008:62), it is relational and context specific (Jepson, 2009). The study explored the dynamic interaction of the different levels and types of context from the physical to the symbolic. By focussing on the discourse as a unit of analysis, it was possible to make visible the discourses deployed by the stakeholders when they talked about the leadership they were experiencing, through which they then enacted their identities within school.

To clarify, the aim of the research was to shed a discursive light on distributed leadership and the constraints of context. In so doing, I have so far addressed the following research questions:

What are the contextual factors that shape discourses of educational leadership?

What does the discursive analysis reveal of how stakeholders talk about ways of becoming in the leadership they are experiencing within a socially situated practice?

In order to address these questions, the methods of interview and cognitive mapping were used. As a result, it was possible to look at leadership as a discursive practice within the schools by critically analysing what was said, by whom, how and what happened as a result. This involved analysing what the participants spoke about, what they valued, and what claims they made about everyday knowledge as everyday participants within the school community.

A discourse perspective therefore provided the possibility of researching practice through studying the language-in-use (Gee, 2005). The focus within this analysis was on how discourse was put together and what was gained by its construction. This highlighted that language does not just describe things, it constitutes reality (Wittgenstein, 1953); and the reality it constitutes has important implications individually, in terms of who can speak within a socially organized setting and politically in terms of what might be said and by whom in terms of the distribution of social good (Gee, 2011).

This research was influenced by two particular approaches to discourse analysis, a 'practice approach' and a 'critical' approach (Lawless et al., 2011). By looking at effective leadership as discursive practice, a means of critically analysing how participants 'talked-about' their practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991), an understanding was achieved of what was being said, by whom, how, and what happened as a result. According to a critical approach to discourse analysis, the focus was on investigating patterns in language-in-use and related practices. From this perspective, discourses helped to determine social practices within the educational settings (Gee, 1999).

The main focus of this research was on the local meanings and local situatedness of leadership within two primary school settings (Fairhurst, 2011). By exploring 'the mundane, immediate, instrumental, and material aspects of organizational life where leadership action is concerned with making and managing meaning' in everyday life of school (ibid. 2011:497) this research contributes to the still underexplored area of discourse studies in not only leadership but leadership within the educational sector.

My intellectual puzzle concerned the effectiveness of leadership in two primary school case study sites and in understanding how contextual factors shape that leadership. Therefore, in trying to understand the world in which educational researchers operate, this study was conducted within a range of beliefs about the ways in which education research can be understood as practice (Mason, 2002).

My ontological position is one in which social phenomena are created from the perceptions and consequent actions of social actors. Because of constant interaction, these social phenomena are in a constant state of revision. Thus the participants perceived different situations in many different ways as a consequence of their own views of the world. The different interpretations they had will therefore affect their actions and the nature of their social interactions with others. As social actors, they not only interacted with their environment of the school, but made sense of it through their own interpretations of events and the meanings that they drew from those events and from the wider societal discourses that they were part of. Within this study, I did not see them as part of an objective reality, but rather of a subjective reality where I needed to understand the effects of their motives, actions and intentions in a meaningful way to fully appreciate the meaning making of leadership within their schools.

The research questions stemmed from a desire to understand what shapes leaders' discourses within a primary setting and how this impacts on an individual's way of becoming within school. More often than not, leadership in schools is learnt by on-the-job experiential learning, through a cluster network of school leaders and by adopting a mandated model of leadership. My experience has taught me that this leadership varies incredibly even within the same socioeconomic environments. My conceptual framework was built around assembling data, evidence and argument which was used to generate ideas and propositions. My strategy was to operationalize what teachers articulate as 'effective' with regard to what leadership feels like and how they observe it, know it and build their identities as teachers and teacher leaders around it.

Education, educational research, and the social sciences present a very complex set of interrelated issues. The way individuals build their relationships within organizations, and the different ways they find of participating in the social groups they find themselves part of within those organizations, is relational, time specific and related to common frames of reference (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014). This study was interested in the conscious and unconscious ways of how things work and why in particular contexts and adopted an ongoing process in thinking about them. This is a further reason why the methods of cognitive mapping and conducting semi-structured interviews were used to try to understand 'the richness, depth, nuance, context (specific) ... complexity of the socially situated practice of school' (Mason, 2002:4). It is for these reasons that Gee's interconnected framework was

also utilized, as it provided a means, a set of 'thinking devices' with which to investigate how contextual factors shaped discourses of leadership within the settings (Gee, 2005:9).

This study was interested in analysing language-in-use as it was fully 'integrated with all the other elements that go into social practices "ways of thinking or feeling, ways of manipulating objects or tools, ways of using non-linguistic symbols systems" ways of being' (Gee, 2005:9). So by investigating the language-in-use it was possible to see how individuals built reality to see what sort of relationship their language was seeking to enact with one other. It was also possible to see what was being communicated as to what was taken to be 'normal' within the study settings and to make visible what roles were being constructed in different situations and whose interest was being served and why. In other words, how language-in-use helped to constitute their organizational life (Cunliffe, 2013).

Throughout the study therefore I was aware of the epistemological implications of choosing the methods of cognitive mapping and semi-structured interviews. In addition during the data gathering process I was conscious that the two methods chosen would enable the participants, as much as possible, to reveal their social experiences of leadership within school. Cognitive mapping as a method enhanced this understanding because relationships between concepts are demonstrated by propositions which are produced by the linking of two or more concepts by words written by the respondents which form meaningful statements (Huff, 1990). Participants within the cognitive mapping process were left to talk 'free associate' (Mason, 2002:64) through their specific experiences without structured questioning from myself and each spoken thought as they drew their maps was captured through the recording process. Furthermore, the process of drawing the cognitive maps supported the participants in the fluidity as a 'thinking device' (Gee, 2005).

With regards to the interviews participants were asked to talk through their leadership that they were experiencing within their setting to ascertain their reasoning or judgements with regards to certain situations, my aim throughout the process, both ontologically and epistemologically was to ask situational questions (Mason, 2002). The data collected from both methods as demonstrated in Chapter 6 illustrates how participants in school constructed leadership in situ (Kelly, 2008).

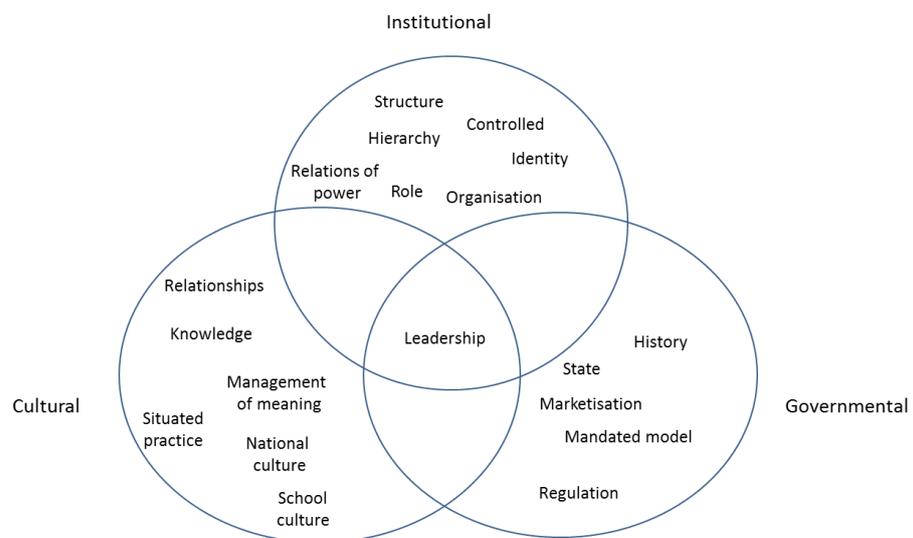
By recording the process, additional rich data was captured. These mental representations, these Cognitive models, are shown below within each of the five themes.

In addition, the method of semi-structured interviewing appropriately aided the data collection by asking the participants questions, and listening to them ‘to ensure that the relevant contexts are brought into focus so that situated knowledge can be produced’ (Mason, 2002:62). For this study, leadership was not an ‘it’ from which to abstract behaviours and tasks, but was considered a relationship that could only be understood through the experiences and the ways of being of the individuals within the case study schools.

6.1 Contextual factors

The model in Figure 6.1 aided the investigation because it presented a framework for conceptualizing and understanding the dynamic, interactional nature of contextual influences on leadership within the two schools. Contextual factors for the purposes of this study has been defined as being on three levels, institutional (relations of power, identity, structure, power and influence etcetera), cultural (ways of knowing, the assumptions, school culture etcetera) and governmental (policy, regulation, marketization, historical etcetera) (see p60).

Figure 6.1 Dynamic interaction of contextual factors on leadership



Interaction of contextual factors on leadership

Figure 6.1 illustrates these different types of context on three different levels within a school environment and how they exist in relation to each other. How they are interactional and dynamic and how they created 'different and continuously changing specific contexts for individuals and consequently exerting different influences on leadership at different points in time' (Jepson, 2009:39). Osborne et al. (2002) concur that leadership and its effectiveness are dependent upon context. For them, 'leadership is embedded in the context. It is socially constructed in and from a context where patterns over time must be considered and where history matters' (ibid.:798). Moreover, Fairhurst (2009:1608) argues that 'leadership actors can ... be passive receptors of meaning ... as much as they can be transformative agents'. They not only co-create the contexts which they and others are part of, they also 'shape any other social reality' such as 'identity or legitimacy', which can itself constantly change dependent on how the context is being constructed through discourse (ibid.).

As highlighted in Chapter 2 the preponderance of leadership theories in the 20th century were focused on the individual leader typically defined by the traits, qualities and behaviours and consequently theory engagement with followers (Bennett, 2003; Schedlitzki and Edwards, 2014). As a result this particular focus has stifled other cultural and institutional contexts resulting in a scarcity of empirical research exploring further 'what the leadership context is (and) how different contextual factors interplay and affect and are affected by leadership' (Schedlitzki and Edwards, 2014:84).

The contextual influences explored in Chapter 5 represent different but interlinked characteristics of underlying conceptual influences interacting on the context of leadership. On the basis of this study it is feasible to argue that the influences of institutional and cultural contexts are strongly affected by the governmental context such as managerialism, mandated model of leadership etcetera however this latter context does not wholly outweigh the other two, as aspects of the immediate institutional context such as relations of power and the pivotal role of the headteacher has an ubiquitous presence within the settings.

Whilst the immediate institutional context has an all pervasive influence on individuals understanding of leadership the influence of this context is itself a product and shaped by the other contextual factors such as relationships, leadership activities, marketisation of education, management of meaning etcetera. It could be concurred therefore that there is an interaction postulated to exist between the

cultural, institutional and governmental contextual factors on leadership and that these contextual factors act on an individual's context and as such influence their understanding and experience of how leadership is enacted. For Gunter (2001:9), 'a teacher does not create, develop, communicate and transmit knowledge separate from context ... and practice is linked to issues of power, status, recognition and value judgments about worth and validity'. Foucault (1970) encapsulates this, arguing that leadership only exists within the discourses about it.

Foucault's 'technologies of the self' (Gillies, 2013) provides an additional appropriate lens with which to offer explanation of how these contextual factors act on an individual's context. 'Technologies of the self are practices which individuals undertake in order to shape themselves in particular ways in relation to discourse' (ibid:15). This may be through acts of compliance (as illustrated in Chapter 5 of this study) or in acts of resistance (as demonstrated in 5.9.6) that may be required of individuals to be 'discursively included' which are in themselves power relations (ibid.).

Discipline according to Foucault is only one way of governing individuals a more subtle way but just as powerful are technologies of the self (Gillies, 2013). Subjectivation therefore can be achieved through either. Cunliffe, (2014) argues that subjectivity is where discourses of power meet and organise identity and which may result in conflict when we either conform or resist. 'Nominalization is central to disciplinary power and is discursively established' (Gillies, 2013:16). Discourses establish what is acceptable, true and legitimate and therefore become norms within an organisation. This is what then allows for what Foucault terms as 'dividing practices' where what is abnormal is rejected. It is through this discourse that 'individuals become normalized so that they see themselves and others (solely) in the light of that discursive perspective' (cited in ibid:16).

The contribution therefore of a conceptual framework for the context of leadership as explored within this study helps to understand the interactions of different levels and types of context and how they act to frame an individual's context and their technologies of self within which leadership is understood and co-created.

By drawing upon Foucault's work on discourse (1972) it has been possible to address the research questions above. The Foucauldian school of thought sees a discourse as a particular way of looking at and structuring the world. As discussed in Chapter 5, by adopting a Foucauldian critique, together with Gee's (2005; 2009;

2011) methodological framework, it was possible to question the basis for the assumptions and norms of educational leadership in school, as well as examining the ways in which individuals within school were both constructed and shaped by the discourse.

This chapter now presents a synopsis of the study's significant findings in relation to the literature, the aims of the study and its research questions. Five discourses emerged from the research which are discussed next. They are:

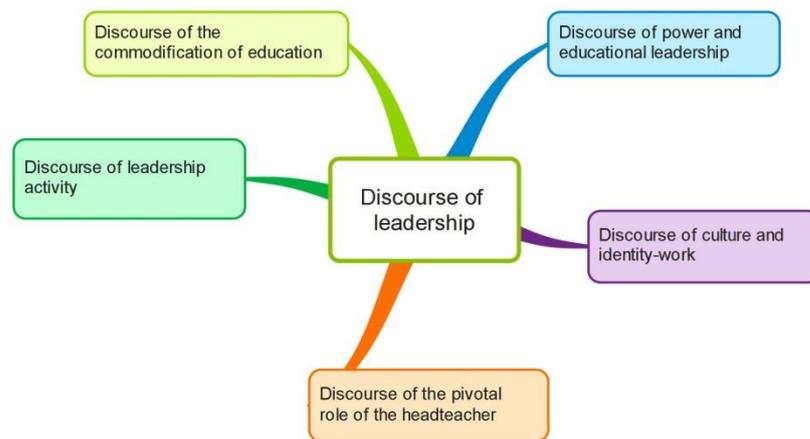


Figure 6.2 The five discourses of leadership

The discourse of leadership is prevalent in the small details of the five discourses which emerged from the data and addresses the second research question of how stakeholders talk about ways of becoming in the leadership they are experiencing in terms of the social construction within a socially situated practice.

6.2 Discourse of the pivotal role of the headteacher

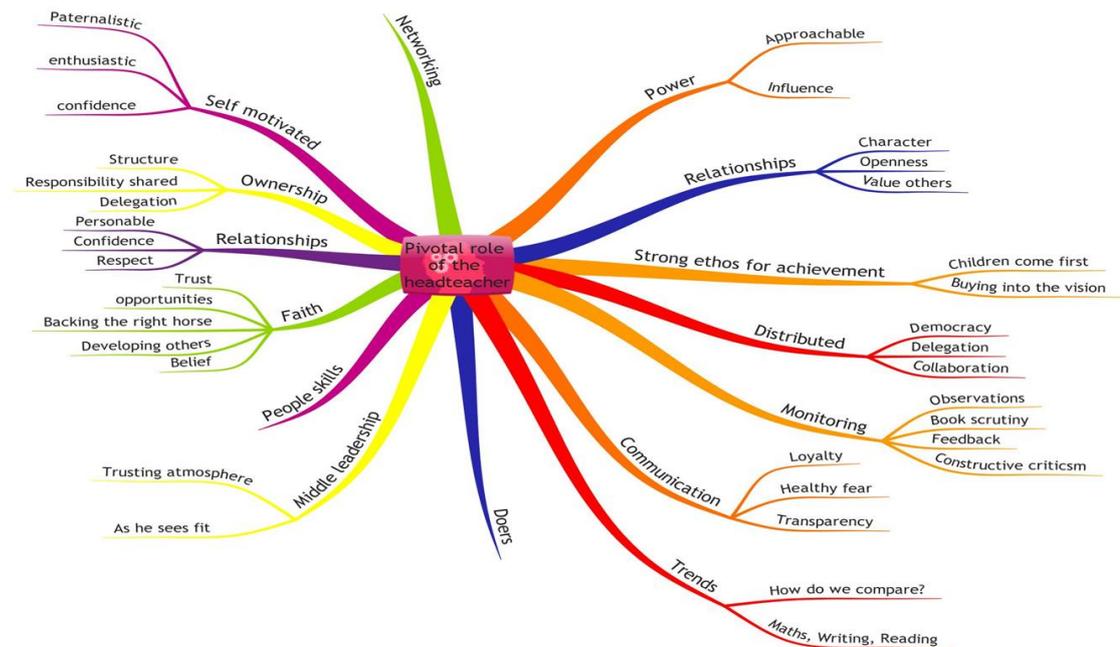


Figure 6.3 Pivotal role of the headteacher cognitive map

What was made visible within the case study sites as illustrated above in Figure 6.3 was how the participants framed their understanding of what constitutes leadership for them within their schools. Identifying the pivotal role of the headteacher and his influence in that process, reflecting the current trend in the literature (Yukl, 2002; 2010). This was exemplified throughout the research, when on numerous occasions the headteacher commented, when asked about sharing leadership, that he was confident in his own influence. Throughout the data it was evident that the headteacher used language to get recognized as engaging in certain practices of leadership. In other words, what he was saying and doing enacted the practice of leadership. For example, when the headteacher was communicating the school vision, the respondents were unambiguous that the headteacher's actions emulated that of the school vision of *'nurturing, caring approachable', 'listenening ear', 'it is quite important that we live not just show family values'*.

Conversely and as clearly articulated, the opposite of caring and nurturing was also revealed: *'got it absolutely perfect...his and our expectations are so very high',* and *'they see what I do and what I want', 'constant reinforcement of expectations', 'there are no hiding places'*. A certain monitoring process illustrated this. It involved the collecting of samples of books from each class teacher for the heads of key stages, together with the headteacher, to carry out a *'book scrutiny'* to assess whether the

pupils were progressing and reaching the standards and academic levels they perceived to be appropriate.

Is this a book scrutiny because they spoke and acted in a particular way, or are they speaking and acting in that way because it was a book scrutiny and a monitoring exercise, understood and modelled by the headteacher as best practice? The practice of book scrutiny monitoring meetings gives 'meaning' and 'purpose' to their language in the meetings and their language in the meetings 'enacts' the book scrutiny meeting and makes it valid and acceptable as a process of monitoring and evaluating practice as a leader.

As *context* within this study takes its meaning from the Latin noun and verb for putting together and weaving, it is noticeable throughout the findings how individuals talk about the central role and influence of the headteacher and how his authority is ever present, inextricably woven into establishing practices and goal setting within the settings.

It was the headteacher who appointed and earmarked individuals for promotion within school. He had the ultimate responsibility for doing so, and as a result he set the parameters for staff to engage with each other and for developing relationships and regard for each others' abilities. It was acknowledged throughout both schools that the headteacher set the standards as the acceptable norm, '*reminding people*' and setting '*expectations*'. Through the leadership practice of feedback and monitoring, he was creating patterns of influence as the pivotal role that permeated everyone's practice. Furthermore, individuals relied upon his authorization to act, and then only within agreed strictures.

The case study headteacher was a graduate of the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) who had taken the National Professional Qualifications for Senior and Middle leaders. He also encouraged his SLT to undertake the same postgraduate qualification. As a result, he was in a position to be fully conversant with the policy discourse framework of educational leadership within the Primary Sector. Moreover, he could be regarded as a rational individual who logically approached situations by framing and reframing the issue, searching for alternatives and judging the impact of changing the course of action. He did this through the process of reflecting-in-action, and, as Cunliffe (2014:73) argues, leaders who take a rational approach are constantly 'engaging in a reflective conversation and

constructing an understanding of the situation using a repertoire of personal experience and situational knowledge.’

Both his and his senior leadership team’s understandings and knowledge, therefore, had been framed and underpinned by postgraduate study with the NCSL, collaboration with local cluster school networks, through previous teaching and leadership roles within the sector and through policy discourse. What is more, they often used the terms ‘leadership’ and ‘management’ interchangeably in both schools. Moreover, it was evident that there was little need for distinction between leadership and management because within the schools the talk about both was seen to have an ‘intimate connection’ and ‘a great deal of overlap’ for motivating and giving a sense of purpose to individuals (Fidler, 1997:26): ‘*Mr H. has got it absolutely perfect, I do think that his and our expectations are so very high*’ (cb). In addition, the data suggests that both schools adopted an understanding of leadership and management as being intertwined and inseparable (Jackson and Parry, 2008).

Both schools were committed to a distributed perspective of leadership whilst also sharing the discourse that the headteacher was the main source of leadership. In both schools, this agreed commitment to a distributed perspective was as a result of a top down initiative resulting from an ‘*inspirational*’ (respondents ‘talk’) and charismatic leader (Weber, 1864-1920) who often used expressive language to communicate (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996) and who commanded respect through his charisma, resulting in commitment from staff, who sometimes went beyond the norm, demonstrating, in Yukl’s (1999:294) phrase, ‘self-sacrifice’ as they ‘imitate[d] the leader’s behaviour’. In return, the headteacher showed empathy to staff needs whilst understanding external threats, constraints and opportunities (Conger and Kanungo, 1998).

The headteacher was able to rationalize (Cunliffe, 2014) the need to take not only a distributed perspective, but a strategic lead in executing a range of processes and values in order to fulfil his vision for the schools. This was achieved through multifaceted relationships and interactions with staff (Spillane et al., 2001; Harris, 2014) which suggested interdependency (Harris, 2004) as teachers were ‘collectively guiding and shaping instructional and institutional development’ (ibid.:20). Staff were very clear about the direction that he wished the school to follow and how they were going to get there (Senge, 2006). Solidarity towards to this end was achieved through staff pulling together and focussing on teaching and

learning (Torrance, 2013), and '*effective teaching*' was the taken-for-granted assumption, '*really working on those things that will ... make the biggest difference*' (ht). This was all achieved through staff meetings, CPD, professional development targets from the review process and relentless adherence to the school improvement plan. Resulting in a narrow focus upon efficiency and effectiveness (Gunter, 2013), with no room for dissent.

The headteacher's influence extended not only to controlling the sharing of leadership within the schools, he also quality assured the process and demarcated clear restrictions as to what was accepted as '*clear expectations*' for both his senior leadership team and consequently staff.

What is presented next is the discourse of leadership activity that participants 'talk' about as they experience the leadership activity in their ways of being in their everyday roles within school.

6.3 The Discourse of Leadership activity

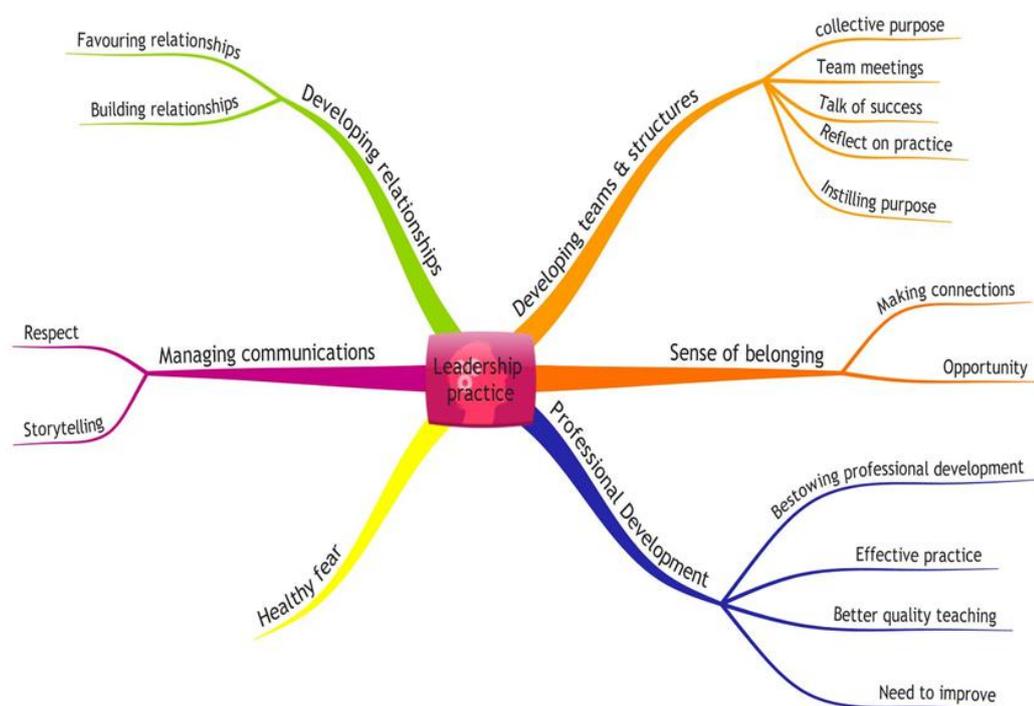


Figure 6.4 Leadership activity cognitive map

The discourses of leadership practice as illustrated in Figure 6.4 of the individuals within the case study sites were part of an active process involving negotiated meanings of activities that were being carried out. These activities included a variety of what Spillane (2005:144) refers to as ‘tools, routines and structures’, creating ways of being by developing teams, building relationships, and managing communications. The context, by framing individuals’ discourses within the case study sites, enabled or constrained the leadership activities.

Formally appointed leaders worked with colleagues to contribute to making things work, putting into practice school strategies and policies as identified in the school improvement plan. As a result, the discourse of a focused and collective effort ‘*prioritising on the most effective practices*’ (Headteacher) was a common-sense assumption resulting in developing a common purpose where staff took ownership, leading to them to take more shared responsibility for school priorities. Evident from the data were the consistent patterns of influence through distributed leadership of negotiated meanings that were socially constructed by all individuals that were made visible through team working, collegiality and collaboration. As Harris states

(2004:14) and Bennett et al. (2003) propose, 'the central task is to create a common culture of expectations around the use of individual skills and abilities ... maximizing human capacity within the organisation'. It was this combination of patterns of influence and activity that contributed to the school being labelled 'good' by Her Majesty's Inspector (Ofsted, 2014:1). The discourses of staff within the school community portrayed the headteacher as a source of encouragement and support, '*where Mr H. has it right is developing teams*', therefore the reliance was on individuals to take responsibility for school outcomes. Ironically, their ways of being, their discourse, suggested a model of distributed leadership, but the reality was a 'top-down' model (Harris, 2014).

Furthermore, within the case study sites the discourses adopted by individuals in terms of their talk, built relationships with each other and with groups were all for the purpose of leadership activity (Cunliffe, 2014). Within the schools the single voice of authority was one of a pre-established view. This was the discourse of an 'effective teacher', of being good enough to share best practice, committed to the shared vision: '*because Ht had the strength and steel to say to people you know this is what you need to do and you know if you aren't doing it you will have to go*' (db). This connection between individuals within school was perceived as a 'healthy fear' but could equally be construed as a 'manipulation of employees' (Cunliffe, 2014:42).

Moreover, just as language was used to build relationships, it also built leadership activities. Through making visible the language-in-use it was possible to see what leadership communications were seeking to get others to recognize as being important, relevant or accepted as the norm to fulfil the headteacher's key message, '*we had to improve quickly*'. this was particularly significant as the second case study school was categorized as 'requires improvement', and it was noted by Her Majesty's Inspector that 'leaders and managers have yet to ensure that consistently good and better teaching is bringing about good progress across all year groups' (Ofsted, 2013:1). It was imperative for the SLT to ensure that there was no deviation from policy, creating a requirement to be 'more specific about classroom practice' (Gunter, 2008:253). Thus, communication within school was not just a linear process, but a means to convey a message. The headteacher used figurative language and symbols of empathy with family values and morals as important aspects of communicating and providing guidance and direction for achievement of the message of his school vision and required outcomes. The head possessed a 'normative rationality', he had a strong sense of purpose based on what he believed

and what he considered to be good (Sergiovanni, 1991:326) – ‘the embodiment of purpose and the development of followership are inescapably moral’ (ibid.:323). Spirituality and moral stances have long since been part of the educational system, but since the advent of the Education Reform Act and the dominance of management principles within schools, Grace (2000:233) argues that ‘the discourse and understanding of management must be matched by a discourse and understanding of ethics, morality and spirituality’.

The headteacher within the case study sites provided direction and the ability to influence others to achieve goals as identified in the school improvement plan to secure chosen ends. The means by which these ends were achieved were through implementing changes with regard to individuals’ performance which would result in achieving valued school outcomes. By providing opportunities for individuals to develop their teaching practice, he was positioning himself as an authoritative figure who had an individual’s professional development as his main concern to achieve required outcomes. As a ‘growth-facilitator’ (Alvesson and Spicer, 2011:93), the headteacher along with the senior leadership team promoted a school-wide culture of building and sustaining school improvement where sharing of professional expertise (Harris, 2014) was encouraged and held in high regard.

This was all achieved through a purposeful programme of staff development spearheaded by the senior leadership team, who had themselves gone through their National College of School Leadership targeted training programmes (Gillies, 2013:53).

What is presented next is the discourse of commodification of education that participants ‘talk’ about as they experience the leadership activity in their ways of becoming in their everyday roles within school.

6.4 Discourse of commodification of education

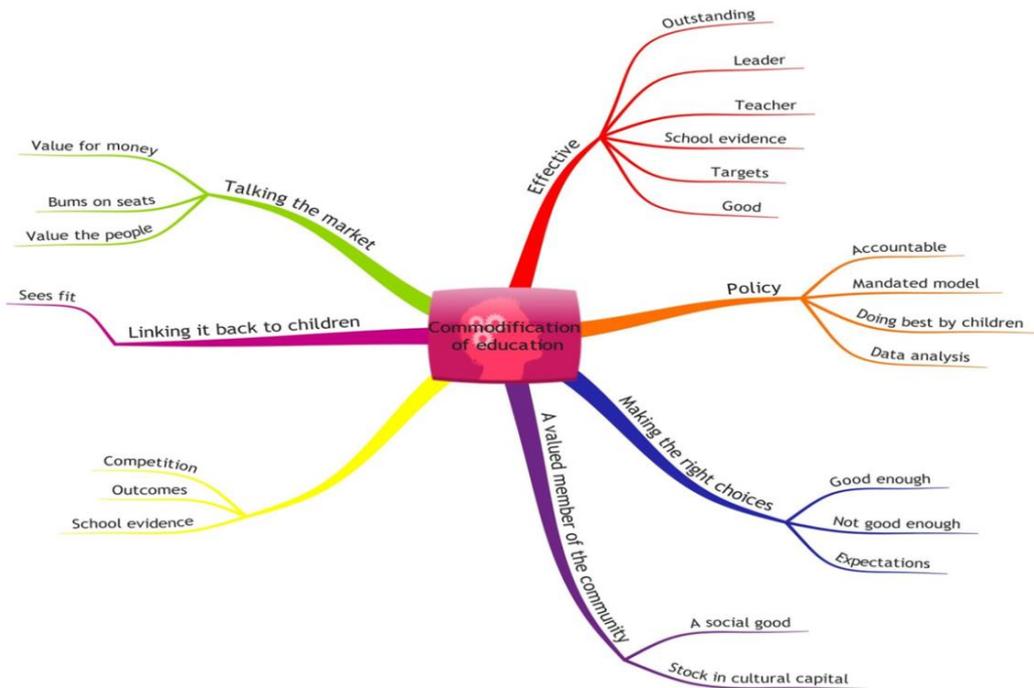


Figure 6.5 The commodification of education cognitive map

The discourse of market metaphors and the ways of talking was distinct among the participants from both schools as demonstrated in Figure 6.5. They regularly used terms such as ‘*outcomes*’, ‘*delivery*’, ‘*measured*’, ‘*effective*’, ‘*accountable*’ and ‘*buy in to*’. These discourses were strong indicators of the nominalizations of market rationalities in the schools and the cognitive models of the participants, who inextricably linked to and understood their schools in market terms.

Within the senior leadership teams of both schools, ‘*accountability*,’ ‘*strategic thinking*’ and ‘*data*’ were means to an end. Accountability and a focus on statistical data gathering were means of implementing management activities for the purpose of scrutiny and assessment of the wider school community. There was a school-wide focus on the identification of priorities, setting of personal targets, staff monitoring, performance and evaluation which were all linked to the school improvement plan.

This discourse model within the case study sites was one where participants themselves took personal responsibility for improving the school’s financial situation, expressed in terms of ‘*bums on seats*’, ‘*people are more accountable*’ and taking personal responsibility for ‘*tackling underperformance ... are children getting value for money?*’ this constitutes a way of being within school that epitomizes a neo-

liberal vision of the performing school (Gunter, 2001), part of a political rationality that sees school improvement as part of a competitive school market that can be measured, compared and held accountable (Gillies, 2013).

Not only did participants build connections between their reasoning and market thinking, but they also built connections between the community of practice within school and seeing being a member of it as a desired commodity, something to strive for. When asking the participants explicitly about what it meant to be part of the school community, it was evident that they saw being treated with respect and considered good enough to be 'one of the team' by those who were viewed as 'effective' and role models within the school as a goal worth aiming for, something of value within the community, leading to them valuing some practices over others, some individuals over others (Winkle-Wagner, 2010).

Furthermore, in both schools it was the accepted norm that certain staff were earmarked for continuing professional development to support and reinforce the school's goals and processes. By utilizing this form of influence, continuing professional development as a distribution of a social good was used in order to achieve results, and was also felt to have implications for the school's culture and ethos.

Within both schools, success really mattered and was celebrated frequently. The discourse model was one that if an individual as acted in line with what the headteacher or his senior leadership team professed was the correct course of action for their practice, then that would result in success both for the individual and for the children. Respondents considered being part of the group of outstanding leaders or teachers to be a status symbol – *'you use them', 'it is nice for staff to be recognized in that way'*.

These beliefs were based on the assumption that by 'belonging', by 'experiencing being part of the community' where others are mutually supportive of one another in becoming a better practitioner; by building mutually supportive relationships; by sharing good practice for quality teaching; individuals will be equipping themselves with *'what works well'* for *'achieving effective teaching and learning'* in school. Equipping themselves with what makes them effective either as a leader or teacher will ensure the school receives a 'good' or 'outstanding' in their assessment from the Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted). The headteacher will want to increase

the value of the schools' cultural capital and be proactive in the actions for achieving it.

Being '*effective*' and successful was stock in cultural capital for staff within the schools, and the 'skills, abilities, norms' in the field of practitioner were of value and therefore sought after (Winkel-Wagner, 2010:8). Bourdieu uses the metaphor of a card game in which 'cultural capital would be the cards that one could play in the game' (ibid.:8). In this instance, being '*well trained and well informed*' (db) and a successful part of the community were cards that individuals could play in school. These ways of being within school are embedded in new discourses that align other discourses of marketization in new ways, creating new hybrids: 'Discourses ... often influence each other in positive and negative ways, and ... sometimes breed with each other to create new hybrids' (Gee, 2005:7).

What is presented next is the discourse of relations of power that participants 'talk' about as they experience the leadership activity in their ways of being in their everyday roles within school.

6.5 Discourse of relations of power

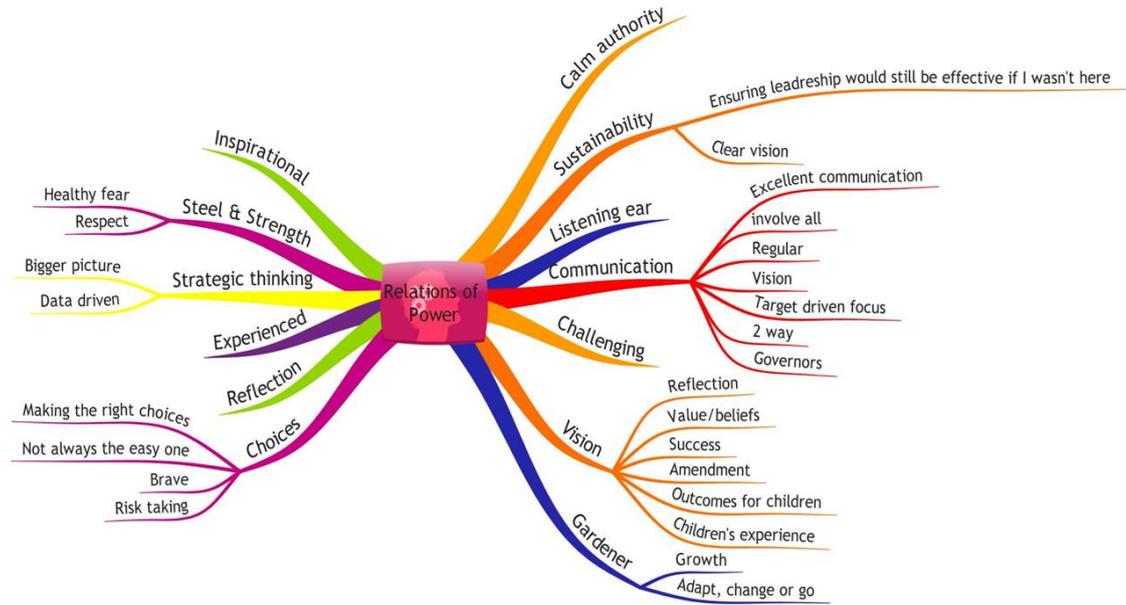


Figure 6.6 The relations of power cognitive map

It was the taken-for-granted assumption that the headteacher set the parameters for participation within distributed leadership and empowerment, despite participants' perception of working within a democratic environment as illustrated in Figure 6.6.

Individuals drew on the language of power and influence in their discourses of what was accepted as the norm to carry out their roles. They often drew on figurative language illustrating strength, growth, pruning and other such social and politically produced discourses. The leadership discourses did not describe what must be done, but rather constructed the context 'in such a way as to render it fit for the discourse' (Gillies, 2013:46). In other words, their discourses were full of hierarchical language such as '*allowing us*', '*evaluate*', '*effective*', '*monitor*'. It was the accepted norm that the headteacher and, in turn, the senior leadership team were responsible for direction and the setting of standards throughout the schools. Furthermore, the discourse, the ways of being in school, constructed the staff as objects for leadership attention by constructing school outcomes as measurable, quantifiable and therefore appropriate to demonstrate to external bodies the effectiveness of leadership and management within the schools (Gillies, 2013; Bennett, 2003; Gunter, 2001; 2007; 2008).

Moreover, when discussing feedback with middle managers, their talk was a discourse of accountability rather than one of interaction and discussion. The

discourse was one of achieving outcomes, but the actions portrayed performance management practices for meeting set targets: *'head of Year 6 with the kind of directive that results needed to improve in a very short period of time ... to get Year 6 results to a standard for Ofsted'* (ab).

The headteacher's reliance upon his senior leaders was evident across the data, however, he only once referred to distributed leadership (Spillane, 2006; Harris, 2004; 2014), and that was during his cognitive mapping when he was thinking aloud: *'my take on effective leader is how many leaders they leave behind. So I would say that distributed leadership is really important'* (Ht). When prompted as to what he meant by the term, his response was, *'it's just having faith in other people'*. His preference was to use the term *'my senior leaders'*. His discourse was one of leadership processes and actions and his talk was of 'achieving results through others' and supporting them as a whole in achieving goals for the organization (Hallinger and Heck, 2003:229). His discourse model was one of the recognition of what was required of a 'performing school' (Gunter, 2001:28).

To achieve the desired outcomes, the discourses of success, empowerment and achievement were commonplace within the settings. There was an illusion of autonomy, although the reality was one of the headteacher maintaining control through his senior leadership team (Alexander, 2004; Hatcher, 2005). To the individuals in both schools the outcome was inevitable because the evidence presented to them was *'this is why I have to do it, it is the right thing to do and the evidence shows that'*; to do otherwise would be counter-intuitive to good practice. Performance was monitored regularly through grading of lessons where, through performance management, the headteacher enabled individuals to move up the pay scale. On achieving the performance threshold, it was at the headteacher's discretion whether staff had progressed professionally over the academic year, 'a government-driven headteacher managerialism' (Hatcher, 2005:255).

What is presented next is the discourse of culture and identity-work that participants 'talk' about as they experience the leadership activity in their ways of being in their everyday roles within school.

6.6 Discourse of Culture and identity-work

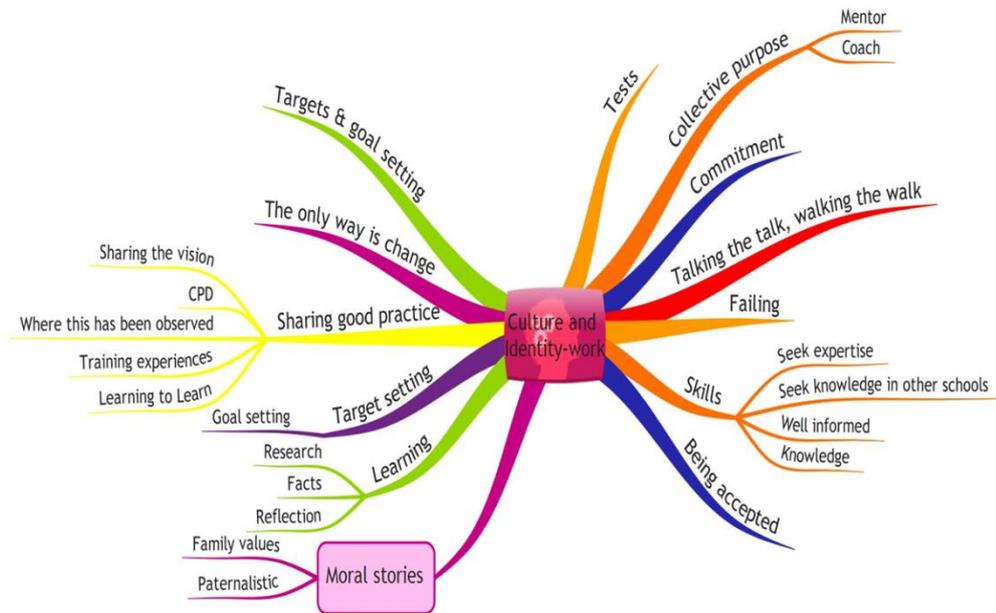


Figure 6.7 Culture and identity-work cognitive map

Within the schools, leaders made meaning through story-telling and sensemaking, turning situations that were understood by all into actions (Weick et al., 2005). One way in which the senior leadership team achieved this within the case study sites was by creating narratives with a moral plot. These narratives would be centred on reasoned action, demonstrating the common good for the children and school of an individual's practice. This was not about 'delimiting individuals' actions but rather creating a body that was useful and docile' (Bennett, 2003:52). Within both case study sites, it was evident that the senior leadership teams invested their time in developing values and desired ideas to persuade colleagues of the best way forward (Weick et al., 2005).

The headteacher achieved this by expressing an alignment and connection with family values, espousing trust in terms of a discourse of norms, values and goals around what 'any father would want for his children' (Streyer, 1998; Cunliffe, 2013). His discourse is one where families and schools create trajectories of achievement starting in the home through to a successful school and by association on to successful lives. His discourses of family are means of sharing ownership, developing a common purpose and leading teachers to take more shared responsibility. Furthermore, his ability and confidence to shift positions came naturally to him as he was in a constant flux, shaping his identity and those of his

staff members (Cunliffe, 2013) in a continuous process of meaning-making (Alvesson, 2011).

It was evident from the data that individuals within the schools aligned themselves with providing good educational opportunities and developing pupils to achieve their full potential. The focus was a collective purpose driven by the headteacher through his senior leadership team, making sense for participants not only of the present, but of the future, shaping their values and attitudes (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014). The headteacher positioned himself as a determined character – the main character (Sims, 2008), where the discourse within the school was that the group held norms of hard work and there was a taken-for-granted assumption of achieving the vision and outcomes. The discourses of expectation and success patterned together with family values and relationships to achieve a value set that was shared by all.

Their identity construction as part of this process was demonstrated by the discourse of a practitioner who sets high standards where professional practice is valued, where a community of practice is a contributing factor of ensuring the school's success. Therefore having a collective purpose (expectations and outcomes are high for everyone) is strongly associated with being and acting as an outstanding teacher or an 'excellent practitioner' (one who leads from the front and influences teaching). By contrast, not 'buying into the vision' or not sharing 'the collective purpose' is strongly associated with not being and not acting as an effective practitioner. Respondents therefore take up or have enacted upon them different subject positions, such as outstanding and good, equating to success and achievement, versus weak and a failure, resulting in being unsuccessful as practitioners.

In addition, the participants drew upon charismatic and inspirational discursive resources to interpret their views of what an effective leader looks like in school, often describing the leadership they were experiencing in terms of 'several inter-related influences' (Yukl, 1999:301). The participants talk was one of a continual repetition of a shared understanding of a situation along with persuasive talk that would lead to action. For instance, the deputy head's rhetoric was of an upstanding individual who believed in what he is doing, had strong morals and was willing to stand up for them. He supported the headteacher's high status and moral ground and believed him worthy of respect, and as a result believed he warranted the reprimands he received from the head. As a result, he was prepared to change his actions in order to live up to the prevalent high standards.

The deputy head, like other members of the senior leadership team, told stories about his way of being as a means of connecting himself and others to the organizational culture and practice (Cunliffe, 2013). They achieved this by making connections and pulling on individual's feelings and emotions with the taken-for-granted assumption that the staff now care enough to go *'that extra 150 miles'* (eb).

The senior leadership team were continually engaging in identity-work, often positioning themselves as the main characters in their stories and seeing themselves as *'the driving force'* supporting the school's vision, ensuring that they were *'delivering that message out'*, where the message was given to them as an action by the headteacher. Moreover, they positioned themselves as supportive middle leaders who *'make sure'* (ab) that they are available to support others in carrying out specific directives.

The 'hybrid' notion of the discourses within school was very evident (Gee, 2005:7). In other words, followers as well as leaders within the schools were members of other social groups and categories, yet the affiliation to the school community was very evident (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2014). Both schools had moved from a position of 'requires improvement' to one of 'good with outstanding qualities' as deemed by Ofsted (2011; 2014).

The significance of monitoring and guidance, ability to see the bigger picture and the acknowledgement that the senior leadership team – 'they' – decided who to earmark for development because the taken-for-granted assumption within school as the deputy head points out, *'It's not about what they have rather what they are missing'*. The respondents, through their language-in-use, built not only their own identity, of striving to be a more effective teacher, but accepted the leadership practices of monitoring and guiding their practice for the better. In turn, through their talk they were building identities of those who are in positions of leadership, *'they'* who know what is required to improve an individual's practice.

What follows is a discussion in which the third research question will be addressed of the implications of this analysis:

What are the implications of this analysis for the practice of leadership within schools?

6.7 Implications of this analysis for the practice of leadership within school

Introduction

The aim of this study was to shed a discursive light on the leadership that was experienced within two primary school settings and the constraints of context that shaped the discourses of leadership within those schools. Contextual factors have been defined as being on three levels: institutional, cultural and governmental. So using this framework as a sorting category for posing situated questions of the participants and Gee's (1999; 2005; 2011) interconnected one to explore and ask questions of the data and the taken-for-granted assumptions, it has been possible to garner an understanding of how these contexts interacted in framing an individual's understanding of the leadership they were experiencing and implications for their practice.

How the participants thought about leadership and how they described it impacted on their behaviours in relation to it. This focus on language has, however, been ignored by much leadership research (Shedlitzki and Edwards, 2014). So by studying leadership discourse within a broadly social constructionist framework it has been possible to rethink the concept of leadership through a critical social interpretive lens. What is illuminating and a focus for the implications of this analysis for the practice of leadership within the schools is how leadership is 'relational' (Cunliffe, 2014:xvii). Individuals within school had relationships within the same year groups, across year groups and across school, all with the common factor of engaging in relationships with middle and senior leaders. What is of interest for this study is the recognition that each individual is different and the acknowledgement of this on the impact of identity, culture and leadership-making. Table 7.2 provides a summary of the present perspectives which emerged from the data with alternative discursive perspectives of leadership as I have interpreted them from the discourse of the actors within school.

It is worthy of note that Table 6.1 is not an attempt to point to gaps in the literature or inconsistent findings, but instead focuses on localized issues and tensions in which negotiated meaning is constructed.

Table 6.1 Key differences between present perspectives and discursive perspectives of leadership

Talk about	Present perspective of leadership	Discursive perspective of leadership
Pivotal role of headteacher	Monologic	Dialogic
Power relations	Influence	Relational
Leadership activity	Pre-formed entity	State of becoming
Culture and Identity-work	Shape and maintain	Empowerment
Commodification of education	Government driven managerialism	Disrupt the assumed normality

6.8 Implications

6.8.1 Monologic versus Dialogic

The headteacher's understanding of 'conjoint activity' (Gronn, 2002), his shared leadership, was reciprocated by the staff in their trust of his courage and vision: 'Mr H. has got it in bucket loads' and 'staff trusting the leader and believing in them, they wouldn't perform as you would expect without it'. Within the case study sites, it was evident that the headteacher knew what was needed for the schools to succeed in a target-driven culture and therefore this normalized what was allowed and what was proscribed, which was discursively established (Gillies, 2013). As mentioned previously, he determined which individuals formed part of the distributed leadership within school. His influence and confident approach was autocratic as he was determined through his 'strength and steel' to achieve his vision for the schools; this could be as a result of needing to move both schools from positions of 'Satisfactory' (Ofsted, 2009) for the first case study site and 'Requires improvement' (Ofsted, 2013) for the second to a situation where both schools would be graded 'Good'.

The headteacher's steel and strength was driven by the direction that he wanted the school to travel in, his assertion that 'I think the most important thing is the direction you want to travel in terms of how external bodies will see effectiveness'. External bodies meant the Office for Standards in Education, and this quotation indicates the perceived need for a single voice of authority (Hatcher, 2005) conveying an ideology of the need to achieve effectiveness and create a common understanding with his staff of a pre-established view, a 'monologic discourse (which) rules out diverse meanings and silences other voices' (Cunliffe, 2014:44). Bakhtin (1986, cited in Cunliffe, 2014:44) argues that there is a need 'to focus on the dialogic aspect of language as living utterances – the two-way movement of dialogue between people

in particular moments and particular settings', hence moving away from monologic meaning making to a dialogical one and being open to diverse meanings and discussions.

Furthermore, the headteacher's language was masked by couching it in a values-laden discourse of family values, relationships and growth metaphors. He co-created within school an ethos of people-improver; however, 'the growth metaphor in leadership discourse tends to underplay the importance of the laws of nature in favour of a happy image of care, tenderness and authenticity' (Huzzard and Spoelstra, 2011:76). The focus within school was on achieving targets and the vision for instrumental ends: 'plants, like those led, (were) seen as infinitely malleable and expendable' (Willmott, 1994, cited in Huzzard and Spoelstra, 2011:94). Development was used by the headteacher as a means of eliciting desired behaviours. Story telling is acknowledged within the literature as useful (Hatch et al., 2005) in dealing with the complex nature of organisations. According to a discursive leadership lens, drawing on figurative language within an organization should be seen as an interactive meaning making process between leaders and followers and therefore open to scrutiny of its purpose.

6.8.2 Government driven managerialism versus disrupt the assumed normality

As previously identified within the study, the change in the relationship between teachers and the state and the re-modelling of teacher identities, whereby schools have been required to operate as competing business units (Hall and Gunter, 2013), has resulted in the commodification of education. This led to standardized testing systems, teacher and school performance assessment and the development of headteacher managerialism (Hatcher, 2005) that involved operating within a climate of 'a centrally imposed national curriculum together with an inspection regime which ensure(d) that teachers only operate(d) within given parameters' (Hammersly-Fletcher and Kirkham, 2007:428; Gunter, 2012). It is pertinent to question, therefore, how practitioners feel able to challenge their current practices and, given the ever-present challenges of a school day, to take time to think clearly about ways in which to enhance their work.

As a result, stakeholders struggled with contradictory organizational discourses since, as the 'outstanding teacher', they were required to focus on their teaching, be innovative and creative in their practice and also be part of the community within school. Furthermore be responsible for the social and emotional well-being of their pupils (Cullingford, 1997). Spillane (2006:7), in his 'leader-plus' approach,

recognized that routines and structures play an important part, along with the distribution of leadership within schools, to achieve results. For him, building teacher knowledge and professional communities amongst teachers is important. However, in practice within the case study sites, participants were required to take responsibility for their actions and at the same time be reflexive whilst also being acquiescent to data-driven targets and autocratic decisions. The norm was a 'shared purpose, collective expertise, and an absolute focus on improving learner outcomes' (Harris, 2014:97). Moreover, when carrying out leadership activities such as discussing feedback of individual's performance within the classroom with middle managers, their talk was a discourse of accountability rather than one of interaction and discussion.

However, this shared notion of striving to be an 'effective teacher' and therefore contributing to an 'effective school' was a social construct co-created by the individuals, a way of being within school (Gee, 2011) which was shaped by national expectations but compounded by individual expectations that they could make a difference to children's attainment. This was exemplified by the continual repetition throughout the stakeholder's discourses of a shared understanding of pre-determined standards and targets. Leadership activity of negotiated meanings of monitoring, evaluation and appraisal within the settings was therefore a natural, taken-for-granted assumption....

6.8.3 Relations of influence versus relational

In addition, it is evident that knowledge plays a disciplining role within school (Cunliffe, 2014). This was evident within the taken-for-granted assumptions about rules and practices that determined 'what is an effective teacher' or 'effective leader'; what is 'good knowledge'; what are 'the expectations'; who are the individuals who are identified as appropriate for 'sharing good practice' – who, in other words, are the experts; and who, as a result, controls and influences the meaning making and 'talks' for everyone. It was the headteacher who influenced participation through his senior leadership team and therefore, through them, the meaning making. As illustrated within the study, like all of the senior leadership team, the deputy head's alignment with the headteacher was apparent as he positioned himself as a strategic lead driving forward the headteacher's vision. His nominalization that the staff were 'on board' left little room for those who were not, as he pulled on their emotions by expanding upon a narrative of the 'impact of their (in)actions if they did nothing; situations therefore were talked into existence (Weick

et al., 2005). Power therefore permeated all the activities within school because of the privileging of some activities over others, some individuals over others and some ideologies over others (Foucault, 1972; Gillies, 2013; Cunliffe, 2014). Making visible the talk of these management activities 'opens up the school population to greater scrutiny, who is doing well, who is not ... who is "cost-effective", who is expensive, who is to be cherished and who is not' (Gillies, 2013:74).

Through a critical discursive lens it is possible to probe the participants' accounts of the leadership activities and the relationships they are experiencing through their taken-for-granted knowledge that reveals the 'inseparability of language, meaning and action' (Fairhurst, 2011:498) and, further, question the leadership that is repeatedly constituted through this meaning making, 'built upon a stock of taken-for-granted interpretive resources' (Kelly, 2008:775).

6.8.4 Pre-formed entity versus state of becoming

Framing individuals' discourses in this way aided and contributed to an understanding of the pre-formed leadership activities. For the senior leadership team, couched in the national college of school leadership rhetoric, it was a matter of ensuring that there was no deviation from policy and external monitoring accountability. It was a way of being, a discourse, within both case study schools that epitomized a neo-liberal version of a performing school (Gunter, 2001): a political rationality that saw school improvement as part of a school competitive market that could be measured, compared and held accountable (Gillies, 2013). Individuals' discourses and, as a result, activities were nominalizations of market rationalities – 'bums on seats', intertwined with an understanding of their schools in market terms. Being 'effective', or in other words 'outstanding', was a thing therefore to strive for; it was part of individuals' identity-work (Cunliffe, 2013), it had value within the community and was distributed as a social good by the headteacher and his senior leadership team. Graded lesson observations; regular book scrutinies to see if teacher marking came up to the prescribed (pre-formed) standard and children were achieving the national standards for their age group; and teacher performance management: all are pre-formed, not co-created or emerging, activities. These activities reveal the anxiety and tension between the 'subjective experience of being led and the recognition of (possible) mutual engagement' (Fairhurst, 2011:502). Through opening up a discursive space it would be possible to talk about the dominance and privileging of certain leadership activities and the marginalization of others. The objective would be 'to enthuse management

education with a sense of ethics, moral responsibility, reflexivity and relational responsibility' (ibid.:502; Cunliffe, 2014).

6.8.5 Shape and maintain versus empowerment

Language gets its meaning for individuals within school through the practices in which it is used, which involve verbal and non-verbal communicative acts; 'words are not just words, they do things and create action' (Cunliffe, 2013:54; Rigg, 2005; Gee, 2011). A Foucauldian approach, moreover, would argue that 'individuals were not only being formed by the Discourse but formed themselves' (Gillies, 2013:27).

The stories told in school had implications not only for individuals for their own identity-working (Cunliffe, 2013), but also aided them, as Weick et al. (2005:409) argue, in 'mak[ing] plausible sense retrospectively, while enacting more or less order into ... ongoing circumstances'. For them, sense comes from the mundane as well as from general communicative acts. For example, relationships were heralded as important not only for sharing good practice but for ensuring the achievement of the school vision and the continuity of high expectations. The implication of this for individuals is that their discourse was built on courage and trust that their fellow teachers had the required professional judgement and know-how to drive them forward: 'our key is to have the right subject knowledge and expectations' – expectations as exemplified by the headteacher.

However, that courage was built on 'healthy fear', and courage and fear operated within the case study sites as dichotomous opposites. I acknowledge that this study has taken the position that leadership is a social process, co-produced and constructed in situ; but it also takes the position that leadership works through the use of and manipulation of language and sign systems (Spicer and Alvesson, 2011) or, as Fairhurst (2011:498) suggests, is 'repeatedly constituted as a form of life via a series of 'language games' D/discourse analysis offers us through the exploration of language-in-use of human agency'. The discourse of educational leadership views teachers in 'a particular way but it is not anything that is essential, necessary or timeless' (Gillies, 2013:11).

A Foucauldian lens provides the means to challenge these assumptions and open the field up for questioning to aid understanding for individuals in relation to this discourse, to question what is the norm, the normalizing ways of behaving in school.

6.9 Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to illustrate the implications of this analysis for the practice of leadership within school. In so doing, I have argued that a critical discursive approach provides an illuminating lens for opening up a discursive space in which to question taken-for-granted assumptions of leadership and ways of being within a primary school setting. This draws attention to the pivotal role of the headteacher within schools, the relationship between a monological leadership perspective and a dialogical one in which the diversity and the voices of many are heard. I would also suggest, through a critical discursive lens, that a relational perspective supports the ideal of leadership within school where the consideration and discourses support the concept that we are always in a relationship with others who are all different from us and therefore need to consider how this impacts on an individual's identity, the ethos of the organization and actions within that social situated practice.

If leadership activity is conceived as pre-formed entities and an individual's identity is shaped and maintained by the taken-for-granted knowledge within a school environment, or indeed any organization, then this highlights that discursive scholars have a role to play in understanding ways of becoming and empowerment. I have further argued that it is the headteacher's vision of the school's goals which wins out; there is no formulation of the school's vision together. The evidence from the data suggests that true transformational and distributed leadership falls short due to government-driven managerialism and that a leader together with his staff co-creates a social construct of an effective school spurred on by a charismatic leader driven by national expectations but supported in that by certain individuals who consider that they make a difference to children's attainment. I would argue, in agreement with Gillies (2013), that, through a critical discursive approach, it is possible to open up a discursive space to question why experienced teachers are tied in to this power structure and not enabled to work in an emancipatory way and where conflict or resistance does exist in small pockets why is it a card that is hard to find played in this game of cultural capital? Additionally I would argue through this approach it is possible to open up institutional life to understand that there are ways of negotiation that there can be new ways of working together to strive to see what organizations may and could look like (Cunliffe, 2013).

I am not so naïve as to think that by questioning taken-for-granted assumptions I will change organizational life, nor am I proffering that whilst school leaders and

teachers at both schools were immersed in a climate of liberal governance and unavoidable market practices that everyone was a reluctant participant. I would like to take Gillies's assertion that is probably more apt to 'frame educators as "product-producers" of market governance: as both harvests of its normative influence and farmers of its future yields' (Gillies, 2013:104). He argues that educators are 'subject to and subjects of market reforms in education' (ibid.). We are all part of the wider societal influences and are all members of many different discourses which breed together and create, as Gee (1999; 2005; 2011) argues, new hybrids. A Foucauldian analysis seeks 'to separate out the power of truth from the discourse within which it is secured' (Gillies, 2013:26). Through an examination of the discourse, it is possible to reveal the socio-historical basis for that leadership and explain how it has developed to reflect the socially situated practice in which it resides to examine localized issues where negotiated means result in coordinated actions (Fairhurst, 2011). This research contributes to such a debate by opening up a discursive space in which to examine the under explored influence of context on leadership within two primary school sites.

Furthermore this study contributes to school leadership and practice within teacher education by suggesting that both students of leadership management and practising leaders not take institutional realities at face value but to question and critique why these realities are created and sustained. Furthermore to question the effects of those realities and to consider creating alternative realities which may better serve individuals and schools (Prasad and Caproni, 1997).

This study has further contributed to the field of leadership learning by providing a framework of 'thinking devices' to help make transparent the ways in which individuals use sensemaking to create their identities within school in the context of status and therefore the privileges associated with assuming an 'effective' subject position. Or in other words, the identity that their language-in-use may attribute to others and therefore how it may help the speaker to enact their own identity within a setting. Furthermore this framework can be used in other settings to reveal how language-in-use is used within school to make certain things significant or not and in what ways it is made visible.

Moreover this research contributes by providing a critical perspective on leadership training within teacher education to encourage practising and future leaders to analyse and question how individuals through their language-in-use can make one thing more relevant and acceptable (or irrelevant) to another for individuals. Also to

question what sign systems are they contributing to the metaphors of power and influence in the leadership that individuals are experiencing, to understand the implications of which for everyday life. Furthermore, to question what language-in-use of power are they using to help construct their own identities to be or not be effective leaders? This study contributes by suggesting how these critical skills could be integrated with the more traditional school leadership training and ask students to broaden their ideas of themselves, others, senior leadership teams and organizations for as Caproni and Arias (1997:295) suggest management training should be, 'the construction, production, and distribution of culturally specific knowledge about how the 'ideal manager' is expected to think, feel, and act – and not think, feel and act in a given society'. This research further contributes to school leadership teacher education by stimulating a dialogue on how critical theory and discursive perspectives could enhance pedagogical practices.

It also encourages and contributes to the argument of leadership development practices to become more contextually situated and look at identity-work and regulation and power within leadership development and practice (Hatcher, 2005; Ford et al. 2008; Cunliffe, 2009). Within leadership teacher education what this study also seeks to contribute is for scholars of educational leadership instead of asking the why do leaders act in a certain way? Rather ask as *discourse* scholars would, 'how is leadership brought off?' and additionally ask what *Discourse* scholars would, 'what kind of leadership are we talking about?' (Fairhurst, 2011). My contribution and aim for leadership practice is to plant the seeds to question the status quo and hope that it is nurtured by critical individuals within leadership teacher education. Who will be mindful of what Gunter (2008:264) suggests that leadership should be about 'emotional leadership' which is concerned with rendering 'the self at ease and to give life meaning and so the teacher is helped by the school leader as the local reform implementor, to feel good about what is happening to them while being made ready for audit'.

6.10 The path forward

The concept of discursive approaches to leadership offers a useful framework to develop further understandings and investigations of taken-for-granted assumptions within an organization. Building upon this study and the contextual framework presented in Figure 6.1 – The Interaction of Contextual factors on leadership and the the Five discourses of leadership as presented in Figure 6.2, it would be of interest to build upon these findings. This could be achieved through investigating

other settings possibly through ethnographic approaches for garnering or consolidating understandings of the discourses of various empowering and disempowering subjectivities (Fairhurst, 2011). As well as what individuals within those settings bring to the leadership relationship and that which cultural and governmental aspects supply. Furthermore as 'ethics in leadership...identity...and relational approaches' (Schedlitzki and Edwards, 2014:6) remain under-developed areas within leadership development, means that there are more exciting themes for further leadership investigations.

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