School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences

Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology

How can Educational Psychologists support the sustainability of the teaching profession with Early Career Teachers and their mentors?

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Declaration: This thesis is being submitted for the award of Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology. I declare, this is my own work and to the best of my knowledge, it does not include the work of others without acknowledgement. This piece contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other university module or degree.

Acknowledgements

To say that I did this project on my own is a lie. This thesis does not exist because of me alone. It exists because of a wide collection of people, who all contributed to this project in their own way and for their own reasons. For some, it was their job; for some, it was their love; for some, it was their curiosity. For some, it was all three. Despite their reasons, they all supported this project because they believed in *me* to do it. Yet, I am merely a vessel, a conduit, a courier. This project does not solely belong to me, I just wrote the words.

If I have been able to pass this thesis on to the reader, *that's you,* then my job is done. You ought to know who helped me to deliver this project, but their names won't mean much to you. They know exactly who they are, and my thanks to them will certainly be shared. They deserve a level of privacy which I have sacrificed for myself in sending this document out into the world.

So, instead, I want to acknowledge *you,* the reader, on this page*.* Thank you for reading this; whether it's your job to read it, your love for me that has led you to read it, or your pure curiosity (or perhaps all three reasons) – you have my sincere thanks, whoever you are.

Overarching Abstract

In chapter one, a systematic literature review (SLR) was conducted to synthesise the findings of eight studies which had explored the reasons and factors for teachers leaving the teaching profession within five years. The scope of this SLR was focused on early career teachers (ECTs) given the prevalence of data indicating that ECTs are most at risk of leaving the profession. Findings from these international studies were complex and a critical interpretive synthesis method was used to combine studies of varying methodological approaches. A theoretical model was produced to present the synthesis of these pieces of research. Through investigating how these studies were conducted, it was identified that there was a need for research to be conducted which explores the impact of discourses on teachers' decisions to leave the profession with a focus on English-specific participants.

In Chapter Two, I discuss the influence of my conceptual framework on the research I conducted within the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) in chapter one and the empirical study in chapter three. The purpose of this chapter is to form a philosophical bridge between these two chapters, exploring the paradigms which I have operated within across this research project. This chapter is structured using conceptual framework questions with ethical considerations presented at the end.

Chapter Three is an empirical study whereby the views of ECTs and their mentors about the teaching career were examined. A Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) was used to explore how teachers position themselves within the discourses around teaching within a socio-historically specific context. Analysis of data from this empirical study provides a critical view of neo-liberal discourses in education and offers a discussion of how the discourses might be challenged going forward.

Chapter Four offers a reflective synthesis of my learning throughout this research project. It offers additional information regarding the process of the research and offers an overview of next steps for this research. The synthesis is hooked to a metaphor so that the research story can be told in a way that is important to me (White, 2007).

Chapter 1 word count = 4,833 without tables and figures (7,097 with)

Chapter 2 word count = 2693

Chapter 3 word count = 5,556 without tables and figures (7,649 with)

Chapter 4 word count = 1,906

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Chapter 1: What is known about the factors and reasons given by teachers leaving the profession within five years of qualifying? A systematic literature review.

1.1 Abstract

A systematic literature review (SLR) was conducted to synthesise the findings of eight studies which had explored the reasons and factors for leaving the teaching profession within five years. The scope of this SLR was focused on early career teachers (ECTs) given the prevalence of data indicating that ECTs are most at risk of leaving the profession. Findings from these international studies were complex and a critical interpretive synthesis method was used to combine studies of varying methodological approaches. A theoretical model was produced to present the synthesis of these pieces of research. Through investigating how these studies were conducted, it was identified that there was a need for research to be conducted which explores the impact of discourses on teachers' decisions to leave the profession with a focus on English specific participants.

Key words: meta-synthesis, teachers, schools, educational policy, education, employment, neoliberalism

Following examination, this paper will be submitted to the Educational Review journal as a 'review article'. Presentation and formatting styles are conducive to this journal's publishing guidelines.

1.2 Introduction

The purpose of this Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is to synthesise relevant literature to answer the question; what is known about the factors and reasons given by teachers leaving the profession within five years of qualifying? Firstly, I will define the key terms from the outset to reflect a known understanding of them. I will then present the prevalence of this phenomenon using government legislation, data and critiques which mostly focus on western, neoliberal schooling systems. Finally, I will use this to present a rationale for the current SLR to answer the review question.

1.3 Terminology

1.3.1 Defining the term, 'Early Career Teacher'

Within the context of English statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) (2021), Early Career Teachers (ECTs) are graduates who have successfully passed their Initial Teacher Education (ITE) with the certificate of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) from a certified ITE provider. Due to this SLR being conducted by an English citizen, this term has

been used to encompass the description of this demographic focus throughout. Other terms used by other countries will be classified in terms of length of service being within 1-5 years from receiving qualified teacher status, as described by the studies.

1.3.2 Defining retention and attrition

Retention is defined in the Oxford Online Dictionary as, 'the continued use, existence, or possession of something or someone' and attrition as 'a reduction in the number of people who work for an organisation that is achieved by not replacing those people who leave' (2023). These terms will be used to focus on the phenomenon of teachers leaving the profession, what influences their decisions and what has been done to fill the gaps with teacher shortages.

1.3.3 Defining neoliberalism

The Cambridge Online Dictionary defines neoliberalism as, 'the policy of supporting a large amount of freedom for markets, with little government control or spending, and low taxes,' (2023). However, it is important to note that neoliberalism as a social concept can be described as ambiguous (Venugopal, 2015) especially as it can be entangled with other societal concepts such as globalisation (Lane, 2024). Within the context of education specifically, neoliberalist schooling is constructed around the notion of competition and individualism (Gibbs, 2018) whereby everyone is measured via universal metrics (Apple, 2014), which began with Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan's (1979 onwards) government policies within the UK and USA respectively (Maisuria, 2014). Further discussion on the impact of neoliberalism on education can be found in the next section.

1.4 Educational context, legislation and socio-political climates

In the UK, the influence of retention and attrition rates within the teaching profession is claimed to mostly arise from government educational policies and initiatives which concern teacher workload and pay (Worth & Faulkner-Ellis, 2022). Other than retirement, teachers are increasingly leaving the profession to move to other careers (Sibieta, 2020) with particular retention issues in secondary schools and Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects as highlighted by the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) (2022). This is a significant issue for the increasing number of pupils due to enter secondary education in England and Wales over the next few years (Worth & Faulkner-Ellis, 2022). However, the DfE have been able to meet overall recruitment targets for trainee teachers across the Covid-19 pandemic, but these targets are suspected to not be maintained as the economy recovers (Fullard, 2021). During the academic year 2022-2023, numerous teacher strikes were held due to disputes over pay which the National Education Union stated that insufficient pay offers from the government would, 'do nothing to reverse the problems of

recruitment and retention in our schools,' (National Education Union, 2023). Moreover, an NFER (2023) recent press release suggested that the pay increases to teachers are certainly welcomed but long-term strategies and non-pay related incentives must also be considered to address the teacher supply challenge. The retention of teachers and high attrition rate is not exclusive to the UK (Madigan & Kim, 2021) as it is especially prevalent in countries where teaching is a less financially attractive profession where high turnovers of staff are difficult to reduce and are most problematic in socio-economically disadvantaged areas (UNESCO, 2016).

The UK government has recognised that there is an approximate decade long trend of early career teachers leaving the profession between 1-5 years of service (DfE, 2019a, 2019b, 2021; Worth, 2020) with a particular peak in teachers leaving within 1-2 years of service, despite financial incentives offered to trainee teachers and ECTs. Formally known as Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs), ECTs now receive a two-year induction period brought in by the Early Career Framework (ECF) (DfE, 2019a) as part of the government's response to the teacher recruitment and retention issues (DfE, 2019b). In addition to the increased induction period, ECTs now receive support from a mentor and an induction tutor within the setting, two formal assessments with support from more regular informal assessments and a reduced teaching timetable. All statutory guidance on the induction of ECTs is available within the Induction for Early Career Teachers (in England) government documentation (DfE, 2021). In May 2022, the Government released an interim report on the findings of the trial period for the ECF, using survey data of early career teachers, mentors and induction mentors (DfE, 2022a). This interim report aimed to inform further development of the ECF in conjunction with the views of its users. As this new policy is in its infancy, with its national rollout operating within the time frame of conducting this SLR, the effectiveness of this approach remains to be evaluated.

The societal context for teachers in England (and indeed, many other western societies) is within a neoliberalist political ideology. This is important to highlight as education can serve a double purpose; one purpose of serving society but another purpose allowing what society deems as 'desirable' to be challenged (Biesta, 2019). Neoliberalism has influenced the purpose and function of education (Maisuria, 2014) which has led teachers, students and politicians to be caught up in a 'global education-rat race' (Biesta, 2019, p.658) and has transformed education into an economic process which can be 'bought and sold like everything else' (Davies & Bansel, 2007, p. 254). One of these neoliberalist influences on education is the rise of academisation in schools, which the UK government wants as a totality by 2030 (DfE, 2022b), but this gives rise to philosophical tensions around education being a part of a performative, marketplace system (Heilbronn, 2016). Recent NFER

evidence suggests that more data is needed to demonstrate what makes academy schools more effective in terms of school outcome improvements and that there are several challenges yet to be solved before the 2030 complete academisation of schools, including how the quality of academies is regulated (Lucas et al., 2023).

1.5 Rationale for the current review

The scope of this SLR is focused on ECTs given the prevalence of data indicating that ECTs of working age are most at risk of leaving the profession even when compared to their colleagues who intend to retire (Worth, 2023). In addition, given the prevalence of this phenomenon existing across neo-liberal societies, the decision to assess literature beyond the scope of England was chosen but individual cultural and societal differences will be highlighted and discussed. The purpose of this review is to see how this phenomenon of ECTs leaving the profession is conceptualized in research.

1.6 Method: Critical Interpretive Synthesis

Critical Interpretive Synthesis (CIS) is a type of inductive review approach which can be described as iterative, dynamic, flexible and reflexive in nature (Depraetere et al., 2021) with the aim to extend upon the existing literature and create new constructs (Xiao & Watson, 2019). Its conception is fairly new and inclusive of a range of different types of research which draws mostly from meta-ethnographic style approaches to reviewing literature (Flemming, 2010). Dixon-Woods et al., (2006), its original developers, outlined key processes to guide the reviewer but published examples of using CIS show many different approaches to using the key processes (for example, Patey et al., 2018). My main guide for conducting the literature review came from Boland and Cherry's (2017) comprehensive guide to systematic literature reviews, given that my competency in engaging completely with a less-structured approach from the outset was in its infancy. After engaging with a structured model, I realized a more iterative approach was suited to my literature review. Therefore, a combination of the structure from Boland and Cherry alongside the flexibility of Dixon-Woods et al., allowed me to follow the process outlined in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Approach to the SLR

Boland & Cherry (2017)	Dixon-Woods et al., (2006)	
Phase 1 1. Planning your review 2. Performing scoping searches, identifying the review question and writing your protocol 3. Literature searching 4. Screening titles and abstracts 5. Obtaining papers 6. Selecting full-text papers	A review question should be formulated at the outset but should **remain open to modification**. Precise definitions of many constructs may be deferred until late in the review and may be a product of the review itself. Searching initially should use a broadly defined strategy, including purposive selection of material likely or known to be relevant. Searching, sampling, critique and analysis proceed hand in hand, and should be seen as **dynamic and mutually informative processes.**	**Overarching processes:** CIS explicitly **acknowledges the "authorial voice"**; that some aspects of its production of the account of the evidence will not be visible or auditable; and that its account may not be strictly reproducible. Its aim is to offer a **theoretically sound and useful account that is demonstrably grounded in the evidence.**
Phase 2 7. Quality assessment	CIS encourages an **ongoing critical orientation to the material to be included in the review**. Some limited formal appraisal of methodological quality of individual papers is likely to be appropriate. Generally, the aim will be to **maximise relevance and theoretical contribution** of the included papers.	
Phase 3 8. Data extraction	Formal data extraction procedures may be helpful, particularly at the outset of the review, but are **unlikely to be an essential feature** of the approach.	CIS demands **constant reflexivity on the part of authors of reviews.** Authors are charged with making conscientious and thorough searches, with making fair and appropriate selections of materials, with seeking disconfirming evidence and other challenges to the emergent theory, and with ensuring that the theory they generate is, while critically informed, **plausible given the available evidence.**
Phase 4 9. Analysis and synthesis 10. Writing up, editing and disseminating	The analysis should be aimed towards the development of a synthesising argument: **a critically informed integration of evidence from across the studies in the review**.	

The following sub-sections will be identified as phases of the literature review, with the overarching processes influencing all parts of the review.

1.6.1 Phase 1

This phase comprises of the early stages of the review up to the selection of the review papers. Due to the use of CIS, this phase was revisited many times with careful attention to the evidence which came about from the searches. Table 2 and 3 comprise of the PICO table (JBI, 2020) and the inclusion/exclusion criteria used before and after preliminary scoping searches.

Table 2: PICO table

PICO Table		
Research Question: How does the literature conceptualise the factors and reasons given by teachers leaving the profession within five years of qualifying?		
P – patient, population or Problem	*How would I describe a group of patients similar to mine?*	Teachers identified as Newly Qualified (NQT) or Early Career teachers (ECT) or only having practiced as a teacher for less than five consecutive years.
I – Intervention or exposure	*Which main intervention, prognostic factor, or exposure am I considering?*	Factors relating to reasons given by Teachers/NQTs/ECTs for leaving the teaching profession.
C – comparison or intervention	*What is the main alternative to compare with the intervention?*	Comparing the frequency of the factors identified in the literature.
O – Outcome	*What can I hope to accomplish, measure, improve, or affect?*	Either a quantitative or qualitative (or both) synthesis of the factors identified in the literature.
What Type of question are you asking?		Descriptive – describing the factors which influence teachers leaving teaching.
Type of Study you want to find: What would be the best study design/methodology?		Cohort studies Cross-sectional studies Qualitative studies

Table 3: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion		Exclusion	
Criteria	**Justification**	**Criteria**	**Justification**
Peer reviewed journal articles	*Quality assurance already (hopefully) addressed*	Teachers identified having worked more than five years as a teacher	*Does not fit the target sample*
Published after 2011	*2011 was chosen as a cutoff point due to UK Government changes in teaching standards and ITE before the ECF was developed*	Teachers working in post 18 settings (e.g., universities)	*Higher Education is not the focus of this study*
Published in/translated to English	*Resource limitations for the researcher*	Teachers who do not have qualified teacher status (or international equivalent).	*Does not fit the target sample*
Studies which identify factors/reasons for leaving the profession.	*Appropriate for the research question.*	Preventative or intervention studies.	*Does not indicate factors/reasons for leaving*
Policies/reports which identify factors/reasons for teachers	*This was included to mirror the UK's ECF and teacher and retention strategies in other countries*	Studies which identify factors for joining the profession.	*Opposite to the research study*
		Teachers working internationally (e.g., teaching	*Sample too specific*

Inclusion		Exclusion	
leaving the profession.		English in a non-English speaking country)	
		Studies focusing on experiences of teaching methods/pedagogies (e.g., teaching literacy skills).	*Does not indicate factors/reasons for leaving*
		Studies focusing on experiences of non-teachers (e.g., students/pupils, parents etc.) or teachers in research roles only.	*Does not fit the target sample*
		Policies/reports not focusing on teacher retention & attrition (e.g., teacher performance statistics)	*Does not indicate factors/reasons for leaving*
		Studies focusing only on leadership roles in teaching	*Does not fit the target sample*
		Studies focusing on teacher performance or teacher evaluation	*Does not indicate factors/reasons for leaving*
		Studies only focusing on COVID-19 as a factor for leaving the profession	*Context too specific*
		Studies focusing on job satisfaction only	*Does not indicate factors/reasons for leaving*

Blue text= Criteria amendments post scoping literature search

After initial scoping searches and amendments to the inclusion/exclusion criteria, search terms were identified to suit the review question. They were as follows:

- "Early career teacher*" OR "newly qualified teacher*" OR "new teacher*" OR "recently qualified teacher"
- leave OR "leav* the profession" OR quit* OR "leav* teaching" OR attrition
- Factor* OR reason* OR motive*

Search terms were set as identifiable throughout the whole text of the papers so that the search could be as broad and as inclusive as possible. Scoping searches identified that there was generally a small amount of research and so this approach was used to maximise the relevant literature searched.

Figure 1 presents the PRISMA (Page et al., 2021) diagram outlining the process from the initial search to the selected papers. The eight chosen papers are identified alphabetically below:

Table 4: Research papers chosen

Author (Date)	Study Title
Buchanan et al., (2013)	Teacher Retention and Attrition: Views of Early Career Teachers
Carroll et al., (2022)	Teacher stress and burnout in Australia: examining the role of intrapersonal and environmental factors
Clandinin et al., (2015)	Early career teacher attrition: intentions of teachers beginning
Dupriez et al., (2016)	Teacher shortage and attrition: Why do they leave?
Gallant and Riley (2017)	Early career teacher attrition in Australia: inconvenient truths about new public management
Perryman and Calvert (2020)	What Motivates People to Teach, and Why do They Leave? Accountability, Performativity and Teacher Retention
Struyven and Vanthournout (2014)	Teachers' exit decisions: An investigation into the reasons why newly qualified teachers fail to enter the teaching profession or why those who do enter do not continue teaching
Wyatt and O'Neill (2020)	Investigation of early career teacher attrition and the impact of induction programs in Western Australia.

Figure 1: PRISMA diagram

Identification of studies via databases and registers

Identification

Records identified from 5 Databases:

Web of Science:	(n= 50)
EBSCO Host:	(n= 168)
JSTOR:	(n= 423)
ProQuest:	(n= 178)
Scopus:	(n= 35)

Total records: **(n = 854)**

Records removed *before screening*:
Duplicate records auto removed (n = 297)
Hand deletion of duplications & irrelevant papers (n = 77)
Total records removed: (n = 374)

Screening

Records screened (titles & abstracts) **(n = 480)**

Records excluded using PICO table exclusion criteria **(n =379)**

Records assessed for eligibility (titles and abstracts) **(n =101)**

Records excluded:
- Reason 1: studies on perceptions of mentoring programs (n =18)
- Reason 2: studies on perceptions of leadership/interventions (n =12)
- Reason 3: studies exploring/presenting perceptions of support strategies (n =34)

Total records: removed (n = 64)

Records assessed via full text **(n =36)**

Records excluded:
- Could not access paper (n = 3)
- PICO check (n= 26)

Total records removed: (n= 29)

Included for quality assessment **(n= 13)**

Records obtained through backward and forward searching **(n =1)**
Records obtained through handsearching selected journals **(n= 5)**

Included

Studies included in review post quality assessment in line with CIS approach (see below). **(n = 8)**

Table 5: Overview of studies

Author	Year	Title	Country	Type of study	Study aims	Methods	Analysis	Main Findings
Buchanan et al.,	2013	Teacher Retention and Attrition: Views of Early Career Teachers	Australia	Qualitative - Situated Theory Methodology: Qualitative	To explore why some ECTs stay in the profession and why others choose to leave.	Semi structured interview data from a larger longitudinal study in the first - fourth years of teaching Participants – 54 took part in the present study (out of 329 total longitudinal participants)	Constant comparison data reduction methods to identify common themes (4 researchers coding and analysing data)	As experience increases, the teachers were more likely to stay. Categories 'supported stayers', 'resilient stayers' - leavers did not participate in the study's entirety. '5 attributes' to support ECTs: resilience, reflection, responsiveness, relationships and resourcefulness.
Struyven & Vanthournout	2014	Teachers' exit decisions: An investigation into the reasons why newly qualified teachers fail to enter the teaching profession or why those who do enter do not continue teaching	Belgium	Cross-sectional Methodology: Quantitative	RQ1 - Do attrition rates vary based on teacher characteristics? RQ2 - What are the motives for exit attrition? RQ3 - Impact of teaching experience preservice on motives	Survey designed by researchers based on literature including all possible motives for attrition + personal variables data. Included closed questions and open questions for motives not mentioned. 235 total participants.	Multivariate linear model, hierarchical regression, factor loading	Male secondary teachers most at risk of attrition, five overarching motives for attrition identified (job satisfaction, relationships with students, school support and management, workload and future prospects). RQ3 findings less clear.
Clandinin et al.,	2015	Early career teacher attrition: intentions of teachers beginning	Canada	Interview study Methodology: Qualitative (gathers some quant data but only to present participant characteristics)	To explore the complex individual and contextual factors influencing teacher attrition rates.	Semi-structured interviews with 40 beginning teachers.	2 levels: first descriptive stats, second iterative and thematic analysis of transcripts.	62.5% unsure whether they will stay in teaching. 7 themes emerged from the data: support, identity and belonging, contract tensions, will do anything, balance, trying not to let teaching consume them, sustainability

Author	Year	Title	Country	Type of study	Study aims	Methods	Analysis	Main Findings
Dupriez et al,	2016	Teacher shortage and attrition: Why do they leave?	Belgium	Cohort study Methodology: Quantitative	To study the risk factors of new teachers leaving the profession within 5 years across a cohort data set.	Cohort data of 19,196 graduate teachers obtained via administrative database to analyse: exit rates between school types, exit rates between cohort data & exit rates analysed with personal variables (e.g. age, gender, etc.)	Bivariate analysis & multivariate analysis	Socio-economic status of the school is not linked to risk of leaving, less experience in the role was a higher risk factor of leaving and secondary teachers were more at risk of leaving (with some context around ITT routes increasingly having 'less qualified' teachers in secondary).
Gallant & Riley	2017	Early career teacher attrition in Australia: inconvenient truths about New Public Management (NPM).	Australia	Case study (collective) Methodology: Qualitative	To explore key factors influencing male teacher attrition rates (within a NPM context).	In-depth interviews with five male ECTs	Personal Interpretive Framework (PIF) tool (adapted)	NPM initiatives were negatively experienced by the participants.
Perryman & Calvert	2020	What motivates people to teach, and why do they leave? Accountability, performativity and teacher retention.	United Kingdom	Cross-sectional Methodology: Quantitative	To explore teacher's retrospective reasons for becoming teachers and their reasoning behind their intentions to leave or stay in the profession.	Online survey based on previous literature. Recruitment via the UCL alumni administration database to recruit 1200 graduates from the past 5 years	Numerical data presented in percentages & open-ended answers reported in a descriptive rather than interpretive way. Some links between quant and qual but again descriptive.	Personal characteristics of participants did not make a difference to the intentions of leaving; highlights a 'discourse of disappointment'; workload & work-life balance most frequent reasons for leaving.

Author	Year	Title	Country	Type of study	Study aims	Methods	Analysis	Main Findings
Wyatt & O'Neill	2021	Investigation of early career teacher attrition and the impact of induction programs in Western Australia.	Australia	Cohort & cross-sectional study Methodology: Mixed Methods - Quant analyses for RQ1 & 2, Qual analyses for RQ3.	To explore three levels of enquiry: (1) what is the ECT attrition rate? (2) who is likely to leave/stay? (3) are policy changes and additional supports keeping ECTs in teaching?	Quantitative data (closed-ended questions) was analysed using the Department Human Resource Management system (a database of employed teachers). Total 9850 participants. Qual data obtained from secondary education ECTs via surveys (based on their high risk of leaving). Total 551 participants.	Predictor variables were explored to determine the effects of: age; university attended; field of education; region; socio-economic status; and employment class (permanent or fixed term contracts) on the likelihood of ECTs remaining in the profession.	Secondary school ECT had a higher odds ratio of leaving compared to primary. West Aus Universities offered lower risk ratio of leaving. RQ3 shows insight into ITT preparedness for teaching, but not about reasons for leaving.
Carroll et al.,	2022	Teacher stress and burnout in Australia: examining the role of intrapersonal and environmental factors.	Australia	Cross-sectional Methodology: Quantitative	To explore two levels of enquiry: (1) Stress experiences in conjunction with personal variables (2) role of environmental and intrapersonal factors in experience of teacher stress & burnout	Online survey to access teachers across Australia. 749 Self-identified teachers completed the survey. Multiple scales of stress, burnout and emotional regulation used with additional instruments added by the researchers which referred to leaving the profession.	Percentages (in pie chart form) presented for considerations for leaving. Full factorial MANOVA (career stage, educator type, location). Univariate ANOVAs with post-hoc comparisons to compare stress and burnout across job-related characteristics	More than half of all teachers included were considering leaving. ECTs reported higher perceived stress & burnout compared to mid or late career teachers.

1.6.2 Phase 2

During phase 2, quality assessment was sought in relation to the CIS principles of quality. Although this is not a mandatory phase of a CIS review, I decided to engage with it to ensure that the studies were theoretically relevant to the review (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006). Where they were not relevant to the SLR question (despite their overall quality), they were excluded from the review (N = 5). Table 6 outlines the appraisal tool used from the original development of CIS.

Table 6: Quality Assessment Criteria for CIS from Dixon-Woods et al., (2006)

|	Buchanan et al., (2013)	Carroll et al., (2022)	Clandinin et al., (2015)	Dupriez et al., (2016)	Gallant and Riley (2017)	Perryman and Calvert (2020)	Struyven and Vanthournout (2014)	Wyatt and O'Neill (2020)
Are the aims and objectives clearly stated?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Is the research design clearly specified and appropriate for the aims of the research?	yes	yes	not specified	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Do the researchers provide a clear account of the process by which their findings were reproduced?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Do the researchers display enough data to support their interpretations and inclusions?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes (quant), no (qual)	yes	yes (quant), no (qual)
Is the method of analysis appropriate and adequately explicated?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Is the study relevant to the present SLR question?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes

1.6.3 Phase 3&4

Phases 3 and 4 were conducted in tandem; as the inductive theory emerged from the studies, data was extracted to provide evidence and where more data emerged, the theory was adapted to suit the evidence. This symbiotic process allowed me to be reflexive and the theory to be plausible with the given evidence. As some of the papers were quantitative, formal data extraction methods were used for these studies and can be found within the appendices. However, when engaging with the CIS approach the extent of the data extracted from these studies was matched alongside synthesizing the qualitative evidence which is presented in Table 5. Where qualitative synthesis occurred, the use of first and second order analysis from the meta-ethnographic approach were used in accordance with the CIS approach for analysing qualitative data (Depraetere et al., 2021).

1.7 Findings

Figure 2 is a visual representation of the theoretical product from the CIS of all studies. Appendix 1 includes a grid of the analysis from each of the study's findings to indicate how they were coded for the diagram. Codes were influenced by the CIS approach used by Flemming (2010) as this paper demonstrated a clear model for synthesisng first and second order constructs following third order constructs which include the findings from quantitative research (see Appendix 2 for the table showing this). Codes identified within the research papers were as follows:

- Belonging
- Health
- Identity
- Job stability (including contract status) and future prospects
- Leadership and management
- Location
- Relationships
- Support offered
- Teacher typology (type of teacher i.e., primary or secondary)

Figure 2: Diagram of CIS findings
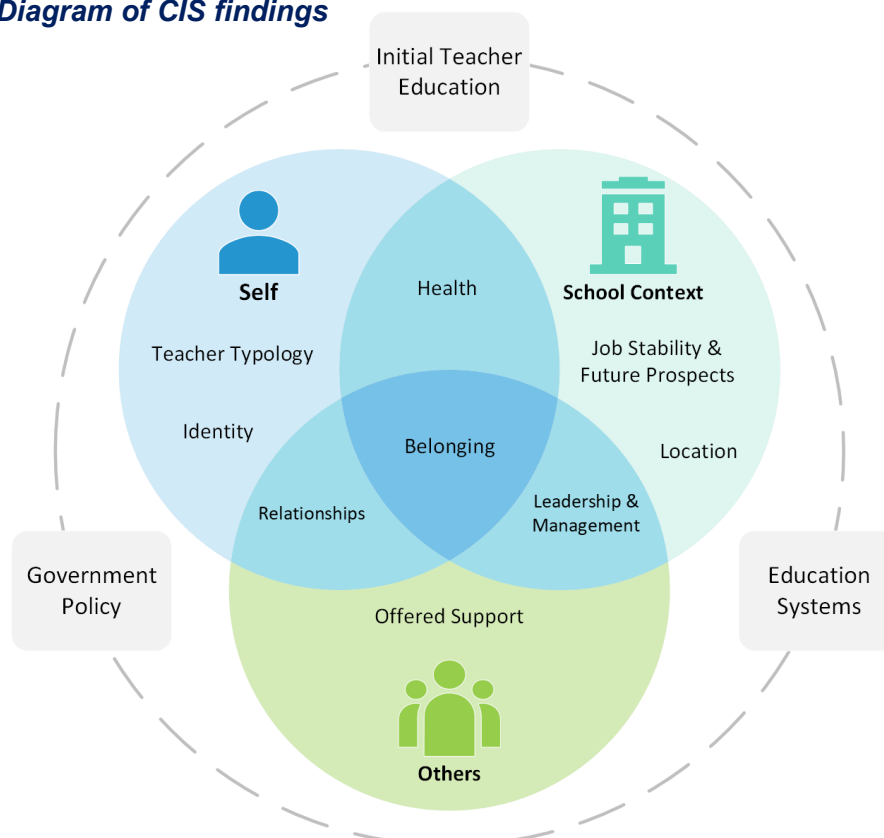
Following this, an exploration of the findings from each of the studies will be outlined within the Self, School Context, Others and how the overarching concepts (in the grey boxes) influence these areas.

1.7.1 Self

Teacher typology was the most common theme to emerge from both quantitative and qualitative data across the studies. The similarities across the findings showed that secondary ECTs were more likely to leave teaching within five years of qualifying. Carroll et al. (2022) reported that ECTs experience higher levels of perceived stress compared to their more experienced colleagues ($p=0.022$ for mid-career and $p=0.003$ for late career teachers respectively $\eta^2 = 0.02$) which contributed to the increased risk factor of ECTs being more likely to leave the profession. Additionally, Struyven and Vanthournout (2014) found that teachers who studied secondary education as their degree were more likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs once qualified compared to those with a kindergarten education degree ($p=0.003$, $\eta^2 = 0.6$). Alongside these findings, exit attrition rates were highest in male secondary teachers as found in Dupriez et al. (2016). Similar findings were also found in Australian populations, as reported in Wyatt and O'Neill (2021) where secondary teachers had a higher odds ratio of leaving compared to their primary colleagues (95 % CI = 0.631−0.754 with a reported effect size of Wald's X^2 = 88.418, *df* = 3, p<.001). Finally, the qualitative data reported by Clandinin et al. (2015) supports these teacher typology findings

whereby middle and high school teachers described lower self-efficacy compared to elementary teachers. On the contrary to these international findings, Perryman and Calvert (2020) reported that teacher typology made no difference to the intention to leave within a UK sample; as their qualitative analysis did show that concerns about the profession were shared across different types of teachers.

Following teacher typology, qualitative data provided insight into how these teachers felt about their professional, and sometimes personal, identity. The participants in Buchanan et al. (2013), Clandinin et al. (2015) and Gallant and Riley (2017) specifically discussed the impact teaching was having on their sense of identity. Their fear of failure (Buchanan et al., 2013), struggles with perfectionism and being a people pleaser (Clandinin et al., 2015) and the uncertainty of teaching being feasible alongside starting their own families (Gallant & Riley, 2017) were highlighted by these studies. In addition, the impact teaching was having on their health was highlighted in Clandinin et al. (2015), Gallant and Riley (2017) and Perryman and Calvert (2020) with illness having a large impact on the participants decision to leave teaching.

1.7.2 Others

Themes concerning relationships within the qualitative studies were highlighted as key contributors to how the ECTs perceived teaching and could act as a counter to any dissatisfactory contractual situations which were impermanent or on a supply basis (Clandinin et al., 2015). Feeling supported within these relationships was a strong theme throughout the studies and was found to be one of the most salient reasons for leaving the profession if feeling supported was perceived as poor (M = 0.60, SD = 0.73, descriptive statistics used) (Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014). These feelings of stress and dissatisfaction in their support from colleagues were varied across studies; some highlighted frustrations around support not being tailored to the individual (Clandinin et al., 2015), some presented feelings of isolation especially in small staff teams (Buchanan et al., 2013) and some described a rushed induction period with little support (Wyatt & O'Neill, 2021). As a result of poor support and work related stress, over half of the participants in Carroll et al. (2022) considered leaving the role in the past month (59%, n=437) with the majority of these participants reporting these thoughts as moderately to extremely serious (75%, n=328).

Regarding ITE, some studies highlighted how prepared participants felt for their first teaching role. Within the qualitative studies, participants gave specific examples of how prepared they felt ranging from workload expectations (Gallant & Riley, 2017) to behaviour management experiences (Buchanan et al., 2013). In conjunction with these expectations, Perryman and Calvert (2020) also highlighted how the participants perceived others' experiences of

preparedness for the role. These included participants seeing how the workload of the role already exists with family members and how colleagues had shared the true amount of hours worked each week which included weekends and evenings. Studies exploring this phenomenon seem suggestive of a disconnect between the experiences of ITE and the reality of the job.

1.7.3 School context

Job stability, school location and leadership and management were key themes across the data within the studies concerning the immediate school context. It is important to note that some of the studies, such as the ones conducted in Australia and Belgium, have a more nationalized approach to the deployment of new teachers in the country. The participants shared their experiences of moving around their countries for jobs after qualifying which impacted their likelihood to leave or stay in teaching. For example, Carroll et al. (2022) compared participants' experiences of work related stress and burnout across different region types in Australia (i.e., urban and rural) with rural participants experiencing significantly greater levels of perceived stress (p=0.012, η^2 = 0.02) and work-related burnout (p=0.048, η^2 = 0.01). In addition to this finding, Buchanan et al. (2013) highlighted themes of isolation where teachers were placed far from their home region and that adjusting to different social contexts was difficult for the new teachers to cope with.

Job stability was also a theme which was entangled with the differing cultural approaches of ECT career paths. Dupriez et al. (2016), studying within a Belgian context, outlined how career paths are forged and that these paths can vary depending on if a teacher pursues pre-school, primary or secondary education. However, one theme transcended all cultures as an important factor which impacted the likelihood of the ECTs remaining in their post. Where teachers worked less hours than those in a full-time post, Dupriez et al. (2016) found that this was a significant risk factor for teacher exit rates (OR= 1.66, p<0.05, R^2 of Nagelkerke = 0.256). In addition, anxieties around feeling unable to follow up on student behaviour was shared by those who worked part time in their post (Buchanan et al., 2013) and those who were attempting to secure a job through supply work were accepting of undesirable working conditions such as not having their own classroom (Clandinin et al., 2015).

Perspectives on leadership and management within the school context were shared themes across some of the studies. One of the most salient reasons in Struyven and Vanthournout's (2014) study for early exit rates of ECTs was how the school was perceived to be managed by leadership teams (M= 0.60, SD = 0.73 descriptive statistics used) and 38% of the participants in Perryman and Calvert's (2020) study selected 'lack of support from

management' as one of the top reasons for leaving their post. Specificity on these reasons could be found within the qualitative data of Gallant and Riley (2017) whereby participants highlighted that they were confused that good teachers became managers, professional development tasks were an act of compliance rather than genuine learning, irrelevant meetings, inconsistent leadership, job security concerns which lead to being unable to challenge leadership and the excessive workload experienced in their roles. Indeed, Perryman and Calvert's (2020) qualitative data highlight similar themes with the addition of an 'us and them' mentality and a general lack of gratitude from managers.

1.7.4 Overarching contexts

Government policy, ITE and education systems were experienced similarly across participants in different countries and across studies. Participants reported that they felt underprepared for teaching via their ITE course with specific reference to managing student engagement and behaviour (Buchanan et al., 2013), workload expectations (Gallant & Riley, 2017) and feeling that the role is unsustainable (Clandinin et al., 2015). In Australia Wyatt and O'Neill (2021) looked specifically at the types of ITE courses participants had completed in relation to the attrition rate; they found that interstate, international or unknown universities (their classifications) had a higher odds ratio of participants intention to leave compared to participants who attended a Western Australian university. It was highlighted that these courses did not prepare them enough for teacher admin, discussions with parents and general behaviour management strategies. The Belgian studies highlighted that masters degree ECTs (who were more likely to be secondary teachers with a subject specialism) were more likely to leave the profession early (Dupriez et al., 2016) and that a lack of career prospects beyond teaching for some of the participants was one of the most salient reasons for early exit (Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014). In Perryman and Calvert (2020), some of the top reasons for the ECTs leaving the career early in the UK was because of government initiatives (43%) and being part of a target driven culture (57%). Similarly, Australian participants felt like a faceless number lost in a big system (Buchanan et al., 2013) and Canadian participants questioned if the role was what they expected it to be and if it was sustainable (Clandinin et al., 2015). However, these themes were not found to be impacting attrition rates in the Belgian studies but the authors did recognize that the systems for their government are very complex and they only looked at French-speaking Belgian participants (Dupriez et al., 2016).

1.8 Discussion and limitations

The findings of this SLR present a complex picture as to why ECTs leave the profession early. Studies exploring both quantitative and qualitative data provided many commonalities in findings despite international boundaries. Early exit rates of ECTs appeared to be at their

highest risk within secondary teaching posts and prevalent where participants felt a disconnect from their ITE experiences to their first year in teaching. However, reducing the findings from these studies in this way can be reductive and perhaps be ignorant of the complexity of the phenomena.

As a CIS approach was used for this SLR, the central approach of criticality must be acknowledged as well as presenting key findings. Constructing an understanding of the available literature must be addressed through critical questioning (Suri, 2018) with the 'authorial voice' explicitly present (Patey et al., 2018). Therefore, the following questions will be asked to address this in conjunction with the findings this SLR presents:

- *What are the gaps in our understanding of a phenomenon?*
- *What methodologies or theoretical perspectives are likely and/or unlikely to be employed by primary researchers in the field?*
- *In the published literature, whose questions are prioritized?*
- *Whose questions have received little attention from primary researchers?*
- *How are the answers to such questions intertwined?*

With the available studies in this SLR, all but two of the researchers across all studies were affiliated with a university course which provided ITE. Had there been more variability in the professions withheld by the researchers, the focus of such studies may have been more inclusive of different viewpoints, questions and aims of the research (Gough & Thomas, 2016). The engagement of 'transdisciplinary research' (Oliver et al., 2017) within SLRs could provide a more varied approach to synthesizing literature which was missed in this piece of research. Therefore, professional variance within the primary research and subsequent SLRs could provide a more balanced view to research and somewhat mitigating the prioritisation of one type of researcher over another.

Another interesting aspect of the present SLR is the abundance of literature from countries considered to be 'Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich and Democratic (WEIRD)' societies (Henrich et al., 2010). Perhaps the problem of teacher retention and attrition does not exist (or is not reported in the same way) within non-western societies which could tell us more about the western education system's flaws diverting teachers away from the profession. Indeed, Gaudelli (2020) wrote about how the critique of western education is not a new concept and that the continuation of such practices does not place value on young people developing their social and relational being with the world itself. It is possible that teachers who are bound by educational policies which enforce an 'instrumentalist' approach to being a teacher (see Carusi's 2022 analysis of 'refusing teachers') which demands their input as a teacher to improve standards and keep up with the competition are more

commonly found in WEIRD societies or societies which adopt WEIRD or neoliberal approaches to education. If we look at educational policies such as the Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education 2017) curriculum approach to early years, we can see how an educational policy in a WEIRD society (i.e., New Zealand) can encompass indigenous practices and philosophy (i.e., Māori) within a bi-cultural approach to education which does not conform to the neoliberal ideology such as England's Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum (McNerney, 2016). Perhaps here we can see how the impact of curriculum policy can influence retention and attrition rates with teachers who do not conform to the WEIRD 'way' of doing things; indeed, no papers from New Zealand emerged from this SLR.

In keeping with the present phenomenon existing within WEIRD societies, the studies within this SLR only provide a surface level view of why teachers leave the profession, regardless of their methodology. Although it is useful to see the scale of the problem highlighted by these studies, one may be dissatisfied with the way in which these studies handled how the findings co-existed within the educational system. For example, this SLR highlighted that some of the reasons for leaving teaching were due to the culture of education being target driven and based on performativity of pupils. Perhaps, then, an exploration of what these teachers valued in education may have provided insight into the conflicts with neoliberal discourses and agendas with which twenty first century teachers and pupils have become socialized into (Hyde, 2022). However, the studies within this SLR can provide a picture of a phenomenon which has persisted to exist over a set period of time, across similar cultures and within a neo-liberal context; this would not have been achieved if looking at the studies in isolation of each other (Alexander, 2020).

1.9 Conclusion and implications

This SLR aimed to answer the research question: What is known about the factors and reasons given by teachers leaving the profession within five years of qualifying? It aimed to explore, through the use of a CIS approach, an overview of why teachers leave the profession early. Key findings were synthesized via an inductive approach to demonstrate the similarities across studies and across neo-liberal, western societies. The findings were complex, and subtle variations existed between studies, but illuminated that the problem of teacher retention and attrition continues to be prevalent. Indeed, teacher retention and attrition continues to be an issue for countries like England, even when the disruption of the global pandemic was accounted for (Worth, 2023).

The implications from this SLR are two-fold; there is a need for research to be conducted which explores the impact of educational discourses on teachers' decisions to leave the profession with a focus on English specific participants. Given that this research was

conducted by an English resident, this SLR began with specific reference to an English context where evidence suggested the prevalence of the problem existing within this area of the world. However, the SLR only drew attention to one English study (Perryman & Calvert, 2020) and so further research within this context is needed. Indeed, the ECF (which teachers in England are bound to during their induction) states that it is open to further developments in research to adapt to the needs of ECTs (DfE, 2019a). A study following the implications of this SLR will, hopefully, be well received.

Chapter 2: Methodological and ethical considerations

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the influence of my conceptual framework on the research I conducted within the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) in chapter one and the empirical study in chapter three. The purpose of this chapter is to form a philosophical bridge between these two chapters, exploring the paradigms with which I have operated within across this research project. The chapter is structured using conceptual framework questions with ethical considerations presented at the end.

2.2 Why now?

The context for the SLR and empirical study is concerned with current and historical teacher retention and attrition rates from across Western countries (in the SLR) and within England (in the empirical). Teacher supply shortages have been consistently documented by governments, empirical research, teaching unions and the general media. Although the Covid-19 pandemic did have some impact on how the retention and attrition rates were impacted, trends appear to be generally consistent in that these rates are continuing to decline in comparison to pupil populations (Fullard, 2021). Within the scope of this research project, a focus was drawn onto the British socio-political influences of the post-2010 coalition government with which a significant shift occurred in how the Department for Education (DfE) constructed the purpose of education, impacting teachers and pupils alike.

The impact of post-2010 neoliberalism via Conservative party majority rule in Britain is a key focus throughout this research project. However, I do acknowledge that the neoliberal socio-political climate has been present since post-World War Two political and economic strategies across Europe, North America and other Westernised nations (Ridgway, 2023). The Conservative party in Britain has been largely associated with policies and agendas influenced by neoliberalism more so than other political parties who have been in power across recent political history (Davies & Bansel, 2007). What is key in focusing on post-2010 climates is the impact of the ideological shift from New Labour to Conservative (initially in coalition with the Liberal Democrats) governments in Britain. Here, we bore witness to how teachers were positioned within political discourse, especially when newer teachers trained within these political shifts were described as more superior to their pre-2010 trained colleagues (Spicksley, 2022). This was also witnessed through the changes made in the National Curriculum (DfE, 2013), the Teacher's Standards (DfE, 2011), the academisation agenda (DfE, 2016) and the SEND code of Practice (DfE, 2014b) to name a few of the policy changes (Hyde, 2022). As Conservative rule has remained in Britain since 2010, we have seen a longitudinal effect of these policy changes alongside the impact of austerity on

general local government services (Davoudi et al., 2021). More than a decade's worth of empirical research and personal experience has been considered within this research project.

In relation to Educational Psychology, we are inextricably bound to the education system alongside our educator colleagues (Swinson, 2023). EPs work with teachers consistently throughout their work, with many EPs themselves having professional backgrounds of working in schools. Policy changes directly impact our work too, regardless of whether we work with individuals or whole systems (Prendeville & Kinsella, 2022). Teachers are our close colleagues (Gibbs & Miller, 2014) and there have been many examples of EPs supporting teachers within trainee EP research projects (e.g., Birchall, 2021; Murray 2022 and Clarke, 2023). Therefore, in my view, what concerns our teachers should be of concern to us too.

2.3 Why me?

I began my teacher training amid these post-2010 policy changes. As I embarked on my undergraduate degree, the national curriculum, SEND code of practice and teachers' standards were all renewed during my training and were firmly in place by the time I qualified in 2015. Although I had always intended to eventually become an EP, I still wanted to be a teacher first as I felt it was important for my own professional development to understand and appreciate the role of a teacher. I intended to gradually work towards becoming a SENCO before even thinking about becoming an EP; roughly a decade's worth of teaching would have sufficed in my career plan. However, the reality of teaching wore me down slowly, taking just three and a half academic years to finally push me into leaving early. I fell within the demographic of teachers leaving the profession within five years of qualifying (Allen et al., 2023) and didn't even attempt to start any SENCO training. Teaching almost destroyed my passion for education.

Being part of the attrition statistic problem has influenced me greatly in pursuing this research project. I had spent the best parts of my young adult life working myself into mental health issues due to work-related stress before I was lucky enough to escape and work as an assistant EP. I saw my teacher friends also lose faith in the profession, many of whom either never made it through their induction year or immediately changed their career path following their induction period. The psychological impact of all this has stuck with me ever since, and, unfortunately, I see the same tired eyes in the teachers I work with now - almost a decade later. How was the situation so bad for me, and why does it continue to be a problem?

Szulevicz (2018), writing about Danish school psychologists, suggests that teachers and psychologists are interlinked with the professional demands and dilemmas faced when operating within neoliberalist educational systems, describing it as a devaluing, un-educational machine. Similarly, educational psychologists in England are seen as professionals teachers turn to during professional crises (Gibbs & Miller, 2014) especially where the very notion of a neoliberalist workforce is 'fragmented' and does not promote career longevity in teaching (Sugarman, 2015). Therefore, looking at how to support and promote the sustainability of the teaching career through ECTs and their mentors, brings an opportunity to challenge the neoliberalist agenda through the language and discourse used around exactly why ECTs leave the profession, and which narratives gain dominance over others (Davies & Bansel, 2007; Maisuria, 2014). If being a teacher is not sustainable, how can we expect new teachers to join and stay? This is what I endeavour to explore within this research.

2.4 Why in this way?

In Chapter 1, I synthesised the current research on teacher retention and attrition using a meta-synthesis approach to reviewing the literature; a Critical Interpretive Synthesis (CIS) (Edwards & Kaimal, 2016). This approach drew from roots in meta-ethnography, with the difference being that it allowed the inclusion of a diverse range of methodologies ranging from quantitative, qualitative and mixed-methods studies (Hong et al., 2017). Using CIS allowed me to be conceptual in both the process and the outcome of the findings, with attention drawn to how the meta-construction I created came to be from the constructions of the original papers (Schick-Makaroff et al., 2016). Through preliminary scoping searches and reading through government-based documentation on the issue, it was apparent that an approach that included all types of methodology was needed to capture the issues and concerns of teachers leaving the profession early.

For the empirical study, I initially wanted to explore teachers' wellbeing in relation to attrition and how best to support them as an EP. However, I was not satisfied with how many research papers approached the issue; focusing on teacher's wellbeing being a 'problem' that can be 'fixed' with strategies such as developing resilience skills (e.g., Molyneux, 2021). It wasn't until I came across the philosophical notions of post-structuralism via my preliminary Narrative Therapy training at university that I started to see a lens through which I could use in research. Writers such as White (2007), Hobbs et al. (2022) and Freedman and Combs (1996) in Narrative Therapy brought my attention to philosophical concepts such as deconstruction (Jaques Derrida) and discourse (Michel Foucault). Following this, I then found writers within the field of psychology (Ian Parker, Valerie Walkerdine) and educational

psychology (Tom Billington, Liz Todd) who subscribed to the notion of Critical Psychology, an approach to research and practice, which led me to how I conducted this research project.

2.4.1 Philosophical positioning

In summary, my philosophical position within this piece of research is concerned with poststructuralism and a particular affiliation with radical constructionism (Willig, 2013). I view knowledge and meaning to be produced through the interaction of multiple discourses (ontology) which helps me to understand how language is used to create and enact identities and activities amongst people (epistemology). Through this, I examined how discourses are used (methodology) to understand *how* stories are told (method) by those who are situated within the discourses under scrutiny (sources) (Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007). Following from deploying a CIS approach to my SLR, using Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) provided me with the tools to understand how ECTs and ECT mentors constructed and defined their identities, alongside subject positioning through discourse (Pomerantz, 2008).

I acknowledge that it is difficult to subscribe to an unambiguous and clear-cut epistemological viewpoint within qualitative research (Willig, 2013), especially when a consistent methodology across poststructuralist thinkers cannot be easily packaged as it is considered to be more of a 'mode of thinking' or 'style of philosophising' (Peters & Burbeles, 2004). In addition, poststructuralist thinkers typically do not explicitly use or identify with the term 'poststructuralist' (Lundy, 2013). In an attempt to be philosophically coherent, I have surmised from my reading that poststructuralism emphasises the 'discursive construction of knowledge' and the 'never-ending tensions to be found within texts' (Dillet, McKenzie & Porter, 2013, p. 507). It offers a critical perspective to research (Hodgson & Standish, 2009) which includes historical influences on current circumstances (Apple, 2014) and attempts to 'decentre' humanistic assumptions of truth (O'Keeffe & McNally, 2023).

Poststructuralist discourse analysis is concerned with how the identities of individuals are shaped by discourse; leading to discourses being the object of study (Braun & Clarke, 2013) which impacts the participants, the researcher and the audience of the research itself (Cohen et al., 2018). One form of this type of analysis is FDA, a specific methodology linked to critical psychology (Parker, 2013), which was the chosen method for this empirical research. FDA is concerned with political discourses (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2017) which are intertwined and inseparable from each other (Scotland, 2012). Some argue that political influences on education exist as a dyadic relationship; that is, schools influence political thought and political thought influence schools (Winter et al., 2020). Therefore, truth can be considered a product of the discourses that exist in this dyadic relationship, in line with a Foucauldian style approach to research (Peters & Burbeles, 2004). These can exist

within the 'overt' and 'covert' assumptions of the world (Hardy, 2013) and how individuals turn themselves into subjects through these discourses (Foucault, 1982, cited in Foucault & Faubion, 2002).

For the purposes of this research project, I used an adapted form of FDA following Willig (2013) and Parker's (1992) processes for conducting this form of analysis. There are a variety of approaches to using discourse analysis in general (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2017) and there is difficulty in having a coherent definition of what FDA *is* (Graham, 2011). However, Howitt (2019) suggests that FDA can be used when research is addressing institutions (such as education) by professionals who work within them and the influence of their own practice (i.e., educational psychologists); hence, FDA was chosen as it can provide the tools necessary for a critical reflection on professional practice (Hofmann, 2016).

2.5 Ethics

This study was approved by the Newcastle University Ethics Committee and I drew upon the ethical guidelines EPs work within in practice; the British Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Ethics and Conduct (2021), the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics (2021) and the BPS Practice Guidelines (2017). Every effort was made to ensure that I adhered to the highest level of ethical standards (Prendeville & Kinsella, 2022) although I appreciate that ethical issues cannot always easily be resolved, especially as such guidelines are subject to review as time goes on (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2017). By presenting a transparent account of my consideration of ethics, I hope to provide truthfulness which is considered by some to be more important than absolute truths in research (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005). Following Brinkmann and Kvale's (2005) discussion on ethics inspired by Foucault, a consideration of micro-ethics (concerning the individual participants) and macro-ethics (concerning the wider ethical implications of the research) will be presented.

2.5.1 Micro-ethics

Participants were recruited voluntarily and were provided with a research outline document (see Appendix 3) and signed a consent form (see Appendix 4). Participants had access to my email address and my supervisor's email address if they wished to withdraw consent from the study, in line with Newcastle University's research data collection and retention protocols. Throughout the interviews, participants were reminded of their right to withdraw at any time and some participants exercised this right within the interview recording (i.e., requesting for data to be omitted after being shared). Participants were offered in-person (in their school) or virtual interviews (via MS Teams) so that they could participate in a space most comfortable for them. To protect the participants' identity, pseudonyms were assigned

to the interview transcripts and only necessary identifying information was reported in the research (see Table 7 in Chapter 3).

Participants were assured that the purpose of the interviews was not to make judgements on their mentors or mentees; this was especially important for the mentor/mentee pairs which both decided to participate in the interviews. I acknowledge that there are several often-neglected power characteristics within qualitative interviews, which concern but are not limited to: the asymmetrical power relation of the interview, the interview as a one-way dialogue, the interview as an instrumental dialogue (serving the researcher's ends), the interview being a manipulative dialogue (interviewers may use subtle therapeutic techniques) and the interviewers' monopoly of interpretation (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005). The interview questions can be found in Appendix 5 and were semi-structured in their nature. This was done to reduce the effects of the power characteristics outlined and I often reflected my interpretation of the participants' answers to ensure that they could see my understanding of their dialogue.

2.5.2 Macro-ethics

As this research was inherently concerned with macro aspects of teacher retention and attrition issues, the analysis reflected this focus both during the interview and the analysis. As part of the pre-interview information, I presented my SLR findings to the participants using the visual of Figure 2 (in Chapter 1). I was transparent in the research I was drawing upon and the issues with which I was concerned, which was the current teacher retention and attrition crisis in Western countries. I explained to the participants that I was interested in analysing the discourses from their talk, not their talk as an individual to be compared against the other participants. After all, Foucault asserted that it matters not who is speaking when focusing on the study of the discourses; offering anonymity to the one who speaks and interrogating the discourses that emerge rather than the speaker (Rabinow & Rose, 2003).

However, I acknowledge that this piece of research will be made public; Brinkmann and Kvale (2005) pose rhetorical questions to this issue here for researchers to take into consideration. Questions such as 'what happens when I, as a powerful researcher, speak on behalf of my interview subjects in the wider cultural situation?' (p. 170) are particularly thought provoking. As both the SLR and empirical projects look at teachers who are (mostly) educated, trained and employed by their respective governments, using their words to criticise governmental decisions has potential to be dangerous. However, the thick contextual construction (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2017) of neoliberalism, which is not a term adopted by any government body (Davies & Bansel, 2007), is deployed to mitigate such

potential dangers as this is, in essence, the concept under scrutiny - not the individual teachers or individual countries.

2.6 Conclusion

In providing my conceptual framework and ethical considerations, I hope to have provided an adequate scope to the context, purpose and processes of this research project which has included the SLR and the empirical study. Following this chapter, I will present the empirical research I conducted (Chapter 3) and a reflective account of the research journey including the next steps (Chapter 4).

Chapter 3: What discourses emerge from ECTs and their mentors talk about the teaching profession? A Foucauldian discourse analysis.

3.1 Abstract

In this empirical study, the views of ECTs and their mentors about the teaching career were examined. A Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) was used to explore how teachers position themselves within the discourses around teaching within a socio-historically specific context. Analysis of data from this empirical study provides a critical view of neo-liberal discourses in education and offers a discussion of how the discourses might be challenged going forward.

Key words: discourse, teaching, education, school, neo-liberalism, policy, Foucault, poststructuralism, critical psychology, educational psychology.

Following examination, this paper will be submitted to the Critical Studies in Education journal. Presentation and formatting styles are conducive to this journal's publishing guidelines.

3.2 Introduction

The aim of this empirical research project was to explore what discourses emerge about the teaching profession in researcher-guided conversations with current teachers both ECTs and their mentors. In this introduction, I will briefly review the wider context of the research area before presenting the rationale for the current project in the context of Educational Psychology practice.

3.3 Current context

The current processes for becoming a teacher in England are varied, ranging from undergraduate degrees, post-graduate degrees, apprenticeships and other routes (Hulme & Wood, 2022). All training routes tend to lead to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) although some types of schools (such as academies, free schools and independent schools) may choose not to require QTS (or provide an induction period) for their teaching staff. However, many schools employ the QTS standards (DfE, 2011) to quality assess their teachers (DfE, 2014a). Upon completion of an accredited training course, they are then mostly identified as an Early Career Teacher (ECT) which was previously named Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT). As ECTs, they then complete a two year induction period at the school they are employed which is informed by the Early Career Framework (DfE, 2019a) and are allocated one mentor (usually a fellow teacher within the school) and one induction tutor (usually a member of leadership). These reforms were introduced as a government response to the

teacher recruitment and retention crisis in England (DfE, 2019b) based on statistical evidence demonstrating the high risk factors of teachers leaving the profession within two years of qualifying (Worth, 2020). ECTs are considered to be a key group of teachers where retention is particularly low (Jerrim, 2021) especially when comparing their attrition rates to their retired colleagues (Worth, 2023). Since the inception of the ECF, research has continued to demonstrate significant challenges within the teacher education system in the UK (Ridgway, 2023) and although there are some positive changes in supporting ECT retention (HofCL, 2022), issues remain for more experienced teachers and the projected trends of teacher supply and demand are concerning (McLean et al., 2024). These have been described as the 'perfect storm' (p.3) and detrimental to children's learning (Jerrim, 2021).

Not only is the issue of teacher recruitment and retention a concern for the UK, but the 'global north' is also experiencing this problem (Spicksley & Kington, 2023) as well as the political shaping of the purpose of education across the world (Biesta et al., 2022). Countries such as Belgium, Canada and Australia share similar teacher attrition and retention issues and are conceptualised within various research paradigms (Buchanan et al., 2013; Carroll et al., 2022; Clandinin et al., 2015; Dupriez et al., 2016; Gallant & Riley, 2017; Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014; Wyatt & O'Neill, 2021). What is shared across these areas of the world is the political ideology of neoliberalism which concerns itself with the promotion of self-interest and marketisation across society (Maisuria, 2014). Education is just one of those areas in which the neoliberalist agenda has an impact, with a view that 'economic productivity is seen to come not from government investment…, but from transforming education into a product that can be bought and sold like anything else,' (Davies & Bansel, 2007, p. 254). In addition, neoliberalism brings accountability to the individual, not the state; even when the impact of austerity and lack of opportunities is not a part of the life choices the individual makes (Sugarman, 2015). Indeed, recent reforms of education in England which coincided with the coalition government of 2010 switched education policies of quality *teaching* (with New Labour initiatives such as the National Literacy Strategy to support teachers) to quality *teachers* (with a focus on getting the 'right' people into teaching) (Spicksley, 2022). Therefore, in researching the problem of the teacher recruitment and retention crisis, one may want to explore more macro-levels of inquiry, as Roth (1992) argued,

> 'If we sense, as most of us do, that our schools are neither liberating nor
> conserving our values, then an opening exists for both radicals and
> reactionaries to propose new criteria for the human subject, constituting a future
> different from the present and the past.' (p. 694)

A way in which to do this through research is via Michel Foucault's (1954-1984) work which has inspired many writers to critically view the institutions and practices in which they operate through the study of discourse and power (for example, writers such as Ian Parker, Erica Burman and Valerie Walkerdine) which include writers within the field of Educational Psychology (for example, Tom Billington and Liz Todd).

An example of applying Foucault's methods in relation to teaching is a study by Spicksley (2022). Here, attention was drawn to discourses of post-2010 ministerial speeches which reconstructed the identity of teachers in support of the neo-liberal agenda.[1] This research illuminated a 'hierarchical generational division' (p.672) between teachers that acted as a source of separation between new and experienced teachers. Within this research, it was highlighted that the government initiatives for Teach First (a school-based teacher training method) were positioned as more valuable in creating educational reform by reducing ITE methods via university institutions. This initiative mirrored global attempts of the Teach for All movement to draw in 'elite, high performing graduates as the primary remedy for entrenched educational problems' (p. 657). In this way, Spicksley (2022) posits, a tension was created between experienced teachers and new graduates, positioning experienced teachers as 'problematic' and 'passive' compared to trainee teachers as 'inherently superior' and 'brilliant'. In essence, Spicksley (2022) argued that these discursive practices were a tool for creating 'docile bodies' (Foucault, 1977) ushering in a new generation of teachers willing to follow new reforms to education which countered the experienced teacher's historic understanding of teaching. Interestingly, McLean and Worth (2023) have recently pointed out that cohorts of Teach First trainees who completed their training between 2011-2017 were considerably more likely to be in leadership roles earlier on in their career; this may suggest that the new generation of teachers Spicksley (2022) described via ministerial discourses are now the new generation of school leadership.

3.4 Rationale

At the time of writing, there does not seem to have been a Foucauldian inspired study focused on the discourses of the teaching career in the field of Educational Psychology. Therefore, this original qualitative study aims to understand the discourses around the teaching career through the talk of ECTs and ECT mentors. Although the original context for this study was to concern only the views of ECTs, attrition and retention data has also placed experienced teachers at risk of leaving the profession early, with overall teacher leaving rates increasing (McLean et al., 2024). Therefore, ECTs and ECT mentors were the focus

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[1] Ridgway (2023) distinguishes the post-2010 political climate in England as the 'modern conservative era' so that it can be differentiated from other periods of conservative reform such as Thatcherism in the 1970-80s.

sample of this study. Conducting this research from an EP perspective, as opposed to a teacher perspective for example, brings an opportunity for this phenomenon to be explored from a more macro professional view. As EPs typically interact with large numbers of schools in various situations, research from this point of view could provide a larger scope for both the analysis and the outcomes of the study; alike to how educational academics conduct research with teachers but are not directly teachers themselves (Heimans et al., 2024). This study also draws specific attention to how EPs can support the sustainability of the teaching profession, following the analysis of the teachers' talk. A proposal of what could be done is provided within the discussion.

The study addresses the research question: What discourses emerge from ECTs and their mentors talk about the teaching profession? In addition, this study seeks to extend an understanding of what these discourses might tell us about the state of education in this country. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to present a social critique to empower the stories of teachers with the hope that this can be a steppingstone to guide reform for the teaching profession. This approach is conducive to how Willig (1999) described the purpose of applying discourse analysis to research and how Parker (2007) describes the use and purpose of critical psychology.

3.5 Methodology

This study adopted a poststructuralist ontological and epistemological underpinning alongside a critical psychological approach to carrying out the research methodology. Poststructuralist thinking derives from the idea that knowledge is intertwined with culture and history, with influence of mostly French philosophical scholars such as Michel Foucault (Howitt, 2019). Following from a poststructuralist understanding of knowledge, conducting the research from a critical psychology perspective will allow the analysis to consider the historical basis for the discourses and how they can be deconstructed in order to connect with the process of change going forward (Parker, 2007).

A focus on wider discourses within the stories told by the teachers in this study allow for a macro construction of themselves positioned within the social world (Pomerantz, 2008). To analyse these, Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) is used. This methodological approach is influenced by Foucauldian philosophy whereby discourse concerns, 'rules, divisions and systems of a particular body of knowledge,' (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2017, p.10) and how these discourses are historical for, and then maintained by, the individual (Parker, 2013). Through identifying these discourses, FDA allows for power to be considered within the analysis; not as an imposing, dominating, total power, but how that power can rule and regulate an individual (Foucault, 1983 in an interview with Gérard Raulet,

cited in Rabinow & Rose, 2003). The use of Foucault's ideas allows researchers to, 'propose new criteria... constituting a future different from the present and past... by surveying the closure and repetitiveness in our own thinking,' (Roth, 1992, p. 694).

3.5.1 Method

This research was conducted across two local authorities in the Northeast of England. ECTs and ECT mentors were chosen for this study as they were directly involved with the recent changes to the ECT induction period. Given the context for the ECF and general recruitment and retention reforms the government have implemented, focusing on these two types of teachers chosen. Participants other than these roles (e.g., ECT induction tutors) were not included in this study as they are typically part of senior leadership teams with limited classroom teaching allocations.

Participants were recruited via purposive, convenience sampling whereby the researcher disseminated research posters within their local authority via the EPs within the Educational Psychology Service. EPs sent the flyers to their allocated schools via their point of contact with school (mostly SENCOs). To widen the catchment for participants, the researcher also requested that colleagues in neighbouring EP services disseminate the information to their schools too. Participants who were available for a 1:1 interview for around 45 minutes of their time during the working week volunteered to participate. The table below offers a relevant description of the five participants who responded to the research information. All participants were white-British women.

Table 7: Participant overview

Participant pseudonym	Type of teacher	Type of setting	Experience
Ruby	ECT (full-time)	Mainstream primary	1st ECT year, 2nd term (NQT started but disrupted due to personal circumstances)
Rose	ECT (full-time)	Specialist secondary	1st ECT year, 1st term
Amber	ECT Mentor (part-time)	Mainstream primary	More than 20 years, 8 ECTs
Sienna	ECT Mentor (full-time)	Mainstream primary	7 years, 1 ECT
Violet	ECT Mentor + TLR (full-time)	Specialist secondary	5 years, 1 ECT

3.5.2 Ethical considerations

This study was approved by Newcastle University's Ethics Committee following an enhanced ethics assessment and adhered to the standards outlined in the BPS Code of Ethics (2021).

Within the research flyer and participant information sheet, details of the study were provided for prospective participants and those who chose to take part were also provided with a verbal explanation of the study before beginning the interviews. Appendices 3&4 provides an outline of the ethics documents provided for participants. Further considerations of ethics can be found in Chapter 2.
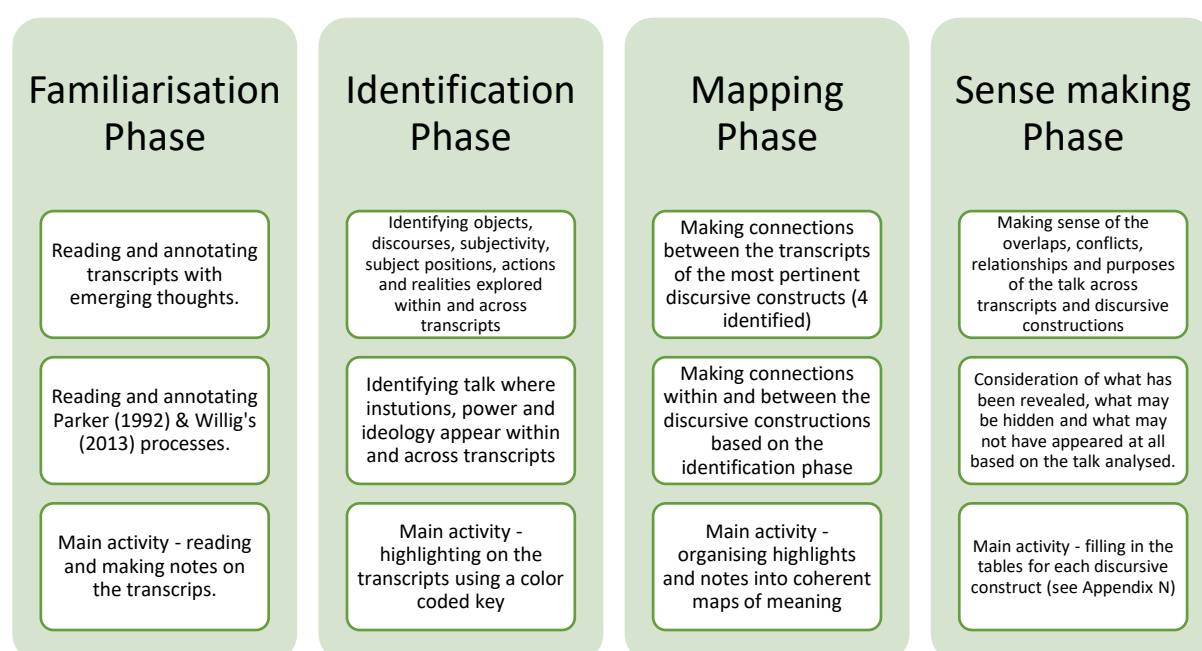
3.5.3 Data generation

Data was generated through the use of researcher and participant interviews. Semi-structured interview questions were displayed and referred to by the researcher to prompt the discussions (see Appendix 5). These interviews were initially transcribed using Microsoft Word Online's transcription tool before thorough editing by the researcher. The transcriptions are true to the recordings and were not edited for grammatical accuracy applied to written texts. Appendix 6 is an extract of one of the transcriptions alongside analysis annotations for reference.

3.5.4 Data analysis method

Given this study's methodological stance, a version of FDA was used as an analysis tool. FDA does not have one prescribed method of analysis (Graham, 2011), and nor did Foucault propose a set method or a general concept of 'Foucault Studies' (Rabinow & Rose, 2003), so an adapted method of FDA was chosen to accommodate for the context and purpose of the research. Figure 3 outlines the method of analysis which draws upon the writings of Parker (1992), Willig (2013) and Howitt (2019); their process for analysis can be found in Appendix 7.

Figure 3: My analysis process

Familiarisation Phase	Identification Phase	Mapping Phase	Sense making Phase
Reading and annotating transcripts with emerging thoughts.	Identifying objects, discourses, subjectivity, subject positions, actions and realities explored within and across transcripts	Making connections between the transcripts of the most pertinent discursive constructs (4 identified)	Making sense of the overlaps, conflicts, relationships and purposes of the talk across transcripts and discursive constructions
Reading and annotating Parker (1992) & Willig's (2013) processes.	Identifying talk where instutions, power and ideology appear within and across transcripts	Making connections within and between the discursive constructions based on the identification phase	Consideration of what has been revealed, what may be hidden and what may not have appeared at all based on the talk analysed.
Main activity - reading and making notes on the transcrips.	Main activity - highlighting on the transcripts using a color coded key	Main activity - organising highlights and notes into coherent maps of meaning	Main activity - filling in the tables for each discursive construct (see Appendix N)

3.6 Analysis overview

The following tables present a summary of each discursive construct to illuminate what discourses emerged from the teachers' talk. Figure 4 represents a simplified version of the summaries, with more detail and definitions for the terminology available in Appendix 7. The most pertinent discursive constructions identified via the teachers' talk concerned teaching, wellbeing, time and education. For the purposes of clarity, these constructions are presented in separate tables but their existence within and across the interview transcripts was fluid. In addition, the iterative nature of this analysis also included the writing stage as part of the analysis whereby constructs may have been edited or added as this chapter was written.

The four discursive constructs presented were chosen to both address the purpose of this study and to provide an appropriate boundary within which I could focus my analysis. I acknowledge that the analysis could have focused on many different discursive constructs and could have addressed more wider discourses at play within the teachers' talk. For example, gender could have been a large focus of the analysis as the impact of gender related discourses were present across all interviews. However, this was not included as its own discursive construct so that the focus could remain on the profession without distorting the analysis towards a cis-gendered female perspective without explicitly seeking views across other gender groups. In addition, the sampling method was not prescriptive in this way and the analysis did not intend to focus on this discursive construct as part of the purpose of this study. Gender is acknowledged as an identified discourse within the four constructs presented as it was a concept that was important as part of the participants' lived experience.

The description these discursive constructions as the focus for this analysis are as follows:

'Teaching' – this construct concerned anything related to the practice of teaching including the day-to-day actions (such as lesson planning, marking, behaviour management etc.) and implicit pedagogical actions or reflections (i.e., how the teachers addressed their practice choices which sometimes concerned their professional values).

'Wellbeing' – this construct concerned anything related to how the teachers' professional role impacted their health either physically or mentally. Throughout analysis, this construct encompassed individual experiences and shared (or perceived to be shared) experiences.

'Time' – this construct concerned explicit references to the tangible concept of time (i.e., the hours in the working day) as well as the impact the teaching role had on the teachers' perception of time especially in relation to their descriptions of work-life balance.

'Education' – this construct concerned the teachers' perceptions of the education system on the whole. It made reference to how teachers perceived themselves as part of a wider system and how the system itself influenced their sense of agency and action.

Figure 4: Simplified analysis overview

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                         Objects

        Auxillary                      Subjects
        Criteria


                    Discursive
        History     Construction       Realities



                                       Actions
        Reflexivity

                    Wider
                    discourses
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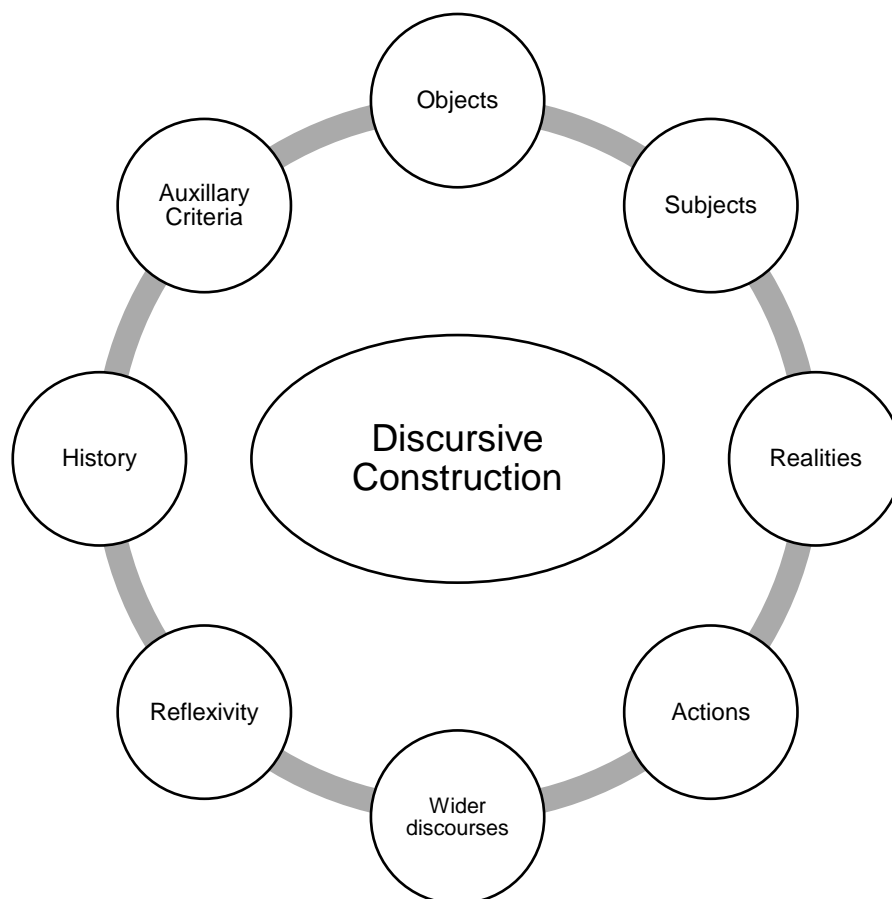
Table 8: Discursive Construction: Teaching

Discursive construction: Teaching				
Objects • What is described? • *What is implied?*	**Subjects** • Types of self • Audiences • Positioning and power	**Realities** • 1st layer – what is referred to? • 2nd layer – objectification of a discourse • What pictures are painted/mapped?	**Action(s)** • What does this discursive construction achieve? • Identifying purpose, intent, voice, opportunities	**Wider discourses** • Systems of meanings • Shared understanding to support coherence
Tasks – e.g., planning, marking, duties etc. People – e.g., pupil and staff title categories School *Finances & pay*	Explicit adjectives/descriptions used: transparent, passionate, responsible, self-critical, consistent, perfectionist, 'mother hen' & a 'show pony'. Audiences – school leadership, government, the general public Positioning – catch 22 scenarios (describing hypocrisies in role), overwhelming responsibility, low self-efficacy, isolation	1st layer - The 'real' things about teaching: the workload, the pupils, the real 'objects' which can be seen and experienced. 2nd layer – the 'reality' of teaching concerning what is felt in the profession as experience increases. Teaching is depicted as encompassing more than just one job – makes reference to social work, safeguarding, parenting, increased responsibilities etc.	Explicit past actions – for example, moving schools when dissatisfied with teaching rather than moving roles completely. Potential actions – for example, reducing hours or stepping down a role (to HLTA/TA) to support wellbeing or family circumstances (i.e., having time for own children).	Assumptions that realities do not require elaboration – use of "you know" type phrases* • Efficacy discourse • Financial discourse • (Mental) health discourse • Gender discourse • Parenting discourse • Behaviour discourse • Individualistic discourse • Neo-liberal discourse
Reflexivity • Choice of descriptions of discourses (e.g. what does a feminist discourse mean here?) • Impact of researcher views to analysis		**Historical considerations** • How and where the discourses emerged • Implications of change	**Three Auxiliary Criteria** • institutions • power relations • ideological effects	
*The researcher identifies themselves as a teacher in a previous role before starting the interviews. It may be important to highlight here that the study was conducted in Education Investment Areas (DfE, 2023) whereby socio-economic circumstances of the pupils may be related to teacher experience here (e.g., when mentioning the level of social care given to the pupils via school staff). My interpretation of the realities constructed by the participants evokes a reflection on the Greek Titan, Atlas. Gender discourses – I am analysing and interpreting the data from a western, white-British, cis-gendered, heterosexual female perspective (among other categories).		That teaching isn't what it 'used to be', nor is the perception of schooling the same as it once was for adults in general. The realities conflict between what was, what is, and who sees it. The past is depicted as happy, whereas the present is not. Life stories – often depicting the drive to be a teacher forming from a young age. Playing 'teachers' as children or exposure to teaching through family members.	School environments can reinforce efficacy discourses in positive and negative ways – i.e., supportive colleagues bringing a high sense of self efficacy, unsupportive colleagues bringing a low sense of self efficacy. Gender discourses having power over career choices when children are brought into the family – the physicality of having children (maternity leave) and the time to raise them (working hours). Partners were not mentioned within these discourses. An oppressive positioning, assuming that the female partner will need to sacrifice their career (and pay/progression) in the family unit. Individualistic discourse – a general promotion of this through the talk analysed and perhaps being a barrier to resistance. For example, when talk of collective agency emerged to make things better, action was oriented on the institutions (i.e. school and school leaders) to listen to the teachers and take action, not for the teachers to take action themselves.	

Table 9: Discursive Construction: Wellbeing

Discursive construction: Wellbeing				
Objects • What is described? • *What is implied?*	**Subjects** • Types of self • Audiences • Positioning and power	**Realities** • 1st layer – what is referred to? • 2nd layer – objectification of a discourse • What pictures are painted/mapped?	**Action(s)** • What does this discursive construction achieve? • Identifying purpose, intent, voice, opportunities	**Wider discourses** • Systems of meanings • Shared understanding to support coherence
Negative – stress, burnout, negativity, breakdown, worry, pressure Positive – worth, value, pride Concepts – work-life balance, responsibility, togetherness, resilience, praise, habits Difficult/hard conversations (mental) health Tricks of the trade	Explicit: personable, happy, hypocritical *Implicit: responsible* Quality of health is subject to the environment of the school/job in general. Sustainability of teaching being subject to the sense of belonging experienced. Positioned as a liar – not believed by leadership that the job is hard. Not believed that they are doing the best they can. Compassion fatigue (Leonard & Willig, 2021) – wanting to help but feel powerless to do so.	1st layer – that teaching is hard and can be detrimental to physical and mental health if left unchecked. Where collegial support is present, this is identified as a protective factor. 2nd layer – that the realities of teaching are shared across others – same situation, different places. 'Tricks of the trade' disguised as coping strategies with the impact of workload on wellbeing. Seen as the norm for weekends and evenings to be spared for the job – outsiders to the role acting on their behalf to support their basic needs (e.g., partners making them go to bed) or to take part in the same practices (e.g., partners who are also teachers).	Taking responsibility for being the 'happy' member of staff to support the environmental wellbeing across staff. Having the difficult/hard conversations intentionally to solve problems before they get worse (a proactive strategy). Using 'tricks of the trade' to make work-life balance easier (a reactive strategy) Holding back 'real' emotions to support the ECT – protecting them. Consciously doing things differently in their own experience to support the ECT (e.g., avoiding lunchtime meetings).	Assumptions that the experience is shared across all teachers, using collective pronouns, for example. Despite a shared feeling of appropriate actions to support wellbeing in their school (e.g., reducing marking), the actions are not enough to make change. • Protective discourse • Expectation discourse • (Mental) health discourse
Reflexivity • Choice of descriptions of discourses (e.g. what does a feminist discourse mean here?) • Impact of researcher views to analysis		**Historical considerations** • How and where the discourses emerged • Implications of change		**Three Auxiliary Criteria** • institutions • power relations • ideological effects
Protective discourse – this was originally named as 'heroic' discourse but, upon further analysis, this was very specific from the mentors to the ECTs in relation to the 'reality' of teaching and seemed more appropriate compared to a more overarching concept of heroism. Discursive construct is relatable to the researcher, having experienced similar situations to the participants. Empathy was presented to them rather than, say, questions that challenged their views.		As time goes on for the teachers, less attention is paid to the workload and situations so that their wellbeing is protected. This is reflected in the mentors on a long-term basis (i.e., years of practice) and the ECTs via a short-term basis (i.e., comparing previous terms). Experience also informs action, e.g., engaging in proactive support strategies.		Leadership beyond the school (i.e., the larger system for education) viewing wellbeing differently to the teachers. This is resisted when the teachers dismiss strategies like 'coffee mornings' as not being enough to tackle the 'real' issues. The 'culture' and 'nature' of teaching impacting wellbeing and a sense of oppression.

Table 10: Discursive Construction: Time

Discursive construction: Time				
Objects • What is described? • *What is implied?*	**Subjects** • Types of self • Audiences • Positioning and power	**Realities** • 1st layer – what is referred to? • 2nd layer – objectification of a discourse • What pictures are painted/mapped?	**Action(s)** • What does this discursive construction achieve? • Identifying purpose, intent, voice, opportunities	**Wider discourses** • Systems of meanings • Shared understanding to support coherence
Work related time – e.g., timetable, allocated ECT time, workload, deadlines etc. Family and relationships Point/purpose of time spent on work	Time has power over life choices and wellbeing. Time is also in the hands of leaders (i.e. controlling timetables) and can act as a barrier to being able to be the practitioner they want to be.	1st layer – there literally isn't enough time in the day for the job demands. 2nd layer – time is a barrier for the teachers to move on with their personal lives (i.e. having children) and progress professionally (e.g., not enough time to be the reflective practitioner they want to be).	Potential actions to step down in their role to suit their personal lives. Tricks of the trade – as above. Consistently requesting more time, but not being able to suggest where it can come from.	Shared understanding that the time it takes to become a teacher (in general) and the day-to-day life of teaching is bound by the concept of time and that there simply isn't enough of it. Might it be too existential to explicitly act upon? • Gender discourse • Efficacy discourse

Reflexivity • Choice of descriptions of discourses (e.g. what does a feminist discourse mean here?) • Impact of researcher views to analysis		**Historical considerations** • How and where the discourses emerged • Implications of change	**Three Auxiliary Criteria** • institutions • power relations • ideological effects
Gender discourse – as above (in the discursive construction of teaching), whereby time is limited especially with regards to having children. Efficacy discourse – if the teachers could use time in a way that was more conducive to the way that they work and how long it 'really' takes them to do particular tasks, would they have a higher sense of efficacy in their role?		Time barriers persist from training to qualifying and only shift in the objects they embody (i.e., ITE, NQT/ECT and then being fully qualified) but continue nonetheless.	Time holds power here – and whoever uses time (e.g., leadership) can inadvertently impose control. If the teachers were able to use time in the way they wished, they would be positioned as more powerful than they are currently.

Table 11: Discursive Construction: Education

Discursive construction: Education				
Objects • What is described? • *What is implied?*	**Subjects** • Types of self • Audiences • Positioning and power	**Realities** • 1st layer – what is referred to? • 2nd layer – objectification of a discourse • What pictures are painted/mapped?	**Action(s)** • What does this discursive construction achieve? • Identifying purpose, intent, voice, opportunities	**Wider discourses** • Systems of meanings • Shared understanding to support coherence
Institutions: government, 'the system', society, OFSTED and their associated objects (e.g., funding, COVID, strike action etc.,)	Similar to the discursive construct of teaching. Power is very limited here; the teachers are positioned as passive recipients and are required to perform 'like a show pony'.	1st layer – real things about the education system that concern the teachers (e.g., where funding is *really* spent) but are out of their control. 2nd layer – forming these objects of concern which are interwoven into their experiences (e.g., the added workload on getting diagnoses for children via the request of their parents).	There were no explicit actions which appeared in the interviews. However, this discursive construct was consistently drawn upon in how the teachers spoke about their experiences of being an ECT/mentor.	• SEND discourse • Neo-Liberal discourse • Performance discourse • Efficacy discourse
Reflexivity • Choice of descriptions of discourses (e.g. what does a feminist discourse mean here?) • Impact of researcher views to analysis		**Historical considerations** • How and where the discourses emerged • Implications of change		**Three Auxiliary Criteria** • institutions • power relations • ideological effects
Sharing the literature findings with the teachers brought in a problem to the discourse. I problematised it in a way which drew upon literature (and personal experience, which was shared via my conceptual framework) and so I wonder if the recognition of this evidence-base empowered the teachers to speak so openly about it. Perhaps, a scientific discourse is at play here too, justifying their lived-experiences and the discourses they shared.		As above in the teaching discursive construction. It may be important to note here about how they have experienced the education system so far (be it a few years or a few decades) and how they see their future in the profession based on historical patterns (i.e., demoting oneself or completely changing career paths as one teacher talked about).		Inherently, this discursive construction is all about education as a whole institution. There are ideological conflicts with how the teachers would like it to be and what it really is with many frustrations with the system emerging throughout the talk (e.g., how education leaders take advice from other education systems which are viewed as worse for wellbeing than our own).

3.7 Discussion and implications

To explore how ECTs and their mentors construct their experiences of the teaching career in light of current teacher induction reforms, as indicated above, a modified form of FDA was used. The most pertinent discursive constructions which occurred across the interviews concerned the teachers' constructions of teaching, wellbeing, education and time. Within these, many wider discourses emerged during the analysis. The discourses which are most pertinent to the purpose of this research will now be discussed with quotes from the teachers to illustrate these. In line with Willig's (1999) writing on the purpose of discourse analysis, this discussion will encompass three key implications so that the research provides: a social critique of the profession as it currently stands, empowerment for the teachers who took part in the research (by citing their own words) and a presentation of the implications of this study to guide further professional reforms in education in England.

3.7.1 Discussion: a social critique of neoliberalism, performativity and individualism through teachers' talk

Neoliberal discourses were woven throughout the teachers' talk, appearing more as an implicit influence alike to Hyde's (2022) description of the neo-liberal 'norm'. The term neoliberalism was never mentioned but features of the ideology were present throughout the talk. For example, definitive comments about the 'nature' of teaching (Violet) which encompassed working long hours (Amber), evidencing progress (Ruby) and performing like a 'show pony' (Sienna). Elements of performativity and the impact on the teacher's wellbeing was quite evident across the interviews, echoing the need for schools to be extra-ordinary within a competitive, neoliberal system (Maguire et al., 2011). In addition, these 'norms' had an impact on who they were as teachers within this discourse (Ball, 2003), as Sienna described how her approach to teaching is powerless to the realities of the education system:

> "Whether we think they do or not, or whether I am a lovely bubbly teacher or not, it doesn't really have an effect on the pressure that [children] feel because they already feel [it]. I've already got children here who are six and seven years old who feel like they're rubbish and that's not the way it should be." - Sienna

If we consider the idea of 'the body as [an] object and target of power' (Foucault, 1977) then it stands to reason that we should be considering individual experiences of teachers to shed light on how that power is forming and impacting them as professionals on a wider scale. Research on teacher's wellbeing has been extensive across neoliberal societies for many years, with recent British statistics on the matter highlighting that poor wellbeing for educators continues to decline (Education Support, 2023a). However, treating teachers'

declining wellbeing with individualised support, such as counselling, is not enough – their presentation is an effect of a much broader political problem (Winter et al., 2020) and its manifestation changes as teachers gain more career experience (Kutsyuruba et al., 2022). Interestingly, this reality was present for the ECT mentors in this study, and the practice of shielding or protecting their ECTs in some way was an action they all drew upon, as Violet discussed:

> "As an ECT mentor, I will do everything in my power to shield her from that [negative induction experience] because… I wouldn't wish what I went through on anybody else." – Violet

In addition, Amber's experience of teaching provided an insight into the expectations on teachers changing throughout her decades of practice experience. Some writers have discussed the notion of a 'new era' of professionalism for training teachers which prioritises evidence based practice and technician style approaches have shifted the identities of teachers (Murtagh et al., 2024). Amber often discussed how teaching has changed and there are increased expectations on new teachers as well as ones who, like her, occupy more senior roles. She commented that:

> "Teaching is not a full time job. It's more than full time." - Amber

Charitable organisations, such as Education Support, have research evidence claims for this reality across the profession on a national scale. They state that, 'as the demands on education staff have grown in volume and complexity, they are working longer hours and reporting higher levels of stress, exhaustion and burnout… Unsurprisingly, attrition from the profession is growing,' (Education Support, 2023b, p.28). This is also the case for new teachers, as Rose (the most junior out of the participants) described how she was using her 'free time' (rather, her uncontracted time) to catch up on work. Rose's intrusion of work into her non-working hours highlights how teachers are burdened with the responsibility to perform so that they are not viewed by others as 'irresponsible' or 'unprofessional' (Ball, 2016). Although there are increasing financial incentives to become a teacher (DfE, 2019b), teachers, like Rose, who are very early in their career are considering dropping their teaching role/capacity to cope with the demands of teaching despite pay incentives or increases. This is echoed in the literature whereby pay and working conditions are an important factor contributing to teacher retention and attrition but it is not the only reason for teacher's leaving early (see the systematic literature review in Chapter 1 for further information).

If we subscribe to the idea of the 'modern school' which argues that schools are currently places where individual cognitive achievements are valued more than social relationships

(Ball & Collet-Sabé, 2022), then perhaps we need to give up on our attempts to save or reform it (Biesta, 2019). As was repeatedly said by most of the teachers in this research, they simply did not know how to make things better. Therefore, it is possible that the discourses which arose can be described as 'wicked problems'. Rittel and Webber (1973) discussed how society has dealt with the 'definable, understandable and consensual' (p.156) problems shared across professional institutions; the issue now lies with societal problems which are the opposite, or the 'inherently wicked' (p.160). Citations since this publication have been addressed by educational and social science research papers (Termeer et al., 2019), typically within the regions of Europe and North America (Lönngren & van Poeck, 2021), which generally draw a shared meaning in that our global systems are so complex that 'any possible explanation for the existence of a wicked problem will fundamentally condition any possible approaches to resolving it, and vice versa,' (Gruendel, 2022, p.206). Current attempts to mitigate teacher retention, such as the current government initiatives to implement flexible working hours for school staff (DfE, 2024), may indeed cause further problems. Sienna gave an example of this when discussing how she felt guilty leaving her TA alone to teach the class whilst she used her ECT mentor time. It's as if such wicked problems present with an ouroboros[2] effect, with solutions sustaining its very existence in an endless cycle.

3.7.2 Implication one: a critical lens to guide further professional reforms

Through identifying the discourses which emerged in the teacher's talk, the implications of this research must be considered with a critical lens; in keeping with what Parker (2007) discussed as what critical psychology *is* and *is not*. As the discourses concerned 'wicked problems', there will not be a suggestion of what the solutions are or could be so that we avoid the continuous feeding of the metaphorical ouroboros. What is presented is *how* we can act upon the implications of these discourses as Educational Psychologists, using Gruendel's (2022) key components to allow for the reconstruction of wicked problems:

1. *'Wicked problems have a temporal imaginary that requires attention to the constant production and pluralisation of futurity... planners have an obligation to continuously generate future possibilities' (p. 207).* Essentially, the impact neoliberalism has had on our education system is not going to disappear any time soon (Hyde, 2022) but we need to interrogate its existence and consider its impact on our identities, well-being and professional practices (Sugarman, 2015).

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[2] An ouroboros is a snake-like creature from ancient mythology. It is often depicted as infinitely coiled and eating its own tail to symbolise an eternal cycle of destruction and re-creation (source).

2. *'Wicked problems place a jurisdictional limit on expertise' whereby 'there are no experts' (p. 207, cited from Rittel and Webster, 1973).* Following Foucauldian thought that 'power is in discourse' (p.300), Riley (2021) suggest that FDA's focus on how individuals 'make sense of themselves through discourse' and that by engaging in these illuminative methods, we can allow for individuals to be the experts in their own lives (Dulwich Centre, 2024) positioning expertise in a different way.

3. *'Planning for wicked problems requires formation of a collectivity' (p.207).* Teachers and psychologists are interlinked, facing 'new professional demands' within the neoliberalist functioning of schools which are outcome based, competitive and standardized approaches (Szulevicz, 2018). A collective approach needs to be done in an 'organic' way, connecting and allowing participation for those who are willing to challenge the status quo (Apple, 2014).

4. *'Wicked problems suggest an iterative proceduralism' citing Rittel and Webster's (1973) description of an 'argumentative process' (p.208).* Through this, we can turn our gaze onto the education system as we made it to be, opening up the dialogue for change (Parker, 2007) by using the memory of what was to inform the education system we might hope to create (Henriques et al., 1998).

3.7.3 Implication two: a proposal for Educational Psychologists

Following the presentation of the wider implications of this research outlined above, a specific look at what EPs could do as part of this process will now be discussed. It must be stressed that these are only possible approaches EPs may want to take and have arisen from professional discussions with EPs and training tutors who have engaged with this piece of research. They are more invitations for thinking and are presented in the form of questions EPs may want to address as individuals, teams or as a whole profession.

- Where and how can we engage with the purpose of education?

Through drawing upon the work of Gert Biesta (2009, 2014, 2017, 2019, 2022), we could engage with the thinking and questions he has posed over a number of years as to what education is for and what values we wish to draw upon in constructing an education system which rejects individualistic notions of learning and knowledge. Ultimately, he rejects the idea that education should serve as a function which can be measured through measurable means (such as standardised assessment scores or qualification achievements from pupils) and posits alternatives which are values based and acknowledge the conceptual complexity of teaching and learning. In this way, we could use theory and research to provide support for our thinking and draw upon an evidence base which invites reflection as opposed to 'what works' (see Biesta's 2020 book chapter on '"What works" is not enough'). Indeed, his

position on measurement in education mirrors tensions in our own practice with the use of cognitive standardised assessments often requested of us in schools.

- Where and how can we engage with the purpose of teaching and support teachers in feeling agentic?

To avoid teachers falling victim to the 'docile body' (Foucault, 1977), supporting teachers to be experts in their own profession (a parallel to what Narrative Therapy encourages for individuals being experts in their own lives) and feeling agentic in their own professional decisions (which is based on a critical pedagogy they have used to form their professional identity) could be a way to support teachers in finding a sense of purpose in their role. If we consider that our teachers are refusing to teach because they *can't* operate in a way which is of value to them (Heimans et al., 2024) rather than using their individual 'pathologies' for wanting to leave the profession early, perhaps the role of the teacher needs to be critically re-examined. Interestingly, Carusi (2022) recently discussed the current tensions around *what teachers are* (drawing on an ontological perspective where teachers build their own identities) and *what teachers are for* (drawing on an instrumental function of teachers being what they *have* to be, essentially, a 'docile body'). Through this critical view of the purpose of the teacher, we may find opportunities to discover how we can help support and shape the identity of teachers into how they *want* to be based on their own exploration of the purpose of education and teaching. Providing space and time for teachers to explore this could be an appropriate action and, perhaps, our involvement in ITE or teachers' continuing professional development (e.g., through training or supervision) could be useful to continuously support their sense of agency.

- What psychological approaches can we draw upon to support teachers with their own professional wellbeing?

Ultimately, the answer to this lies with the EP or EPs collectively addressing this question in their own reflections. We draw upon a plethora of psychological approaches in our work and this is not the space where I can detail them all here; I will leave this to the reader to decide. In keeping with the philosophical approach adopted by this research (and researcher), an example of applying psychology as an EP within this particular phenomenon could draw upon the approaches in Narrative Therapy. Adopting a de-centred, influential position (pursuing the teacher's preferred future through therapist-led lines of enquiry) in supervision for teachers and drawing on tools such as charting and re-authoring conversations (see White's, 2007, chapter 2 in Maps of Narrative Practice) can provide an exercise for EPs to support teachers in exploring their identity as teachers and potential for action during times of uncertainty and professional doubt.

- How can we collaboratively construct a preferred future with our teacher colleagues, using what we have learned about the education system and the practice of teaching through our recent lived experiences?

This research could pose as an invitation to begin conversations around the issue of the sustainability of the teaching career across professionals and policy makers. As is outlined in the discussion on wicked problems above, collaboration needs to be authentic, and it must be acknowledged that change will take time. There are no answers here, only proposals and suggestions, but it is hoped that the theoretical and empirical work drawn upon in this research can offer springboards into thinking and reflection.

3.8 Limitations

In using FDA as a research tool, some of the limitations of this approach must be acknowledged. Braun and Clarke (2013) describe FDA as challenging, complex, uncertain and suggest it can be difficult for less experienced researchers to engage with especially with regards to *how* they are supposed to use it. Khan and MacEachen (2021) also refer to this difficulty, describing Foucauldian approaches to research as containing 'cryptic philosophies.' Moreover, Braun and Clarke (2013) also suggest that FDA has a transferability issue, for both the participants within the study and the wider public. Writers assert that the general limitation of discourse analysis approaches is that they are a 'non-cognitive' form of psychology, prioritising the discourses over the person (Willig, 2013).

In addition, this study could have explored many more discourses which impacted the participants but only the more 'macro' discourses were prioritised which offered a social critique (i.e., neoliberalism, performativity and individualism). Even within the discourses chosen, it must be acknowledged that they are not causal discourses within themselves; they are also tangled with 'alternative categories' (Sutcliffe-Braithwaite et al., 2021) such as deindustrialisation, technological change and globalisation.

The idea of discourse analysis in general is an approach of researching what *was* not what *is*; it is historically bound and 'consigned to the past' (p. 21, Parker 1992). Therefore, this research must be considered within its own historical context. Perhaps then, this research (and others like it) should be used to project a critical lens on what has been so that it need not be repeated or continued, potentially disrupting the ouroboros cycle of this 'wicked' problem.

3.9 Conclusion

This piece of research has offered a broader look at the teaching profession in light of recent teacher policy reforms such as the ECF. Its analysis brings forth challenges to research

rhetoric which advocates individualised solutions to 'wicked' problems; for example, better emotional preparations for teachers in their formative years which value on their resilience skills, not their skills to think critically and see that something is not quite right with the education system (e.g., research like Molyneux, 2021). In addition, adopting a Foucauldian approach to the data analysis has allowed for a social critique of neo-liberalism through the teachers' talk, providing an observation of its deep-routed cultural impacts (Sutcliffe-Braithwaite et al., 2021). Through this, the research attempted to empower the participants and highlight their key concerns about the teaching profession and education system as it currently stands in England. Although this research is historically bound and does not offer a straight forward solution, it does offer a critique and an acknowledgement that these discourses need not be fixed or pre-given; they are indeed, as Hyde (2022) asserts, simply constructions. Finally, this piece of research has made some proposals of what EPs could do to support their teacher colleagues during this time of uncertainty and invites any of those who read this research to engage with the questions it asks of our own profession.

Chapter 4: a reflective synthesis of professional and academic learning acquired

4.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a reflective synthesis of my learning throughout this research project. It offers additional information regarding the process of the research, reflexive observations, personal anecdotes, and an overview of the next steps for this research. The synthesis is hooked to a metaphor so that the research story can be told in a way that is important to me (White, 2007).

4.2 What I have learned from this research process

The learning from this research project has spanned from reflecting on my early iterations of research projects in previous degrees to finally being able to see how research can link and influence practice through this doctorate. I have come to appreciate the value of research and practice within the EP world as TEP and this chapter offers a reflection on this appreciation. In keeping with the influences of Narrative Therapy as a researcher and applied psychologist, the use of metaphor and imagery will be used to present how I have made meaningful reflections on my learning. This approach was inspired by Kitchen's (2016) metaphor of likening the journey of doctoral research to throwing stones into water; the sub headings are the questions which are posed by Kitchen in their reflective exercise. This is expanded upon using Flutter's (2016) distinction between ripples of impact (localised impact directly related to the researcher) and splashes of impact (wider impact beyond the researcher). Key questions to engage in reflexivity, which is a form of critical thinking about the process of doing research (Lazard & McAvoy, 2020), will also be drawn upon from the guidance provided by Olmos-Vega et al. (2023) which appear as additional questions to the sub-headings.

4.2.1 Why did I pick up this stone?

The stone symbolises professional doctoral research and the action of picking up the stone symbolises choosing a research topic and methodology. Methodological reflexivity asks; how are you making methodological decisions and what are their implications?

Throughout my time on the doctorate, my philosophical position has emerged slowly amongst the plethora of possibilities to research and practice. However, leaning towards the social constructionist end of the epistemological spectrum has been a consistent pattern of thinking for me. I have tried to step into the realms of critical realism, especially within practice, but social constructionism has continuously pulled me back into its space as if there

was a bungie jump rope around my waist. I quickly found that the social constructionist world view was incredibly varied, like looking onto a batch of pebbles which were similar and yet unique to one another. There have been many joys and frustrations in managing so much variance and I acknowledge that my project could have been completely different if I had chosen a different social constructionist methodology. Papers such as 'Choose Your Method: A Comparison of Phenomenology, Discourse Analysis, and Grounded Theory' (Starks & Brown Trinidad, 2007) and Cara Willig's (2013) book on 'Introducing qualitative research in psychology' have been incredibly useful in helping me to map my journey through understanding the variance of qualitative research. Ultimately, the FDA approach I took was the best fit to exploring my research question and following my philosophical research threads.

Accepting that qualitative approaches to research are messy (Braun & Clarke, 2013), that views of knowledge are varied (Willig, 2013) and that change is inevitable (Briggs, 2019) has helped me to settle with the research approaches I have come to know throughout this project. Although it has been an incredibly difficult journey in understanding them, particularly Foucault's writing and those who have been inspired by him, the time and effort spent reading, re-reading and reading again has paid off. I acknowledge that my research understanding is still within a novice level and so I hope to continue to engage with this world view continuously throughout my career as an EP.

With regards to the research topic I chose, Chapter 2 goes into sufficient detail on this through the presentation of my conceptual framework.

4.2.2 How has throwing the stone impacted upon me as the thrower?

The action of throwing is the impact of the research on my professional identity, considering the past, present and future. Personal reflexivity asks; how are your unique perspectives influencing the research?

Over the course of my career, engaging in research has been a dreaded exercise as I have always viewed myself as a 'rubbish researcher'. My undergraduate and masters' dissertations were lacklustre, serving more of a means to an end than an appreciated exercise. The action of 'throwing' the research stone was more like a clumsy drop during my earlier research experiences. However, now I see that time was not afforded to me to fully appreciate the scale and variety of research, with constraints placed against me to just *get the research finished*. This doctoral journey has been able to give me the time and understanding to fully appreciate the research process.

I acknowledge that I have been very privileged during my time on this doctorate to delve into the depths of academic research *properly* and with *purpose*. We are not all afforded these luxuries, especially not our fellow teacher trainee colleagues who have a class to teach and books to mark alongside a barrage of assignments to complete during their training (I experienced this first hand during my undergraduate degree). I spent much longer than I anticipated in getting my head around epistemology and philosophy – but I feel as though it has paid off immensely to lead me to a piece of research I can finally feel proud of. Perhaps, the 'rubbish researcher' label I so lovingly gave myself actually gave me the power to stay motivated in exploring all that is 'behind the scenes' in research. It has allowed me to have a firm grip on that stone, ready to throw out into the world. I let the power of the 'rubbish researcher' label *engage* me rather than *enrage* me.

This research process has also helped to solidify my connections with Narrative Therapy in my practice. The exploration of poststructuralist philosophy has been helpful in my approach to practice, especially with regard to observing discourses around and within the education system. Hearing people's stories, seeing how power influences their intent for action and noticing the plethora of discourses both written and spoken has helped me to refine my criticality lens. I appreciate that I still have a long way to go in fully developing my skills as a narrative practitioner but spending the time within the theory and philosophies of the approach has certainly been a significant factor in supporting my thinking.

A direct influence this research has had on my practice is my exploration of poststructuralist thought to EP practice within a practice study. I drew upon the concept of deconstruction in relation to the role of the EP and applied this to the practices I drew upon during my placement. The following is an extract from a practice study I wrote as part of my training:

> 'One of the biggest issues I have had with teasing out conceptions of the role of the EP within the literature is the constant affiliation of our role with mainstream science and the assumptions these bring. For example, I have come across many EPs describe their work with young people as 'hypothesis testing' and using this in their rationale when thinking through casework. I have also recently had my attention drawn to labelling children as 'cases' positions children to the notion of normativity; and that through the documentation of their 'performances', based on norms from objects such as standardised assessments, paints pictures of particular groups of people in particular ways (Ryan, 1991). Coupled with this, the legacy of standardised assessments and classic theories of child development continues to be felt in current practices despite their critique in our own field

(e.g., even in earlier works such as Gillham's' Reconstructing Educational Psychology published in 1978). Positioning children as objects within our scientific discourses implies that we can find a 'truth' about their presenting 'problem' and could potentially be perpetuating the 'expert' discourse many of us seem to reject.

Deconstructing the conceptions of how we are 'scientists' could provide a way for us to make a change in how we are perceived and help address the misconceptions surrounding our role; stopping and looking critically at the science we draw upon (Latour & Woolgar, 1987) is an exercise I wish to take before venturing out into the world as a qualified EP.'

Practice Portfolio (2024).

Therefore, not only has this exploration of my own epistemological stance aided my understanding of research, but it has also inspired the topics of my other academic pieces of work to explore the role of 'science' within practice. Deconstructing what is *known* about us as a profession, whether it be from the discourse of teachers or what other professionals share about us, has been helpful to address any preconceived notions of our role and explore the impact of the misconceptions about us. In particular, the common label we receive as 'experts' in children's lives to which those who are influenced by Narrative approaches, like myself, would philosophically reject.

4.2.3 What ripples or splashes does the stone have potential to make?

The ripples or splashes symbolise the impact of the research and its potential. Contextual reflexivity asks; how are aspects of context influencing the research and people involved?

The context of this research has concerned the post-2010 educational systems in England and has drawn upon other Western societies within this time period through the SLR. It has been conducted during a time of extensive media coverage on the issues of the sustainability of the teaching career with newspaper outlets such as The Guardian having their own article tabs under the heading of 'teacher shortages' (2024). This research has therefore concerned people's livelihoods and careers as teachers directly through the empirical project and indirectly through the SLR. As an ex-teacher myself, I have a shared understanding of these issues which has brought passion to the project but also a level of bias. I acknowledge this throughout the research project, making it clear to the participants during the interviews and through highlighting this in my conceptual framework in Chapter 2.

I intend to publish chapters one and three with the support of my supervisors. They encouraged me early on to consider publication and are happy to act as co-authors following the examination process. I also intend to share my research with my placement colleagues as well as the Narrative Therapy interest group which has been established via university tutors. I hope that the ripples from this research help to see the issues I have presented through a critical lens, and perhaps encourage them to think about how they practice as individuals (whether they be EPs, teachers or something else) turning the critical lens onto their own use of discourse and actions within practice.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a reflection on the research process as a whole and has included my intentions to disseminate this piece of research alongside personal anecdotes through the use of metaphor. It is hoped that through this learning and my reflections on reflexive questions I have presented that I can implement the understanding of my research journey throughout my practice as a qualified EP going forward. It has been a hard and laborious journey – but a welcome one.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: SLR study analysis grid

Study	Health	Identity	Teacher Typology (type of teacher i.e., primary or secondary)

Buchanan et al., (2013)		**THEME: Isolation**
		• Emotional isolation sub theme:
		    o conflicts with sense of identity, not being true self - putting on an act.
		    o conflicts with values
		    o self-efficacy & fear of failure
		'Resilient stayers'
		
		THEME: Isolation sub themes:
		• Professional – feeling 'lost in a big system' / 'a faceless number'	

Carroll et al., (2022)			Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that early career teachers reported significantly higher levels of perceived stress than mid- (p=0.022) or late career teachers (p=0.003).
Clandinin et al., (2015)	**THEME: Trying not to let teaching consume them** • Impact of teaching on health	62.5% of participants were uncertain they would stay in teaching. **THEME: Support** • Disconnect between role as a teacher and sense of self as a person. **THEME: Will do anything** • Self-confidence in role – being a people pleaser and not feeling like they can say no. **THEME: Trying not to let teaching consume them** • Feeling the need to let go of small worries and perfectionism. **THEME: Can I keep doing this? Is this teaching?** • Hope that things will get better/easier • Realisation that this will always be a busy job – am I busy because I am new or because it is always like this?	**THEME: Contract Tensions** • Exploitation of new staff – metaphor of sacrifice from experienced teachers being able to say no. • If supply/casual = feelings of "second-class" • Self-efficacy when being moved to grade/subject not trained to teach.

Study	Health	Identity	Teacher Typology (type of teacher i.e., primary or secondary)
Dupriez et al., (2016)			Exit rates were the highest for all cohorts, regardless of school, in the first year of teaching. Exit rates were higher within every cohort of secondary teachers compared to preschool and primary, especially in the first year of teaching. Youngest (18-24) & female teachers have a lower, more stable attrition rate
Gallant and Riley (2017)	**THEME: Personal life & identity** • Concerns around family prospects and impact of teaching on health	**THEME: The classroom** • Valued creativity, autonomy, initiative, and innovation within their own classroom **THEME: Personal life & identity** • Sense of responsibility to the pupils • Concerns around family prospects **THEME: Professional identity** • Being able to enact professional knowledge with the pupils	
Perryman and Calvert (2020)	The top reasons (closed option answer) given for leaving by those who had left were: Teaching making me ill (51%)	More interesting is the suggestion that the initial motivation of wanting to 'be creative' is associated with eventually wanting to leave. This aspect is supported by the qualitative data, and feeds into our notion of a discourse of disappointment.	We found that demographic factors, such as age, gender, course taken or whether someone was in primary, secondary or tertiary education, seemed to make no difference to the intention to leave.
Struyven and Vanthournout (2014)			Results demonstrate that male teachers (25%) tended to leave the teaching profession more readily than their female colleagues (13%). A lack of job satisfaction appeared to play a more significant role in leaving the profession for teachers with a degree in secondary education as opposed to those with a degree in kindergarten/pre-primary education (β= .33, t = 2.99, p = .003) Exit attrition is highest for males and secondary school teachers in our sample.
Wyatt and O'Neill (2021)			Whereas ECTs less likely to stay included those: • in secondary in comparison to primary with 0.690 higher odds (95 % CI = 0.631− 0.754)

Study	Job stability (including contract status) and future prospects	Leadership & management	Location
Buchanan et al., (2013)	**THEME: Student engagement and behaviour** • Inability to follow up on behaviour if not full time.	**THEME: Student engagement and behaviour** • Behaviour management processes being inconsistent. • Lack of support from leadership/systems • Child deficit approach & parental responsibilities **THEME: Workload** • The amount, not the difficulty (e.g., need to take work home)	**THEME: Professional learning** • Learning from others – including outside the school e.g., networking off-site. • Useful for those who have small staff teams in smaller schools. **THEME: Isolation sub themes:** • Geographic – distance from home, career displacement issues, adjusting to different social context (i.e. rural to city life transition)
Carroll et al., (2022)			Post-hoc comparisons indicated that teachers working in regional areas experienced greater levels of perceived stress (p=0.012) and work-related burnout (p=0.048) compared to teachers in urban areas.
Clandinin et al., (2015)	**THEME: Contract Tensions** • Not having a sense of certainty when transitioning from trainee > teaching post. Not enough time to prepare from being accepted for a job. **THEME: Will do anything** • Undesirable working conditions to secure job (e.g., not having own classroom)		**THEME: Will do anything** • Moving locations for posts – disconnect between work and life.
Dupriez et al., (2016)	Master's degree status increased exit rate, study theorised this may be due to career opportunities beyond teaching. Less working hours, increased exit rate - (OR = 1.66, p<0.05) most statistically significant outcome for pre-school and primary variable for first year exit rate		
Gallant and Riley (2017)	**THEME: Personal life & identity** • Inflexible working hours **THEME: Socio-political contexts**	**THEME: Non-teaching responsibilities** • Perceptions of leadership – confusion around good teachers becoming managers	

| Study	Job stability (including contract status) and future prospects	Leadership & management	Location
	• Underpaid and overworked – not paid for overtime. • Impact of policy changes to job security	• Professional development as an act of compliance rather than development of pedagogy **THEME: Non-teaching responsibilities** • Accumulation of discontent • Irrelevant meetings, inconsistent leadership, excessive workload **THEME: Socio-political contexts** • Impact of policy changes to job security which lead to feelings of being unable to challenge leadership.	
Perryman and Calvert (2020)		The top reasons (closed option answer) given for leaving by those who had left were: • Lack of support from management (38%) Qual answers highlighted this as poor, unsupportive management styles, lack of gratitude, 'us and them' mentalities	
Struyven and Vanthournout (2014)	Subsequently salient reasons were job satisfaction and the relations with students (M = .66, SD = .69) and school management and support (M = .60, SD = .73). The least important reason for leaving the profession appeared to be the relation with parents (M =.27, SD = .65). The most salient reason was a lack of future prospects (M= 1.66, SD= 1.31). However, the higher standard deviation also points out that this reason did not apply equally to all respondents. Subsequently salient reasons were the workload teachers experienced (M = .89, SD = .93)	Subsequently salient reasons were job satisfaction and the relations with students (M = .66, SD = .69) and school management and support (M = .60, SD = .73).	
Wyatt and O'Neill (2021)			Whereas ECTs less likely to stay included those: who attended an interstate university 0.366 higher odds (95 % CI = 0.319− 0.420), international university 0.630 higher odds (95 % CI = 0.540− 0.734) or unknown universities 0.678 higher odds (95 % CI = .512− 0.899), compared to those who attended a Western Australian university.

Study	Belonging	Relationships	Support offered
Buchanan et al., (2013)	THEME: Collegiality and support • Feeling welcomed and valued	THEME: Collegiality and support • Importance of relationships	THEME: Collegiality and support • Quality of support • 'Supported stayers'. THEME: Professional learning • Learning from others – including outside the school e.g., networking off-site THEME: Isolation sub themes: • Professional - only subject teacher, small faculties THEME: Student engagement and behaviour • Under prepared from ITE
Carroll et al., (2022)			More than half of the respondents (55%; n=413) rated their job as very or extremely stressful and 59% (n=437) of respondents reported considering leaving their role in the past month due to stress or dissatisfaction. Of those who considered leaving, 75% (n=328) reported that these thoughts were moderately to extremely serious.
Clandinin et al., (2015)		THEME: Support • Relationships key contributor to how they imagined teaching. THEME: Identity and belonging • Relationships with individuals and groups key (staff, students, parents, non-teaching staff) • Impact of relationships trumped contractual situation.	THEME: Support • Those not supported were less certain to stay in teaching. • Tailoring support to the individual THEME: Trying not to let teaching consume them • Feeling like concerns cannot be shared with other teachers, loneliness THEME: Can I keep doing this? Is this teaching? • Lack of experience entering the profession
Dupriez et al., (2016)			
Gallant and Riley (2017)		Quality of relationships with others important	THEME: Pedagogy & purpose for teaching • Feeling ill prepared for the workload on the job
Perryman and Calvert (2020)			Collegial support, belonging, expectations/perceptions – not themed but identified in qual responses The top reasons (closed option answer) given for leaving by those who had left were: • To improve work life balance (75%)

Study	Belonging	Relationships	Support offered
Struyven and Vanthournout (2014)		Subsequently salient reasons were job satisfaction and the relations with students (M = .66, SD = .69) and school management and support (M = .60, SD = .73). The least important reason for leaving the profession appeared to be the relation with parents (M =.27, SD = .65).	Subsequently salient reasons were job satisfaction and the relations with students (M = .66, SD = .69) and school management and support (M = .60, SD = .73). The least important reason for leaving the profession appeared to be the relation with parents (M =.27, SD = .65).
Wyatt and O'Neill (2021)	Intention to stay 10+ years indicated by following factors: • School-based induction satisfaction (61%, n=467) [key words; social transition, welcomed, connected, understanding of policies and procedures, supportive culture VS rushed or no induction with little support]		Intention to stay 10+ years indicated by following factors: • School-based induction satisfaction (61%, n=467) [key words; social transition, welcomed, connected, understanding of policies and procedures, supportive culture VS rushed or no induction with little support] Intention to stay 10+ years indicated by following factors: • Mentoring satisfaction (59.1%, n=158) • In-class coaching satisfaction (60.5%, n= 157) • School-based induction satisfaction (61%, n=467)

Study	Initial Teacher Education	Government Policy	Education Systems
Buchanan et al., (2013)	**THEME: Student engagement and behaviour** • Under prepared from ITE		**THEME: Isolation sub themes:** • Geographic – distance from home, career displacement issues, adjusting to different social context (i.e. rural to city life transition) • Professional – feeling 'lost in a big system' / 'a faceless number'
Carroll et al., (2022)			
Clandinin et al., (2015)	**THEME: Can I keep doing this? Is this teaching?** • Lack of experience entering the profession		**THEME: Will do anything** • Moving locations for posts – disconnect between work and life. **THEME: Can I keep doing this? Is this teaching?** • Realisation that this will always be a busy job – am I busy because I am new or because it is always like this?
Dupriez et al., (2016)			Socio economic status of the school had no impact on the exit rate of teachers at bivariate and multi-variate analysis – gives a Belgium specific context as a possible reason for this (standards with achievement are not as high as other countries i.e., performativity culture in USA).
Gallant and Riley (2017)	**THEME: Pedagogy & purpose for teaching** • Feeling ill prepared for the workload on the job	**THEME: Socio-political contexts** • Underpaid and overworked – not paid for overtime. • Impact of policy changes to job security which lead to feelings of being unable to challenge leadership.	**THEME: Socio-political contexts** • Perceptions of the general public on teaching
Perryman and Calvert (2020)		The top reasons (closed option answer) given for leaving by those who had left were: • Government initiatives (43%)	The top reasons (closed option answer) given for leaving by those who had left were: • Target driven culture (57%)
Struyven and Vanthournout (2014)			
Wyatt and O'Neill (2021)	Whereas ECTs less likely to stay included those: who attended an interstate university 0.366 higher odds (95 % CI = 0.319−0.420), international university 0.630 higher odds (95 % CI = 0.540− 0.734) or		

Study	Initial Teacher Education	Government Policy	Education Systems
	unknown universities 0.678 higher odds (95 % CI = .512− 0.899), compared to those who attended a Western Australian university.		

Appendix 2: Flemming's (2010) synthesis of constructs within a CIS approach
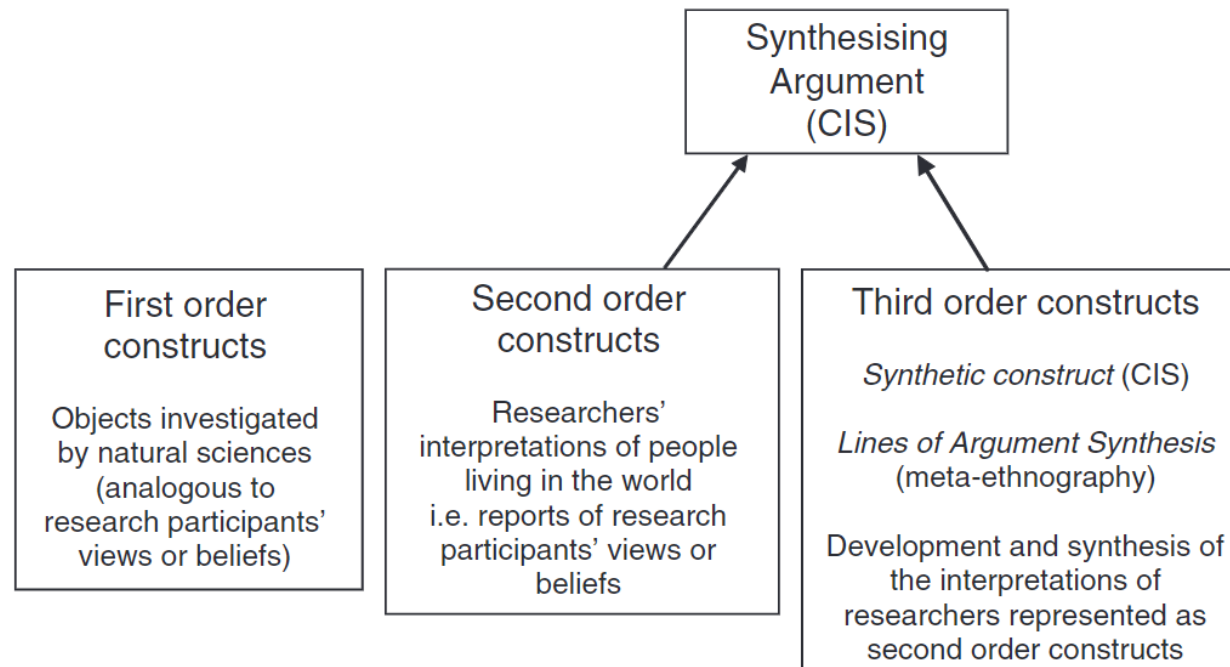
Figure 3 The relationship of a synthesizing argument to first, second and third order constructs. CIS, Critical Interpretive Synthesis.

Appendix 3: Participant information sheet

Newcastle University, School of Education, Communication & Language Sciences

Participant Information Sheet

You are invited to take part in a research study entitled: **How can Educational Psychologists support the sustainability of the teaching profession with Early Career Teachers and their mentors?**

Please read this document carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.
- The study is conducted by **Charlotte Walker** (c.walker12@newcastle.ac.uk) from the School of Education, Communication & Language Sciences at Newcastle University.
- This research project is supervised by **Dr Tracey Heckles** (Tracey.Heckels@newcastle.ac.uk) from the School of Education, Communication & Language Sciences at Newcastle University.
- The purpose of this study is to research the views and experiences of early career teachers about their experiences of the teaching profession. It will also include the views of early career teacher mentors who are part of the Early Career Framework support program (please see this link for more details: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-career-framework)
- You have been invited to take part in this study because you have been identified as an Early Career Teacher or a mentor.
- If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to participate in individual interviews and a group task with your mentor/mentee. Your participation in this study will take approximately 1 hour per session.
    - The interview session will be conducted with yourself and the researcher (Charlotte Walker) using semi-structured interview questions which will be audio recorded and transcribed for analysis.
    - The group task session will be conducted with yourself, your mentor/mentee and the researcher (Charlotte Walker) whereby we will engage in a collaborative activity based on Narrative Therapy research and practice. This will be audio recorded and transcribed for analysis.
- Once research has been completed, I will debrief you on the main findings of the research via email or another meeting if you wish. The research in its entirety will be available on the Newcastle University eTheses website should you wish to access it (https://theses.ncl.ac.uk/jspui/)
- You are free to decide whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without any negative consequences for you.
- You may decline to answer any questions or withdraw from the study without penalty of any kind.
- All non-identifying information you provide, will be kept in a password-protected electronic database, tagged with an anonymous ID number. Identifying information, e.g. your name and contact details, will be kept on an encrypted electronic file within my university OneDrive account (which is password and 2-step verification protected).

- Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as Newcastle University needs to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate under UK General Data Protection Regulations. If you withdraw from the study, Newcastle University will keep the information about you that has already been obtained. To safeguard your rights, the minimum personally-identifiable information will be used. You can find out more about how Newcastle University uses your information at http://www.ncl.ac.uk/data.protection/PrivacyNotice and/or by contacting Newcastle University's Data Protection Officer (Maureen Wilkinson, rec-man@ncl.ac.uk).
- If you have any questions, requests or concerns regarding this research, please contact me via email at c.walker12@newcastle.ac.uk.

This study has been reviewed and approved by the School of Education, Communication & Language Sciences Ethics Committee at Newcastle University (date of approval:…………….)

Appendix 4: Participant consent form

Newcastle University, School of Education, Communication & Language Sciences

Declaration of Informed Consent for the research study titled: How can Educational Psychologists support the sustainability of the teaching profession with Early Career Teachers and their mentors?

- I agree to participate in this study, the purpose of which is to explore the views and experiences of Early Career Teachers and their mentors in the teaching profession.
- I declare that I have understood the nature and purpose of the research.
- I have read the participant information sheet and understand the information provided.
- I have been informed that I may decline to answer any questions or withdraw from the study without penalty of any kind.
- I have been informed that all of my responses will be kept confidential and secure, and that I will not be identified in any report or other publication resulting from this research.
- I have been informed that the investigator will answer any questions regarding the study and its procedures. The investigator's email is c.walker12@newcastle.ac.uk and their supervisor's email is Tracey.Heckels@newcastle.ac.uk and they can be contacted via email.
- I will be provided with a copy of this form for my records.

Any concerns about this study should be addressed to the School of Education, Communication & Language Sciences Ethics Committee, Newcastle University via email to ecls.researchteam@newcastle.ac.uk

_____
Date   Participant Name (please print)   Participant Signature

I certify that I have presented the above information to the participant and secured his or her consent.

_____
Date   Charlotte Walker (investigator)   Signature of Investigator

Appendix 5: Interview prompts

Researchable Question: What can the stories of ==ECT mentors== tell us about the teaching profession in light of the current retention and attrition trends?	Researchable Question: What can the stories of ==ECTs== tell us about the teaching profession in light of the current retention and attrition trends?
Topic: (opening questions) What are your experiences of teaching to date? • What was your reason for becoming a teacher? • What year did you qualify and how did you train to be a teacher? • What experiences of teaching have you had before becoming a mentor? (e.g. year groups, specialisms, school types etc.). • Can you tell me about how you became an ECT mentor (or how you began being a mentor for multiple ECTs including NQTs)? **Topic**: What are your experiences of mentoring ECTs to date? • Can you compare how it has been mentoring NQTs compared to ECTs in light of recent changes? (if experienced) o Is there anything you have kept the same/different in your approach to mentoring? • How well prepared do you feel to become a mentor? What factors have contributed to this (if new to mentoring) • How would you compare your experiences to your peers? • What are the positives/ what have you enjoyed? • What are the challenges / have there been any problems? • Would you like to comment on any specific parts of the ECF? **Topic**: How do you feel about the current trends in teacher retention and attrition? (Return to SLR findings) • Do you feel that these issues impact your ECT in any way? • Has the issue impacted you as an individual? Is it a different experience for your colleagues/wider teaching community? • Is there anything you would change about the ECF to support the retention of new teachers? Ending interview – future hopes & reflections, anything else	Topic: (opening questions) What were your experiences before becoming a teacher? • What previous roles did you have? • What kind of ITT did you receive? • What was your reason for becoming a teacher? • What type of school are you currently working in? Is this a preferred setting? Topic: How are you experiencing your induction period so far? • Where are you with your induction period so far? • What are the positives/ what have you enjoyed? • What are the challenges / have there been any problems? • How well do you feel your induction experience is preparing you for when you are fully qualified? • How would you compare your experiences to your peers? • Would you like to comment on any specific parts of the ECF? Topic: How do you feel about the current trends in teacher retention and attrition? (Return to SLR findings) • Do you feel that these issues impact you in any way? • Is it a similar/different experience for your fellow ECTs/ school colleagues/wider teaching community? • Is there anything you would change about the ECF to support the retention of new teachers? Ending interview – future hopes & reflections, anything else

Appendix 6: interview extract and annotations

Violet - Transcript

1 00:00:01 Researcher

2 There we go. Yeah, it's working. I like that. It's got that. So I know it's working without. Having to
3 listen to. It right, Okiedokie. So you're a mentor. So we want these questions. So just to start us off or
4 why did you become a teacher?

5 00:00:17 Violet

6 So, I got into teaching kind of on a whim. So I finished university. So I did my university degree in
7 English and drama. Drama is my passion – drama, was always as a kid. 'What do you wanna be?'
8 'actress.' 'What do you wanna be?' 'on the stage' 'What do you wanna be?' 'a singer.' When I went to
9 uni, my mum and dad they liked the arts, but they don't really kind of see it as a future, they don't
10 really see it as something that you can make a living from necessarily. However, me being me and
11 being very stubborn, I said I just wanna try it. Let me try it. I'll work it out myself. So I finished
12 university - English and drama - came out of there and decided right, it's either now or never. I either
13 do it now or I don't do it now. So I went and worked for a theatre company - became a professional
14 performer, travelled around the UK. We delivered bits all over. We did bits in schools. We delivered
15 pantomimes. But when I was in it, it made me realise that when I was getting paid for it, I kind of lost
16 my drive. I was doing the same thing every day trying to put wage in my pocket to then go home and,
17 and spend it basically. But because of the nature of the job, I didn't have a base so I was travelling a
18 lot. We were living out of a van. It was not very glamorous! So I decided right, what am I gonna do? I
19 need something on the side if I'm still going to do this so I decided to work for an agency. I've
20 decided I've got university degree - I'll go and be a teaching assistant.

21 So went into being a teaching assistant, went into mainstream school, hated it, didn't like it - and it
22 reminded me of school and I like school, but I was glad it was finished. So I came out there and said
23 to my agency don't really wanna do that, can you send me something else? They sent me to a really
24 special needs school where the children really couldn't do anything themselves or were in
25 wheelchairs - totally different. Totally glad I did it. Not for me -it, it upset me too much. It kind of like
26 I took it home with me and and I couldn't switch off. And I just thought this isn't... this isn't right.

27 So then they sent me to a pupil referral unit – and, loved it. I found kind of that the teachers were all
28 like me , we were all down to Earth. We understood that the children were hard, but actually it was a
29 lot to do with their environment. It was a lot to do with kind of how they've been brought up and,
30 and it was actually - I was quite happy as a teaching assistant. I quite liked it. I liked the fact I could
31 start at 8:00, finish at 2:00, quarter past two - happy days, go home. Brilliant - see you tomorrow!
32 Fine.

33 It was my teacher - who I was it was a was a teaching assistant for - who decided that, 'why don't you
34 go do your teaching? Go do your teaching, you've got your degree. You've done the hard bit. Go get
35 your teaching.' So I thought right, OK. But then when I looked to go into my teaching, I decided that...
36 I looked and basically had to do it through mainstream because that's the qualification in England. So
37 I was like, right. OK. So I moved back home - because I was up in city - moved back home with my
38 parents and thought right - I'm just gonna suck it up. I'm gonna do my teaching. And my - to put it
39 frankly, I absolutely hated my teacher training. My teacher training was probably the... probably the
40 hardest part of my entire life. I experienced things that I've never experienced before, such as like
41 sexism such as ageism. I was treated really badly at my schools. Looking back, I don't really know
42 how I got through it. Glad I did, but kind of that's how I got into teaching was that kind of listening to
43 the person that I valued -which was my teacher I was teaching assistant for -we worked really well,

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(Handwritten annotations in margins:)
- Independent person
- DISCOURSE – PARENTAL
- Positioned by time
- Positioned by finances
- DISCOURSE – Stability? Financial?
- degree status
- Action – educational opportunities provided by degree status
- Pan Contradoxy socio-economic discourse
- employment positioning on happiness & wellbeing.

Appendix 7: Analysis process

Overview of analysis processes	
Parker (1992)	**Willig (2013) - with additional descriptions from Howitt (2019)**

<u>**Seven Criteria for Distinguishing Discourses**</u>
 	
1. **A discourse is realised in texts:**
  a. treating our objects of study as texts which are described, put into words and
  b. exploring connotations through some sort of free association which is best done with other people.
 	
2. **A discourse is about objects:**
  a. asking what objects are referred to, and describing them; and
  b. talking about the talk as if it were an object, a discourse.
 	
3. **A discourse contains subjects:**
  a. specifying what types of person are talked about in this discourse, some of which may already have been identified as objects; and
  b. speculating about what they can say in the discourse, what you could say if you identified with them.
 	
4. **A discourse is a coherent system of meanings:**
  a. Mapping a picture of the world this discourse presents; and
  b. Working out how a text using this discourse would deal with objections to the terminology.
 	
5. **A discourse refers to other discourses:**
  a. setting contrasting ways of speaking, discourses, against each other and looking at the different objects they constitute; and
  b. identifying points where they overlap, where they constitute what look like the 'same' objects in different ways.
 	
6. **A discourse reflects its own way of speaking:**
  a. referring to other texts to elaborate the discourse as it occurs, perhaps implicitly, and addresses different audiences; and
  b. reflecting on the term used to describe the discourse, a matter which involves moral/political choices on the part of the analyst.
	<u>**Stage 1: Discursive constructions**</u>
	Identifying the different ways in which the discursive object is constructed in the text.
	Our search for constructions of the discursive object is guided by shared meaning rather than lexical compatibility (Howitt, 2019).
	• How is the discursive object constructed through language?
	• What type of object is being constructed?
	
	<u>**Stage 2: Discourses**</u>
	Locating the various discursive constructions of the object within wider discourses.
	What appears to be one and the same discursive object can be constructed in very different ways (Howitt, 2019).
	• What discourses are drawn upon?
	• What is their relationship to one another?
	
	<u>**Stage 3: Action orientation**</u>
	Close examination of the discursive contexts within which the different constructions of the object are being deployed.
	A focus on action orientation allows us to gain a clearer understanding of what the various constructions of the discursive object are capable of achieving within the text (Howitt, 2019).
	• What is gained from constructing the object in this particular way at this particular point within the text?
	• What do the constructions achieve?
	• What are their functions and how do they relate to other constructions produced in the text?
	• What is the author doing here?
	
	<u>**Stage 4: Positionings**</u>
	Discourses construct subjects as well as objects and, as a result, make available positions within networks of meaning that speakers can take up (as well as place others within).

7. A discourse is historically located:
    a. looking at how and where the discourses emerged; and
    b. describing how they have changed, and told a story, usually about how they refer to things which were always there to be discovered.
 	
Three Auxiliary Criteria
 	
1. Discourses support institutions:
    a. identifying institutions which are reinforced when this or that discourse is used; and
    b. identifying institutions that are attacked or subverted when this or that discourse appears.
 	
2. Discourses reproduce power relations:
    a. looking at which categories of person gain and lose from the employment of the discourse; and
    b. looking at who would want to promote and who would want to dissolve the discourse.
 	
3. Discourses have ideological effects:
    a. showing how a discourse connects with other discourses which sanction oppression; and
    b. showing how the discourses allow dominant groups to tell their narratives about the past in order to justify the present, and prevent those who use subjugated discourses from making history.
	Subject positions are different from roles in that they offer discursive locations from which to speak and act rather than prescribing a particular part to be acted out (Howitt, 2019).
	    • What subject positions are made available by these constructions?
	
	Stage 5: Practice
	Systematic exploration of the ways in which discursive constructions and the subject positions contained within them open up or close down opportunities for action.
	By constructing particular versions of the world, and by positioning subjects within them in particular ways, discourses limit what can be said and done (Howitt, 2019).
	    • What possibilities for action are mapped out by these constructions?
	    • What can be said and done from within these subject positions?
	
	Stage 6: Subjectivity
	Tracing the consequences of taking up various subject positions for the participants' subjective experience – we are now concerned with what can be felt, thought and experienced from within various subject positions.
	Discourses make available certain ways-of-seeing the world and certain ways-of-being in the world. They construct social as well as psychological realities (Howitt, 2019).
	    • What can potentially be felt, thought and experienced from the available subject positions?

My process			

Caveat – this process is inherently iterative and does not conform to a linear progression of stages. Each phase allowed me to consider other phases and to refer back to Parker (1992) and Willig's processes. The colour coding indicates where the phase drew its influence from. Appendix N provides images of what each phase looked like.

Familiarisation Phase	Identification Phase	Mapping Phase	Sense making Phase
Reading and annotating transcripts with emerging thoughts.	Identifying objects, discourses, subjectivity, subject positions, actions and realities explored within and across transcripts	Making connections between the transcripts of the most pertinent discursive constructs (4 identified)	Making sense of the overlaps, conflicts, relationships and purposes of the talk across transcripts and discursive constructions
Reading and annotating Parker (1992) & Willig's (2013) processes.	Identifying talk where instutions, power and ideology appear within and across transcripts	Making connections within and between the discursive constructions based on the identification phase	Consideration of what has been revealed, what may be hidden and what may not have appeared at all based on the talk analysed.
Main activity - reading and making notes on the transcrips.	Main activity - highlighting on the transcripts using a color coded key	Main activity - organising highlights and notes into coherent maps of meaning	Main activity - edits, revisions and additions to what has been constructed where needed.

Example images of what the analysis looked like on paper:

Familiarisation Phase

Identification Phase

Sense Making Phase

Discursive Construction

Objects

Subjects

Realities

Actions

Wider discourses

Reflectivity

History

Mapping Phase