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**Collaborative inquiry into  
service learning: ethical  
practice through a  
Pedagogy of CARE**

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March 2019**

*Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree  
of Doctorate in Education (EdD)*

## **Collaborative inquiry into service learning: ethical practice through a Pedagogy of CARE**

Practitioner inquiry is an ethical process that begins from a stance of caring. When one cares about the principles of democratic participation and social justice, one wants to advocate for them through modelling them in practice. When teachers engage in practice-based research that is democratic and radical in its intent and process, they act as ethical role models. The aims of this inquiry were to explore ethical principles of practice through a 'students as researchers' approach to service learning at the high school campus of an international school in Central Switzerland. The research question that drove the inquiry was; 'How does meaningful teacher and student involvement as collaborative inquirers *into* service learning model a pedagogy *for* service learning?' The participatory methodology of practice-based, collaborative inquiry involved a teacher-researcher and student researchers engaging in a pedagogy that was based on mutual understanding and respect and critical reflection. A rich variety of qualitative, practice-oriented methods were employed within cycles of inquiry and spirals of action and reflection. Through modelling and reflecting on the pedagogical strategies that were part of the collaborative research process, a framework for a 'Pedagogy of CARE' was developed. The acronym CARE, whilst representing the underlying stance of caring, stands for the required and desired personal attributes within collaborative inquiry; one is conscious, active, responsible and experimental. At the same time, it also embodies pedagogical principles; one engages in a practice of consciousness, action, responsibility and experimentation. This framework, conceptualised as a non-hierarchical pyramid model, can be used by teachers and educational researchers within international education and beyond to inform a practice that is ethical in both its process and intent.

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## **Statement of Copyright**

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*Then I thought a minute, says to myself, hold on; s'pose you'd done a right and give Jim up, would you felt better than what you do now? No, says I, I'd feel bad – I'd feel just the same way as I do now. Well, then, says I, what's the use you learning to do right when it's troublesome to do right and ain't no trouble to do wrong, and the wages is just the same? I was stuck. I couldn't answer that. So I reckoned I wouldn't bother no more about it, but after this always do whichever come handiest at the time.*

from 'Adventures of Huckleberry Finn' by Mark Twain

# 1 Chapter 1: Why this inquiry?

*Imagine an education system in which professionals, individually and collectively, had the disposition to act truly and justly according to their values and moral stance (Lofthouse, 2014, p. 17)*

## 1.1 Radical undertones: anticipating the 'not yet'

Now let me tell you a secret that might cause some concern. I am a utopian thinker and a radical. You may already be feeling sceptical or wary, and I understand this. However, when you see where this admission comes from, you may be more forgiving. Rather than considering the word 'radical' in lay terms (Levitas, 2003) as something fundamental or extreme, I invite you to see it somewhat differently. In referring to this word, I am in fact simply talking about my philosophical stance as a teacher and as a researcher who believes in a democratic alternative to education. Whilst I do see the appeal of the term 'radical' in its meaning of 'root' (Schostak & Schostak, 2008) and an allegiance with important, forgotten ideals (Fielding & Moss, 2011) the kind of radicalism I mean is one of *transcendence*, as a 'set of aspirations that stretch beyond the reach of innovation' (Fielding & Moss, 2011, p. 40). Rather than you seeing me as a rebel or an extremist, or someone 'operating at the margins of mainstream thinking' (Fielding & Moss, 2011, p. 40), I want you to see me as a grounded, rational, principled person that thinks and acts as an ethical being. I want you to see my utopian thinking as a way to explore 'possibilities and potentialities' and an 'attempt to anticipate the 'not yet' (Fielding & Moss, 2011, p. 139) in education.

I want you, my readers, to empathise with my viewpoint that educational change is a key aspect of radical social change (Simon,

1972) and that this can be achieved through critically reflective, *ethical* practice within education (Giroux, 1988; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2007; Lipman, 2003; Thompson & Thompson, 2008). I want you to understand my context, see what is important to me, why this is, and how I strive to act in accordance with these beliefs. This thesis will lay this all out for you, so that you can walk alongside me in my research journey and ultimately find yourself comfortable in being friends with a radical. Who knows, maybe you might take me by the hand and join me in my dreams of a better world where ethical education (Fielding & Moss, 2011) guided by democratic principles is in fact the 'norm'. Let me begin therefore by laying out some of the facets of my radical nature and linking them to the idea of being an ethical being and an ethical practitioner. In doing so, you can get to know me through my beliefs and assumptions and how they link to my efforts as a researcher.

## **1.2 I believe in learning**

The first thing that you must know about me is that I love learning. I love how learning changes me and how it drives me to make change. Learning teaches me why and how to do the right thing; it gives me the power to make considered decisions. The process of noticing, questioning, searching and *re*-searching is at once invigorating and exciting. "But you are a teacher!" I hear you shout, "You are supposed to be *teaching* others so that *they* can learn from *you*!" Stop right there. This issue needs to be clarified before we can possibly go any further.

Yes, I am indeed a teacher. I spend the majority of my waking hours in a classroom within a school; a generally accepted and widely acknowledged component of the teaching profession. It may therefore also be a radical idea to mention that I am also most definitely a learner. As a practitioner in the field of education, I am constantly reinventing myself and learning, forming and re-forming



ideas (Kolb, 1984). If I were not able to do this, I would not feel challenged or excited about what new worlds may be opened up to me. As a teacher I am not simply delivering content, filling empty vessels with a predetermined, static and unchanging knowledge, as in Freire's concept of 'banking education', where 'the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filling and storing the deposits' (Freire, 1970, p. 53). Rather, in line with a constructivist tradition and a participatory approach (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998) to inquiry in my classroom, I am learning "with" others as an active collaborator in a process. I believe that knowledge is constructed in such a collaborative way, and it emerges 'only through the invention and reinvention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry men pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other' (Freire, 1974, p. 58). I see knowledge, therefore, as something that is 'a process, not a product' (Bruner, 1966, p. 72). It is this process of 'being immersed in existing knowledge' and being 'open and capable of producing something that does not yet exist' (Freire, 1998a, p. 35) that defines for me what it means to be a learner and, subsequently, what it means to be a teacher. So there you have it; my teacher- learner identity has been revealed. Not such a radical idea after all, right? Yet, stay with me, there's more to me than that.

### **1.3 I believe in dreaming**

Whilst I am happy with many things about the present, I like to dream about future possibilities. It is in dreaming that I find hope, imagining how things could be different, fairer, more just. I wonder about future possibilities and ask questions about what it would take to change things. If I did not pose questions, there would be no search to pursue the answers, and this search is the thrilling part. In dreaming, I believe in human nature and in human potential. As in Dewey's (Dewey, 1976) thinking, this is a 'faith in the capacity of human beings for intelligent judgement and action if proper conditions are

furnished' (Fielding & Moss, 2011, p. 138). In hoping, I believe in a 'culture of questioning' (Giroux, 1988, p. 9) that helps to contribute to the belief that there is more than one way of doing things. In the current neoliberalist climate, where individualism privileges social responsibility and the public good (Giroux, 2014) this means exploring more than one way of accepting the 'fatalistic and pessimistic position' that education is 'subjugated to the interests of the market economy' (Ferreira de Oliveira, 2014, p. 14). In dreaming, I am on a utopian voyage of discovery (Wright, 2010) to explore a 'better way of living' (Levitas, 2003, p. 4).

I dream of education being able to unleash its transformative potential. I believe in the power of education to create change, not only in my own professional practice or in the lives of my students, but also for a better society. In my role as a teacher-researcher, I see myself as an 'ethical or activist professional' (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2007, p. 205); a teacher who is concerned about the wider social and political agenda, and one who is convinced that inquiry has the potential to contribute not only to personal transformation, but also to social transformation. One of the places in which my inquiry is therefore located is within a *transformative, critical* framework, as I am very much aware that 'knowledge is not neutral' and that it reflects the power and social relationships within society' (Creswell, 2013, p. 25). Within such a framework, the 'purpose of knowledge construction is to aid people to improve society' (Mertens, 2003). As 'action-oriented critique' (Kinsler, 2010, p. 175), such inquiry is emancipatory in the sense that it advances social justice by bringing about unwelcome and uncomfortable news (Kemmis, 2006).

Whilst I do see myself as an activist, I could also be seen as an advocate; seeking to create change from within an institution rather than from outside its walls. My decision to engage in practitioner inquiry therefore stems from my belief in the importance of creating

change and standing up for what I believe is right; this is what makes my approach ethical and not merely something that has been mandated by a higher power. In pursuit of social change, my inquiry is not only technical (Kemmis, 2001) or practical (Grundy, 1987a) but *emancipatory* in its nature (Groundwater-Smith, 2005; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2007; Kemmis, 2006; Kinsler, 2010; Lewin, 1946). So, in dreaming and in hoping, I engage in emancipatory practice.

Engaging in the present whilst dreaming of future alternatives is what it means for me to be ethical. It is about modelling a way of living as a good person (Fielding & Moss, 2011) and, as a teacher, being engaged, not simply in training students, but 'engaged in the formation of a proper social life' (Dewey, 2013). This assumption falls in line with principles of democracy and social justice that are amongst the values of a radical education (Fielding & Moss, 2011). When I pause to consider where and how unjust, undemocratic conditions and practices are happening, I want to change this. The fact for example that changes in my school are decided by teachers and leadership without student involvement means that we are not engaging in a practice that recognises democratic values. This belief in participation and voice is an additional factor that drives me; this will be discussed below.

#### **1.4 I believe in social justice**

When I feel that people are unjustly treated, or when their rights are denied or taken away from them, I get upset. This feeling may be one of anger or outrage at times, but if I were to be in a state of outrage by everything that I believed to be unjust, I would be a constantly unsettled and unhappy person. I try to avoid being in this state, but still consciously reflect and act on the injustices that I do uncover. When I do perceive unjust practices however, I try to precede any immediate actions or reactions by consideration of whether something is worth pursuing. Being a teacher and working in

an institution that operates within certain hierarchical structures, I am aware of a fair amount of injustices when it comes to decisions being made. When there is a mere pretence that a situation has been fair, and when power relationships have come into play, my feathers can get slightly ruffled to say the least. I find manipulation and tokenism disturbing practices, and I believe that social justice can be achieved when people are given a right to participate in things that concern them.

In terms of teaching therefore, I believe in a pedagogy that involves teachers being engaged in an emancipatory project or a form of critical social science (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2007, p. 200) where reflexive knowledge is produced, resulting from a 'dialogic process as conversations in the field' (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2007, p. 201). Everyone deserves to have a voice, and in schools, this includes those that would seem to have the least power, namely the students or the children.

Having voice is, in fact, a fundamental right of a child. According to article 12 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) that was adopted on 20<sup>th</sup> November 1989 by the United Nations General Assembly, a child should have the right to express his or her own views freely on all matters affecting the child, and should be given the opportunity to be heard. In an explanation of this article for youth by UNICEF, this right of participation is expressed thus; 'You have a right to have your say in decisions that affect you, and to have your opinions taken into account' (United Nations Human Rights, 1989). It is therefore important that this right is recognised within education, especially one that is committed to democratic principles of participation. As (Bragg, 2010) argues, consulting young people is not only 'recognising their rights, but also about developing skills of cooperation that are necessary in order to achieve a more cohesive and democratic society' (Bragg, 2010, p. 20).

## 1.5 I believe in questioning

As a learner and a dreamer I question things. This, I suppose, also makes me a researcher, although I have to admit I have had to get used to this term. The word 'researcher' to a teacher generally conjures up the image of an academic sitting in an ivory tower at a distance to what is going on in the real world of classrooms, being 'out of touch' and 'too theoretical' (Anderson & Herr, 1999). However, this is not how it has to be; knowledge production is not exclusively something that academics create and to which practitioners should respond (Gibbons et al., 1994; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2007). Research is a process of inquiry, and this is what this thesis is about; it is about me, as a teacher, engaging in practitioner inquiry. As I adopt a first-person relationship with my practice through my own action and participation in the social praxis of my school community, I am engaging in critical-emancipatory research (Kemmis, 2010). I understand the power of teacher professional learning through research and my own practitioner inquiry has taught me to think this way. I am not the same person I was before I started this doctoral research; my identity has somehow been transformed through my reflective practice (Illeris, 2014; Moon, 2004) and, subsequently, I am happy to recognise myself as a researcher as well as a teacher. This label does not seem so daunting anymore.

My *praxis* as a teacher-researcher is the space in which my pedagogy and methodology interact and interconnect. The word *praxis* is understood firstly in Aristotelian terms (Aristotle, 2003) as a sense of 'knowing what one is doing in the doing of it' (Kemmis (2010, p. 10) and something distinct from 'technical action' (poiesis) and 'theoretical contemplation' (theoria) (Kemmis & Smith, 2008, pp. 15-16). Secondly, drawing on Kemmis' (2010) conceptualisation, *praxis* is understood as 'history-making in action' and 'human activity' as articulated by Marx in his *Theses on Feuerbach* (Marx, 1969). As a teacher, my praxis is my pedagogy; it is my method and practice of

teaching. I am bound to my research through my practice, and the two domains are not separate, distinct entities. In order to further justify and support this approach, I draw on Stenhouse's eloquently phrased statement; 'The basic argument for placing teachers at the heart of the educational research process may be simply stated. Teachers are in charge of classrooms' (Stenhouse, 1981, p. 109). He goes on to say that it is in fact essential that teachers are 'intimately involved in the research process' (Stenhouse, 1981, p. 113) when it comes to research in education. I know and understand my setting and my reasons for conducting the research more than anyone else, and because of this, I should not be made to feel that my research must fit into one particular 'paradigm' (Denzin, 2017; Denzin & Lincoln, 2013; Gage, 1989). If one were to argue that this intimacy could lead to a danger of losing critical perspective, one should be reminded that, through interacting with humans in a social setting, it is impossible for practitioners to be separated from their reality; this reality is a 'dynamic part of the picture' and it is their 'notions of reality that ultimately shape practice' (Cook, 2009, p. 13). As Stenhouse (1981) says, it should be researchers who are the ones justifying themselves to practitioners, and not practitioners to researchers.

So, I have admitted what I believe in and I have introduced where these beliefs come from. However, what is it that brings them all together? Why do I search for 'democratic experimentalism' (Fielding & Moss, 2011, p. 135) and to dream of an alternative for education?

## **1.6 I care**

The reason that I find myself questioning and dreaming is that I care. I care, not in the sense of looking after someone or something but, as in the Oxford Dictionary definition of the verb ;(Oxford Dictionaries, 2018) I feel concern or interest and attach importance to something. I am motivated to act by emotions that work together

with my beliefs. Through caring as a stance, I engage in the act of caring. As Frankfurt (1988) recognises, it is what we care about that influences our actions and our behaviours:

*Caring, insofar as it consists in guiding oneself along a distinctive course or in a particular manner, presupposes both agency and self-consciousness. It is a matter of being active in a certain way, and the activity is essentially a reflexive one. This is not exactly because the agent, in guiding his own behaviour, necessarily does something to himself. Rather, it is more nearly because he purposefully does something with himself (p.83)*

According to Frankfurt (1988), it is not possible to take action or to be aware of something without caring first; in caring, we subsequently think and act. My initial justification as to why and how I believe in radical education is, therefore, that I care. I care about the world, I care about other people, I care about my students, I care about my profession and, perhaps most importantly, I care about education and its transformative power. Ultimately, I care because I am human. I recognise that being human is something precious, and that everyone should have the right to be treated as citizens with the right to participate (Fielding & Moss, 2011). To return to Frankfurt's (1988) thoughts on the importance of what we care about, 'nothing is important unless the difference it makes is an important one' (Frankfurt, 1988, p. 82). Indeed, whatever difference I can make, it is important to me, and therefore it is worthy of my time and attention.

Hence, in caring, what does this mean for my practice as a teacher, researcher and learner? What does this mean for this thesis and the research that I undertook? What would a pedagogical practice look like that is driven by the assumptions and beliefs as outlined above? Dare I imagine what might happen if I did act according to my values (Lofthouse, 2014)? Sections 1.7 and 1.8 below introduce what such a pedagogy could look like, and outlines principles that have influenced my approach to my inquiry. They should be seen as guides to my research strategy however, and not as something that

emerged from my data. The story of what my data told me is presented in chapters five to eight and this, combined with what I believe and have come to know through the inquiry, is introduced in chapter four, and then brought together in chapter nine through my framework for a 'Pedagogy of CARE'. I begin firstly with a further word about caring and its relationship to 'love' and 'listening', as it is indeed caring that underpins what I strive towards in my pedagogical practice and hence what has driven this research inquiry.

### **1.7 Love, caring and the role of emotions: re-imagining education**

*It is impossible to teach without the courage to love* (Freire, 1997, p. 3)

Imagine an education system that was driven by love rather than by exam results; by curiosity and creativity rather than securing a job as being the end goal. As fantastical as this may seem, I know that I for one would like to be part of such a system. The quote by Freire (Freire, 1997) at the start of this section resonates with me very much and I am making the suggestion that love, a strong emotion, has a key role to play in pedagogy. In re-imagining education, we re-imagine the relationships in it. This may be a radical claim, but I am going to stick with it. Freire's (1997) 'love' is not however, as McClaren (2005) stresses, a love of dialogue, but rather a 'dialogue of love', where 'love is preeminently and irrevocably dialogic', emerging viscerally from 'an act of daring, of courage, of critical reflection' (McClaren, 2005, xxx).

As I see it, love, as an emotion, is belief-based as in an Aristotelian conception of emotions as 'discriminating responses closely connected with beliefs about how things are and what is important' (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 41). This links back to the Oxford Dictionary definition of the verb 'to care' as mentioned above (1.6) namely that



it is the act of attaching importance to something. According to Frankfurt (Frankfurt, 1999) love is a 'mode of caring', and an 'active' love involves the one loving being motivated by the *act* of loving itself. Having 'courage to love' means therefore that a teacher is brave enough to believe in that which is important, and acts from a stance of caring. This act of caring is, however, also reflexive, meaning that 'when we care we identify ourselves with what we care about' (Hoveid & Finne, 2015, p. 82). For Frankfurt (1999, 2004), caring is less *what* we care about, but *that* we care (Hoveid & Finne, 2015, p. 82) and through care, our actions are given a direction. In educational relationships therefore, our actions, our teaching and learning, are part of a *relational* pedagogy that is, in turn, a manifestation of our stance of caring.

Emotions are, however, not something that are frequently talked about in the research community, so I may be seen to be radical in doing so, if I were to be implying a 'possible overthrow of a previously stable or at least dominant order of ways of knowing, thinking, believing, acting' (Schostak & Schostak, 2008, p. 1). I am not implying an overthrow however; rather, I am extending a friendly invitation to consider that if educational practice is to be ethical, then there needs to be an interaction between values and practice. If caring is what we value, then our practice should reflect this. According to Felten (2017) the role of emotion is virtually ignored in scholarly literature, despite it being something that underpins all personal partnerships. Felten's (2017) 'confession' that every partnership he has been part of has been an emotional experience does not seem like a new idea to me at all, and it does say something about how emotions may be viewed by the research community if he needs to call it a 'confession' in the first place. In terms of *pedagogical* relationships, I can see why emotion does seem to get ignored. Felten (2017) suggests that 'scholarly venues' tend to involve faculty and academic staff's descriptions of partnerships in 'unemotional terms' (p. 3), whilst more personal and

reflective essays can emphasise the emotional aspects more. In Felten's (2017) view, 'academic customs privilege the rational' (p. 3). So what of customs? Are we afraid to break them for fear of not being accepted into the community of which we strive to be a part? Am I to shy away from admitting that the fact that I care drives me towards the act of caring, even though I am writing an 'academic' piece that ultimately needs to be accepted by academia? Call me radical, but I am not going to do that. The value of caring is central to my inquiry and it is related to my beliefs in social justice (1.4) and a 'radical' practice that I outline in the next section (1.8). Caring is indeed a value that can be linked with the ethics of justice, as female care theorists such as Noddings (1987, 1988, 2010) and Held (2006) agree. There is no need to set these against each other, just as there is no need to set inquiry as stance (Cochrane-Smith & Lytle, 2007; 2009; Zeichner, 2003) against inquiry as research (Menter et al, 2011). In practitioner inquiry that sees values and practice interacting with one another, boundaries are dissolved, practice and research intermingle, and pedagogy becomes an ethical act.

### **1.8 Radical education: an ethical practice for social justice**

What is called for in my mind is a pedagogy that allows for both students and teachers to be learners, sharing a 'similar status as producers' and being 'linked together through a pedagogical dialogue characterized by horizontal and dialogical relationships' (Fischman, 2009, p. 236). The relationship in this pedagogy is, as Freire (1998b) sees it, not simply based on a love that is a kind of 'paternalistic coddling' (Fischman, 2009), but rather a more 'radical' view of the student-teacher relationship that involves the teacher being at the same time a student and the student being at the same time a teacher (Fischman, 2009; Freire, 1998b). It is a pedagogy that has the concepts of change, social justice, participation and transformation at its heart; a type of 'critical qualitative inquiry'

(Denzin, 2017) within educational practice that is part of a paradigm 'firmly rooted in a human rights agenda' (Denzin, 2017, p. 8). Situated somewhere amongst research that could be described as 'transformative, dialogic, reflexive, participatory and emancipatory' amongst other terms (Denzin, 2017), this pedagogy is a form of critical inquiry that is sorely needed in times of global neoliberalism (Denzin, 2017; Fielding & Moss, 2011; Freire, 1998a; Giroux, 2014). Within this type of pedagogy, both teacher and student voices emerge through a process of collaborative inquiry, where teachers and students engage in critical reflection through posing questions together, recognising themselves as conscious, 'unfinished' beings (Freire, 1998a) (Kirylo, 2013) and becoming liberated through cognitive acts (Freire, 1970, 1998b). Influenced by a *critical* approach to education, the questions that are posed are aimed at addressing the status quo and issues of power and hierarchies (Kincheloe, 2004, 2008) and 'standing aside from the prevailing order and asking how that order came about' (Cox, 1981, pp. 88-89). Throughout such an inquiry process, there is a reconfiguring of the traditional student/teacher relationship (Teitelbaum, 2009) and the teacher and the student become collaborative partners in their inquiry. This collaborative relationship should also be based on trust, mutual respect and it should recognise the different subjectivities of all of those involved, refusing to reduce the participants to an 'essentialist existence', but rather regarding them as 'complex subjects' (Fischman, 2009). In my understanding, all of these elements are brought together into a pedagogy that stems from a stance of caring; through caring about one's role in the world, be it in immediate, local or global communities, one is driven to act.

Whilst not necessarily adhering to one particular research framework as such, this pedagogy has many characteristics that a *transformative* research framework (Figure 1) suggests. The framework as I envisage it brings together my epistemological beliefs with an approach to inquiry. The approach, located in teaching

practice, is simultaneously an act of teaching and learning, or a pedagogy, *and* a research methodology. Whilst I do not see this framework (Figure 1) as being a fixed idea, it is an attempt to justify an approach to inquiry that privileges voice, both for teachers and for students.

<b>Epistemology</b>	<b>Methodology / Pedagogy</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge is not neutral</li> <li>• Knowledge reflects the power and social relationships within society</li> <li>• Purpose of knowledge construction: to aid people to improve society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants are provided with a voice</li> <li>• Inquiry “with” others rather than “on” or “to” others</li> <li>• Pursuit of social justice and change</li> <li>• Reciprocity in researcher-participant relationship</li> </ul>

*Figure 1: A transformative framework for educational research (Creswell, 2013; Mertens, Sullivan, & Stace, 2011)*

Such an approach to inquiry is located within a critical-emancipatory research stance (Kemmis, 2010), from a ‘disposition of critical intent, or social consciousness’ (Grundy, 1987b, p. 28) related to Habermas’ (1972) developmental phases in action-oriented critique (theory, enlightenment and action), which were then developed by Carr & Kemmis (1986) in their attempt to link educational theory and practice. However, whilst enlightenment and critical self-understanding are important, they are not enough by themselves (Elliott, 2005) to justify what Habermas (1972) called ‘strategic action’.

In chapter two, I position this transformative stance within my own teaching context of the International Baccalaureate (IB) and the area of service learning, and propose how they can be brought together in a pedagogy for *critical* service learning. Before guiding you through this however, I will discuss the pedagogical principles that I see as belonging to a transformative framework as outlined above. As a

result, I hope to convince you that my vision of a 'radical' education is in fact an ethical one. It is a dream guided by transformative principles that come together through a process of collaborative inquiry. Within such a partnership, the teacher models, encourages and teaches certain behaviours in the hope that the students can learn what it means to act upon beliefs. In this way, the inquiry itself becomes the method for transformation or change. The next section outlines these principles of practice as I understand them before I move on to outline how the rest of this thesis is structured.

### **1.8.1 Critical practice**

Being *critical* is about posing questions; it is an approach that is 'characterised by questioning and not taking things for granted' (Thompson & Thompson, 2008, p. 27). Being a critically reflective practitioner does not only mean that one thinks about one's practice, but it involves engaging in inquiry that is underpinned by a 'critical radical ethics' that is 'relational and collaborative' (Cannella & Lincoln, 2011, p. 81) and that uncovers and addresses issues of power (Brydon-Miller, Kral, Maguire, Noffke, & Sabhlok, 2011; Kincheloe, McClaren, & Steinberg, 2011; Mayes et al., 2017). Such an approach focuses on the underpinnings of power in every context and 'the ways that power performs or is performed to create injustice' (Cannella & Lincoln, 2011, p. 83). Two ways of doing this are through two important principles of democratic education for social justice, namely, the concepts of *dialogue* and *problem-posing*. These approaches are also central to Freire's notion of *praxis* (Au, 2009; Breunig, 2005; Freire, 1970) and to an evolving critical pedagogy (Kincheloe, 2008). Freire's notions of *dialogue* and *praxis* centre on the 'dialectical interweaving of theory and practice' (Kirylo, 2013, p. 51) and linked to these is his concept of *conscientização* (conscientization), which focuses on the capacity of human beings to be able to develop a critical consciousness in order to take action to transform the world (Freire, 1970, 1976). Even though, in an

international school in Central Switzerland, I am in an educational context far removed from Freire in the 1960s in rural Brazil and its poor, illiterate farming communities, I cannot help but feel inspired by the idea that we, as teachers and students, are in a position to transform our social reality through critical reflection on that same reality. Through a 'problem-posing' approach (Freire, 1970, 1974), one is given the opportunity to develop a critically conscious understanding of one's relationship with the world (Davis & Freire, 1981).

Influenced by principles of critical pedagogy as advocated by educationalists such as Freire (1970, 1998a, 1998b), Giroux (1988; Giroux, 2014) and McClaren (1995) I define being critical as Wright (2012) sees it, namely, that one is able to:

1. *question dominant values*
2. *achieve an increased level of critical consciousness regarding the ideologies that impact on their lives*
3. *place the discourse of education itself in its formative geo-socio-political context*

In addition, critical pedagogy also privileges a 'mode of *experiential transformative learning*' (Wright, 2012, p. 62), which involves the following elements:

1. *experiential* –it is not based on integrally transmissible information but it is a process of self-questioning that one must go through
2. *transformative* – it reconfigures dominant value systems by which one's behaviour is, often unconsciously, regulated
3. *learning* – techniques and dispositions of critical thought are acquired and it opens up spaces in which new perspectives can be shared and challenged

Believing as I do in learning, dreaming, social justice and questioning, and caring as I do about the transformative power of

education, these elements of critical pedagogy certainly resonate with me and influence my thinking.

### **1.8.2 Responsible practice**

As well as taking risks and experimenting within our practice, we should also behave as responsible role-models, teaching students what this looks like and how they can learn to be responsible too. Lipman (2003) sees this as being *reasonable*; 'in a democratic society, we need reasonable citizens above all' (p.11) so, in order to achieve this, 'students who pass through schools must be reasonably treated in an effort to make them more reasonable beings' (Lipman, 2003, p. 11). Being a responsible practitioner therefore means treating students with respect, dignity and recognising them as unique, multifaceted individuals that have a right to participate as equals in pedagogical relationships. Being respectful or reasonable in this way means involving young people in matters that concern them; providing opportunities for voice is therefore necessary within such a framework (Fielding, 2001, 2015). Pedagogical relationships are therefore built on mutual respect, understanding and trust (Cook-Sather, 2002). When the relationship is based on collaborative inquiry where knowledge is produced together, this idea of being responsible falls in line with the belief that the purpose of research should be to gain solidarity with others and to "join with" and "learn from" them, rather than to "speak for" or "intervene into" (Cannella & Lincoln, 2011, p. 83). (Glesne, 2007) states, 'If you want to research us, you can go home. If you have come to accompany us, if you think our struggle is also your struggle, we have plenty of things to talk about". (p. 171). Hence, engaging in *collaborative* inquiry, where students are given voice and regarded and treated as equals, is what it means to be a responsible practitioner. As a teacher, one plays one's part in 'helping to shape student voice around collaborative rather than managerialist cultures' (Wisby, 2011, p. 42). Collaborative inquiry in this sense could also be

seen to be located within a 'safe space' where students feel comfortable enough to be brave and to take risks (Cook-Sather, 2016). Creating this space is also the role of a *responsible* practitioner; students need to be listened to before their voices can emerge.

### 1.8.3 Risky practice

I agree with Cook-Sather (2016) when she states that 'real learning requires some risk and discomfort' (Cook-Sather, 2016, p. 1). When we learn, we all, to a certain extent, 'let go of previous understandings and engagement with the world' (Cook-Sather, 2016, p. 5) and as pedagogues, in our guiding and exemplary roles, we invite students to do this. We are all vulnerable to change, growth, or transformation that may come about as a result of our learning. Yet what is important is that we are open to that change, that we welcome it and that we are brave enough to take a risk and to try things out or, in other words, to *experiment*. Cook-Sather (2016) notes that in her pedagogical practice, where she works in facilitating student-faculty partnerships and facilitating student voice, she has 'wrestled with how to balance genuine challenge with sufficient support and affirmation, because it is that combination.... that encourages the greatest growth and openness to further risk' (Cook-Sather, 2016, p. 1). Gorski (2009) states that, in his work as a social justice educator, he sees it as his role to 'facilitate an environment where students find themselves somewhere in the middle in which they are willing to grapple with new ideas without accepting them blindly' (p. 54). Like Gorski, as a practitioner-inquirer, I aim to help my students 'shed the armour' (p. 54) of existing assumptions and be open to new information that conflicts with their already existing knowledge and understandings. The way that I approach this in this research project is through collaborative practitioner inquiry.



Having taught at schools that offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, (IBDP) since the beginning of my teaching career, I am used to being reminded about the importance of being a 'risk-taker', as it is one of the 10 IB Learner Profile attributes; as mentioned in the next chapter, these are qualities that IB students should strive towards in every aspect of their programme (IBO, 2013). As a 'risk-taker', an IB learner should strive to 'approach uncertainty with forethought and determination...work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies.... (be) resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change' (IBO, 2013). These are certainly admirable qualities to aspire towards as learners, and, when students are co-inquirers, they can be encouraged to embody these attributes. As co-inquirers however, the students are involved in a collaborative inquiry together with practitioners, so surely the practitioners themselves should also embody these attributes in their practice. Through co-inquiry, a space should be created that is a 'shared intersubjective space in which different contributions are tested and extended' (Habermas, 1987; Kemmis, 2010, p. 14); in other words, it is a space where students and teachers can *experiment* with ideas together. When we experiment in our practice, we take a risk, we try something out and we are unsure of what the outcome may be. Practitioner inquiry certainly can be a 'risky business' when one is involved in a 'web of complex relationships that intersect with the distribution of authority and power within the school' (Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015, p. 604), yet if we at the same time acknowledge the significance of strategic priorities within the school and we are 'in allegiance' with other colleagues and students (Lofthouse, 2014), then the 'unwelcome truths' (Kemmis, 2006; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015) that may be revealed as a result of the inquiry are more likely to be well-received.

#### **1.8.4 Democratic practice**

When I talk about democratic practice, I refer to the traditions of participation rather than 'representative traditions of democracy' (Fielding, 2011, p. 4). This 'particular understanding of democracy' (Fielding, 2011, p. 4) can be defined as 'thick' rather than 'thin' democracy (Gandin & Apple, 2002) in that it involves a 'more holistic, inclusive, participatory, and critical engagement' (Carr, 2008, p. 118) concerned with 'power relations, identity and social change' (Carr, 2008, p.118) rather than being focused on structures and processes of 'formal democracy' (Carr, 2008, p. 118). Indeed, one way of aspiring towards an education that is underpinned by democratic principles of participation is to facilitate conditions where students are given an authentic voice. Nind (2014) suggests that involving students in such a shared relationship can be seen to belong to a paradigm shift in educational research. In working together with students in the exploration of new knowledge and understandings, there is a 'shift in the power dynamics' (Nind, 2013) of the research production; students are the researchers, facilitated by the researcher-educator. In order for education to be democratic, students should be viewed as critical partners in learning (Shor, 1992), and a 'critical, democratic teacher' (Shor, 1992, p. 20) should lead this collaborative experience.

In a democratic approach to education, teaching and learning becomes a 'shared responsibility' (Fielding, 2001, p. 137) and in one's role as a critical practitioner- researcher with students as research partners, one can contribute to a more radical, participatory tradition of democracy, in line with Fielding's institutional framework (Fielding, 2011, pp. 13-14; Fielding & Moss, 2011). Fielding (2011) recognises that participatory democracy should be something that we are striving towards in educational practice, not merely something that can be theorised about. He criticises market-led approaches to education, which, even if pertaining to address issues of democracy, do in fact 'reduce them to the querulous voice of customer and the hectoring collectivity of visceral self-interest' (Fielding, 2011, p. 10).

As demonstrated in Table 1 below, Fielding outlines how a ‘person-centred, democratic approach’ (Fielding, 2011, p. 11) to education concerns how one can live a better and more fulfilling life, and how one can create a better world by working alongside others. This is contrasted against a ‘market-led, high-performance model’ (Fielding, 2011, p. 11) that accepts the neoliberalist mindset that ‘There Is No Alternative (TINA) to the market as a guiding principle to our way of life’ (Fielding, 2011, p. 4).

<u>Personal perspective: Person-centred education</u>	<u>Communal perspective: Creative Society</u>
Driver: Personal Development	Driver: Shared responsibility for a better future
Dominant model: Relational Dialogue	Dominant model: learning community
Key question: What kind of person do I wish to become?	Key question: How can we develop an inclusive, creative society together?

Table 1: Person-centred education for democratic fellowship (Fielding, 2011, p. 11)

A democratic approach recognises that it is not just students that are given voice through participation, but teachers are also empowered as professional learners. Even when working at the ‘highest’ levels of student participation as conceptualised by Arnstein’s (1969) and later Hart’s (1992) ladder of participation, the idea of *community* empowerment should not be omitted. What is important is that students *and* teachers (or other adults) join together in the initiation and negotiation of ideas within their own learning environment, so that they can both be empowered.

One thing must however be addressed. Whilst knowing that I am a dreamer, you may think that I am romanticising the idea of empowerment. However, I am all too aware of the fact that the term ‘empowerment’ should be used with caution (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2007). It can be all too easy to fall into the essentialist trap of allowing romantic, utopian ideas about ‘authentic’ voice and

'empowering' research to mask over the fact that individual experiences are fluid, dynamic and shifting. In line with a methodology for critical cultural awareness in the field of intercultural communication (Holliday, 2011), Jackson (2003) warns us against this tendency to want to make a fixed link between experience and knowledge; 'the romanticisation of voices leads to emancipatory researchers' tendencies to idealise and totalise their participants' experiences, ignoring the messiness of their multiple subjectivities and contextual realities (Jackson, 2003, p. 697). Chadderton (2011) warns that any student voice project needs to problematize issues of power and empowerment, recognising and being explicit about how research methods should be seen as 'a constantly shifting interplay of dominance and resistance' (Chadderton, 2011, p. 78). In her view, any such project that aims to further democratic ideals and processes should complicate rather than simplify issues of power and empowerment. So, whilst motivated by the idea of a student voice approach, I am at the same time cautious about it, as Fielding (2016) reminds us to be. I am mindful that student voice becomes authentic when it is practised as a call to democratic values, and not just because it may be a movement that 'sells' itself well, as has been the danger in the U.K., as Fielding (2001; 2016) warns us.

### **1.8.5 Ethical practice**

Practitioner inquiry is indeed a powerful method of allowing teachers to develop metacognition (Wall, 2016; Wall & Hall, 2017) to improve teaching and learning for our students (Wall & Hall, 2017) and to 'contextualise professional knowledge and learning' (Campbell & McNamara, 2010). However, I would argue that, in order for it to meet any democratic or social justice aims, it does need to begin with the kind of emancipatory (Kinsler, 2010) or caring mindset that cannot simply be forced. Enlightenment cannot simply be 'thrust' upon an inquirer (Kinsler, 2010), whether teacher or student; rather, there should be some autonomy and ownership (Wall & Hall, 2017)

over one's own research objectives. If practitioner inquiry is to be ethical, it needs to be the kind of practical action that is driven by values (Coghlan, 2016) and it must transcend the dualistic idea that it is either research or stance (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2007; Zeichner, 2003; Wall, 2018) and be understood as the pragmatic balance (Wall, 2018) between the two, privileging 'what works' (Gustavsen, 2004). Collaborative inquiry between teachers and students is, particularly influenced by critical service learning pedagogy, the educational practice that allows for a 'dynamic interaction' (Wall, 2018) between the ideas of first-, second- and third-person research practice (Kinsler, 2010) and takes practitioner inquiry beyond any 'non-emancipatory' (Kemmis, 2006) forms of practice-based research. In this way my inquiry can also be considered to have an ethical underpinning. My 'Pedagogy of CARE' framework as described in chapters four and nine strengthen this idea.

Returning to the idea of student voice, it must be remembered that conducting research with young, inexperienced adults is certainly not without its ethical challenges and considerations. One important ethical issue in this particular inquiry for example, as in any research that involves participation, was to what extent the students were heard, who set the agenda and who was listening (MacBeath, Demetriou, Rudduck, & Myers, 2003). If I was claiming 'meaningful involvement' on their part, to what extent was the students' involvement meaningful and to whom? Was I only involving students in *my* project in order to suit *my* own purposes? Would I, in such a case, be adhering to mere *token* participation (Fletcher, 2005; Hart, 1992; Wisby, 2011) and would I have had the ultimate power as a researcher, despite my aim to break down this teacher-student hierarchy? In previous discussions involving student participation (Wasner, 2016), I have recognised that there can be varying degrees of child involvement in their learning, as Hart (1992) visualises in his 'ladder' of participation. This ladder was based on Arnstein's (1969) model and adapted to relate to student voice work. Despite these

varying degrees of involvement, ranging from 'assigned and informed' (Hart, 1992) on the lowest level of participation (tokenism is considered to be non-participation) to 'child-initiated, shared decisions with adults' at the top, what should happen in my opinion is that levels of possible participation are discussed honestly and openly as a research team at the outset of the project; in this way, all members of the research partnership are aware of the opportunities and limitations.

So, what happens next? What do you need to know at this point? I hope that you are waiting to hear about how I responded in practice to my beliefs and assumptions, how my students responded, and what this led me to conclude. This thesis aims to capture this for you. Hence, what follows is the unfolding of my research journey. The thesis is the manifestation of this journey, and, as a piece of writing, it aims to stay true to and shed light on the principles that I have outlined, adding new dimensions that the data and the writing process bring to it. So, before I take you there, the remainder of this chapter will tell you how I intend to present this journey to you.

## **1.9 Thesis structure**

This thesis takes you through the journey of the research process, beginning with this chapter that has identified and outlined my beliefs and principles that influence my practice. Chapter two contextualises these beliefs in the research setting of my own school, an international school in Switzerland, and outlines my personal conflict with the school's practice of service learning. The dissonance that I was experiencing led me to base my inquiry within the topic of service learning. As a high school offering the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP), there was the specific context of the Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS) element of the IBDP, in which my inquiry was also located. I make the connection between the aims of the IBDP and a participatory, critical approach

to service learning, which further strengthens the 'students as researchers' approach to this inquiry project. Chapter three presents an overview of my research approach and methodology over the course of the academic year, as well as my process of data analysis. Chapter four introduces my 'Pedagogy of CARE' framework before I go on to present my data in chapters five until eight. Chapter nine links the data with the 'Pedagogy of CARE' framework and further implications for practice, and the final chapter of this thesis lays out my suggested ways forward for an education that is underpinned by the principles and attributes that I present in my framework.

It would be a foolish and misguided assumption to presume, however, that the process of writing this thesis was clear-cut and straightforward from the beginning. Whilst the thesis may be structured in a way that intends to present the inquiry in a clear manner to the reader, the steps that have been taken to get here have been anything but straight. On the contrary, it has been a journey of discovery and re-discovery that has left me in awe of this thing called 'research' and its power to transform on both an individual, institutional and societal level. My research was my own practitioner inquiry in my own teaching context at an international school in Switzerland. The next chapter takes you briefly into that world. I will, however, just mention what my writing will look like.

### **1.10 Writing into being**

*In the stories we tell, we discover ourselves and each other*  
(Pelias, 2015, p. 609)

What follows in this thesis is the story of my practitioner inquiry within my own school. Being my story, it has of course been filtered through my own beliefs and values (Chadderton, 2011) and my own understandings of the subject of my observation (Siraj-Blatchford & Siraj-Blatchford, 1997). I am not ashamed to admit that I, as the author of this thesis as a qualitative text, am an integral, inseparable

part of it (Denzin, 1989) and that even as write, the paradigms are shifting and there is a 'blurring of genres' (Geertz, 1988, 1993b). On the contrary, I stand up loud and proud to declare that I, as the 'living, perceiving, experiencing person who is the researcher' (Sikes & Goodson, 2003) have been influenced by my own 'understandings about, and interpretations of' (p.34) the world to which I have been exposed. This means that I am not hiding myself through a discourse which attempts to neutralise or distance my own subjective experiences (Fine, Weiss, Wesen, & Wong, 2000, pp. 108-109). Before I outline how the chapters of this thesis come together to tell the story, I will talk about and justify my writing strategies so that you know what to expect. Within qualitative research, there is indeed a justification for tangled and overlapping writing strategies (Denzin & Giardina, 2009; Pelias, 2011), and the articulation and clarification of these strategies is an important part of the writing itself (Pelias, 2011). For some parts of the inquiry, one strategy may prove to be more useful, but for others, less so.

### **1.11 Reflexive writing**

To begin with, in making myself part of my own inquiry, I am adopting a *reflexive* strategy (Pelias, 2011). In writing this thesis, I am performing myself into being (Pelias, 2011), engaging in a process of writing as a 'method of inquiry' (Richardson & St.Pierre, 2008). It is not an easy task, believe me. The act of writing itself is allowing a whole new reality to be constructed, and my subjectivity is unashamedly exposed; this is, according to Holliday (2016), how rigour and accountability can be maintained in a qualitative study of this nature.

Those who 'express bafflement at the reflexive approach' (Dean, 2017, p. 3) need to come down from their epistemological high-horses and appreciate that, when conducting research with 'messy complex people' (Dean, 2017, p. 5) as in practitioner inquiry, it is



through reflexivity that researchers can unpick their subjectivity from the world of others in which it is tangled (Denzin, 1997). In this process of nurturing and presenting my reflexivity, I am making myself wholly vulnerable and I am taking a risk in doing so. Does this make me a radical? In the spirit of socially consequential writing, I certainly do aim to be 'unruly, disruptive, critical, and dedicated to the goals of justice and equity' (Denzin & Giardina, 2009, p. 29). If 'normal' research is 'puzzle-solving' and a 'form of practice that does not question the rules of the game' (Schostak and Schostak, 2008, p. 4), then perhaps what I aim to do might be seen as something radical. In not being willing to engage in any kind of 'paradigm war' (Anderson & Herr, 1999; Gage, 1989) or be subsumed under any of Gage's (1989) three paradigms (positivist, interpretivist or critical), I may be regarded as being 'alien' or 'suspect' (Anderson & Herr, 1999, p. 12) to those that do identify with these paradigms. As my doctoral thesis comes into being, I am slowly removing items of clothing until I am fully exposed to the critical gaze; I am 'voluntarily standing up naked in front of (my) peers, colleagues, family, and the academy' (Forber-Pratt, 2015, p. 1) Is this allowed? Will it make my readers feel uncomfortable? If it does, then those readers are invited to reflect on their own epistemologies and to consider that it may just be acceptable to stand outside or between them (Anderson & Herr, 1999). Recognising alternatives is what makes us human; we don't have to agree with them, but we can give them the consideration and respect that they deserve. In fact, rather than being tempted to deny that differences exist, they should be at the centre of an ethical discourse about research and scientific inquiry (Denzin, 2013; Fine et al., 2000).

Exposing myself and recognising my own complicity in my research is at once daunting, but at the same time, as a qualitative researcher, it is necessary (Dean, 2017). I cannot pretend that I am standing outside my context and that I am not personally involved. I embody my own knowledge and, through reflecting on this and making it

known, I am offering a trustworthy and honest account. I am not prepared to 'erase the individual in the name of generalizability' (Pelias, 2011, p. 663). So, in writing my thesis, which is in itself an integral part of the process of qualitative inquiry (Holliday, 2016), I am coming to terms with what I think and feel. I hope that, as I gradually undress myself, and I "write into" rather than "write up" my research (Pelias, 2011), my readers gaze upon my naked self and appreciate just what it has taken to get there.

Having introduced my beliefs, assumptions and principles in this chapter, I now offer you a glimpse of the educational world that was the backdrop for my inquiry.

## 2 Chapter 2: Why service learning?

*I think the theory is good, but it's hard to put in practice...it shows that we are trying, but the application of it is a little iffy, I guess (student researcher, grade 11)*

Much educational research surrounding service learning comes from tertiary education, particularly within a U.S. context. There is however an urgent need to improve and develop service learning practice within secondary education, particularly within international schools where the opportunities for travel abroad or working with 'poorer' communities in the Global South are much greater than within national state educational systems for example in the U.K. International schools and teachers need to resist the 'glamour of the global' (Roberts, 2011) in the name of developing 'responsible global citizens' (IBO, 2015) and at the expense of communities who we temporarily visit, use their resources, and then leave them bemused (Roberts, 2011).

In this chapter I am therefore transporting you to the context of an international 'high' school (grades 9-12) in Switzerland, where I have been a German teacher for the past seven years and Service Learning/ IB CAS Coordinator in addition for the past three. If you are unfamiliar with the International Baccalaureate (IB) Programmes, or if you have never come across the term 'service learning', I hope that this chapter will enlighten you somewhat and help you to contextualise my inquiry.

However, before I do explain this to you, I want to start off by letting you into another secret. As with my confession about being a utopian thinker and a radical at the very start of this thesis, this second secret may also cause some concern. Here it is: I was concerned that my school was engaging in unethical practice. The student from whom the quote at the start of this chapter comes could not have put

it more eloquently; I wanted to include her voice here to make my point, even though I am not presenting data from my inquiry just yet. The practice that I, and she, was referring to was what the school was calling 'service learning'. I cared about service learning and its transformative and emancipatory potential (Kiely, 2005) and I was in the position to coordinate it at the high school. I knew that service learning could contribute to identity formation amongst the students (Pompa, 2002) as well as being an approach that had social justice at its heart (Porfilio & Hickman, 2011). My mind therefore began racing with questions when I became unsure of whether what we were doing was in fact ethical. Taking on the role of coordinator of service learning at the high school had been an exciting moment for me; I had been given the chance to coordinate something that was, when practised with *critical* intent, a revolutionary pedagogy (Porfilio and Hickman, 2011) that could challenge the neoliberal discourse (Anders & Lester, 2011; Renner, 2011). As you can see, I was getting a bit carried away with my utopian and radical thinking. I had to come back down to earth and look at the reality. Doing so did not mean that I had to accept this reality however; indeed, as Marx (1969) said, the point is not just to interpret the world, but to *change* it.

So, what was happening at my school and what questions was I asking myself? How did these questions, combined with my beliefs and what I cared about, lead to my own research questions and research design? I will depict this to you below. Following on from this, I will then place service learning within the context of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) that we offered in grades 11 and 12, in order to explain the nature of the collaborative inquiry that I carried out in my school with a group of grade 11 IB students. To end the chapter, I will then introduce the idea of a more *critical* approach to service learning and how this fits in with my principles for a radical, democratic education for social justice as outlined in chapter one (1.8). This chapter is therefore

intended to connect my beliefs and convictions as outlined in the previous chapter with my research methodology and data presentation that follow in subsequent chapters.

## **2.1 International service learning: a cringe-worthy, unethical practice**

The aspect of our practice that troubled me the most was the so-called 'international service learning' that happened within a 'Personal Development Week' (PDW) every September. In this week, all grade 11 and 12 high school students took part in a teacher-led, international project that supported children, young people or the environment in African (Tanzania, South Africa, Ghana), Asian (India, Nepal) and European (Albania, Bosnia, England, Iceland, Italy, Spain) countries. Some of the organisations that we worked with were newer relationships (in India, South Africa and Bosnia for example) whereas others were well established and had been going on for a number of years.

At this point I need to clarify something about the nature of our school; it needs to be said so that you can place these trips within their context. Having previously taught in state schools in the U.K., I am well aware that such trips abroad sound like something completely out of the ordinary, and such extravagance would not be the norm in a school that is non fee-paying. However, just because our school may happen to have the money to spend on sending students around the world, this does not mean that it is necessary to do so. On the contrary, if we had any sense of our moral obligations, we would at least be trying to replace our carbon footprint with the flights that we use (some teachers, aware of a feeling of guilt or responsibility to the environment, have tried this with trips, mainly unsuccessfully however). Since starting at the school in 2010, I had therefore been wondering what was going on with these trips. This practice was completely alien to me. I was not used to being offered

such opportunities for travel and being able to 'drop in' on other communities in other countries with such ease. Sitting watching students by a pool in a hotel in a small town in Northern Albania, I wondered what the educational or 'service learning' connection was meant to be, and I began to feel increasingly disturbed by what I continued to experience in school. These experiences will be described below.

At the time of embarking upon this inquiry, the grade 12 students (those in the final year of their studies) were the cohort who had the opportunity to support one of five organisations in the five different countries outside of Europe mentioned above, and then they participated in the week-long trip PDW to those countries in September. Participation in a trip was compulsory, unless a parent expressed a specific wish for their child to stay at home instead. The support for these organisations was always financial and all participating students were required to raise funds in any way they could (bake sales were the most popular method). Students then got to see where their funds went when they travelled to the countries for the trip organised by teachers in the school; this generated a general sense of satisfaction or 'gratification' (Mitchell, 2008). One was content in the knowledge that one had 'made a difference'. However, to me, this practice was wrong. I did not agree with the fact that we were calling this 'service learning'. I did not see the reciprocity and mutual understanding that should have been the cornerstones of our engagement with other communities (Berger Kaye, 2010; Butin, 2007; Feige, Connolly, & Furey, 2011) or, as Bruce (2016) calls them, the Other (those who are radically different to ourselves). It felt like we were engaging in a short-term, 'unhelpful time sink' (Tryon et al., 2008, p. 16) with other communities.

Standing in school assembly week after week post-PDW trips, I could no longer suffer the cringing feeling that I got as I witnessed the presentations full of images of our students surrounded by

smiling 'poorer' children, and hearing how 'happy' these children had been to have had our students visiting. I was reminded of the 'White Saviour' narrative (Mitchell, 2008; Bruce, 2016) and the idea that we may all be convinced that we were saving the world's problems by spending a week looking into other 'poorer' communities and deciding what we could do for them (Andreotti, 2006, 2010; Bruce, 2016). I began to wonder where the *learning* was, and whether we were in fact in danger of exploiting poor communities as free sources of student education (Mitchell, 2008). Did the students understand the contexts of these international projects? Did they feel motivated or morally obliged to do fundraising on their return? Was it because I feared that we were essentialising others (Holliday, 2011) and that we might in fact be reinforcing hierarchies and privilege through our behaviour and our discourse (Mitchell, 2008)? Was there more to service than baking cookies to raise money and then playing with some children for a few days? Were we being *ethical* in our behaviour or even considering why we were doing it? Where were we being *critical* about what we were doing? What did students think about our service learning and had students ever been consulted about our practice and their learning as a result? These were questions that were eating away at me, and I knew that I had to do something. Of course I cared about 'making a difference' too, but I cared about the people in these communities and worried that we were contributing to a dehumanising practice. I cared about our students, but I also cared about them learning to be ethical. I cared about our school, but I also cared about the fact that we should not be engaging in practice that was blindly and uncritically dictated by the market forces that would make our school appear attractive to its prospective 'customers' or 'consumers' of education. This 'marketisation' of our so-called 'service learning' seemed to be fundamentally affecting the students' (and, for that matter, the teachers') understandings of what "doing good" looked like (Cameron, 2014), creating 'ideal neoliberal subjects' (Forte, 2014) influenced by 'imperial ideologies' (Biehn, 2014).

To come back to my principles as outlined in chapter one, there had to be an alternative, or at least we had to be able to imagine one. The trips were a huge part of what we did at the school, and every year there were disputes about who got to go where and why, and which trips were valuable or not. Students had however never been consulted about any of these issues and that troubled me. The only voices that got heard were those teachers that were willing to give up some lunch times to sit on a PDW Committee; an attempt at least of some kind of democratic process of teacher involvement. It is, therefore, with this context in mind, that I was keen to include student voice in discussions and decisions about these trips. The PDW trips were part of my service learning coordinator role, although I was not fully in charge of them, but I felt that I could combine my democratic imaginings with my social justice aims within this particular context. The PDW trips seemed an excellent opportunity to critique our practice, and if we dared to get students involved in this kind of critical thinking, we would be one step closer to something that looked like a democratic practice. It would be a risk, but then, as previously stated, unless we work towards our dream of alternatives, we would never be able to find out if they could in fact be turned into reality.

## **2.2 Looking into the lives of others**

I continue with further contextualisation of service learning within our school, as I would like to further depict how we, in my opinion, were engaging in an unethical, uncritical practice. Our practice was going against the principles that I believe in, as outlined in chapter one, and this motivated me further to think like a 'radical'. In a bid to explore what the school advertised about our 'community and service' programme (often interchanged with the term 'service learning' in our school') I came across the following quote from a grade 8 student published on the school website, referring to the



required support of a charity in Africa by all grade 8 students in our middle school:

*We are supporting (name of charity in Africa) to help provide adequate education and improve the living standards of many children. Through looking into the lives of the less privileged and striving to improve them, we realise how fortunate we are and how we should treasure every moment of our lavish lives (Grade 8 student)*

The inclusion of this quote on the website was a clear indication to me that it was considered to be a good example of what the school considered to be important and something of which the school was proud. The school was making this public, and the quote had been selected as a good example of the school's approach to service learning. I wanted nothing to do with it and reading it made me squirm and recede in embarrassment. The verbs that are contained in this sentence suggest that the relationship that we have with the people in this particular community is very much one-way; we are *helping, providing, improving, and looking into*. I asked myself what this quote tells us in terms of who has the power, and whether it was this kind of thinking that was leading to a dehumanisation of the people in this particular 'African' community. Was it right that we were encouraging students to think that they were the saviours of others? By publishing this quote, as a school we were using a discourse of "the West and the Rest" (Gibbons, 2002; Said, 1979) and presuming that we were the ones who could impose ourselves on others (Zemach-Bersin, 2012). We were creating our own mini 'imperialist ideology' (Biehn, 2014) as mentioned above. This kind of behaviour was, to my mind, damaging and condescending. I am of course aware that the student who said this is only in grade 8, so one can of course be forgiving. However, what is worrying is that this student's beliefs about saving the world are being reinforced by its inclusion on the website. One can forgive a 13-year old more than one can forgive the leadership of a school. This quote on our school website further convinced me that service learning was the right topic

to inquire into; I did not want to represent an organisation that thought it right to make public a quote that, to me, dehumanised others and made us appear like saviours. We needed to uncover the prevailing assumptions by being critical in our practice (Thompson & Thompson, 2008) so that we could achieve a more bottom-up, humanising school culture in line with democratic, critical ideals. I felt strongly that we should not be nurturing passive robots brainwashed into thinking that they were doing good by simply 'looking into the lives' of others (Andreotti, 2006; Cook, 2012; Stevenson, 2012); this was like an act of 'downward benevolence' (Butin, 2007) or behaving as 'proto-experts' (Saltmarsh, Hartley, & Clayton, 2009) who had the expertise to solve community problems. We had to learn to be *critical* in our practice, so that we could recognise the part that we play in the inequalities in the world, (Doerr, 2011; Mitchell, 2008; Porfilio & Hickman, 2011; Renner, 2011).

### **2.3 'Service' within the IB Diploma Programme: Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS)**

Firstly, let me state that I was, and remain, a huge supporter of the educational programmes of the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO). Despite having been constrained by U.K. national curricula requirements for 11-16 year-olds during my time as a teacher at state secondary schools in the U.K., before moving to Switzerland and joining the international schooling system, I had still always worked at schools that offered the IB Diploma Programme (DP) to 16-18 year-olds. I appreciated the mission of the IBO and was a hopeful believer in it. An IB education aimed to:

*develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect' and to 'encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right (IB mission statement)*

I wanted to believe in an educational practice that was underpinned by such a strong and appealing philosophy. Furthermore, I was inspired by the fact that an IB education should be about ‘open, democratic classrooms’ (IBO, 2013, p. 4) and that the ultimate goal of our programmes should have been about ‘developing responsible global citizens’ (IBO, 2015, p. 4). Within our IB Diploma Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) programme (which I also coordinate (d)) in grades 11 and 12, our ‘specific responsibility’ should have been to ‘support students’ personal growth as they think, feel and act their way through ethical issues’ (IBO, 2015, p. 6). Such principles spoke to me and gave me hope. They made me believe that our students could be the ones that go out and change the world for the better. They made me believe that I was part of a school community whose teachers and students modelled this mission through an embodiment of the ‘IB Learner Profile’ (IBO, 2015); a set of 10 attributes that all IB learners should strive to be: *inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced and reflective*. However, despite this hope, the reality of day-to-day schooling was much different. Was anyone dreaming of pushing boundaries towards an inclusive, participatory, emancipatory pedagogy? Was I dreaming beyond the possible again? Was there a place for my imaginings within the everyday workings of a busy international school, where every teacher had their own curricular agenda, and where students ultimately wanted to pass their diploma and secure a place at university? If there wasn’t, I was certainly willing to take the risk to find out. The place that I began my questioning was within the IB CAS (Creativity, Activity and Service) programme.

As can be seen in Figure 2 the three strands of CAS (Creativity, Activity and Service), find themselves at the ‘core’ of the IB Diploma Programme, along with a course in TOK (Theory of Knowledge) and a 4,000 word written assignment, the Extended Essay.



Figure 2: IB Diploma Programme Model (IBO, 2015)

CAS itself, as one element of the IBDP core, encourages ‘personal and interpersonal development’ (IBO, 2015, p. 8) through sustained involvement in and reflection on experiences that are creative, active and service-oriented. In addition to these ‘experiences’, students are required to be involved in at least one collaborative CAS project that lasts for at least one month, and that sees students going through the five different CAS stages of *Investigation, Preparation, Action, Reflection* and *Demonstration* (Figure 3).

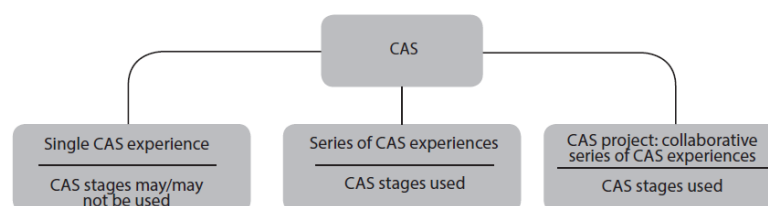


Figure 3: CAS experiences and stages

The CAS 'stages' used in CAS projects and series of experiences (Figure 3) are not meant as linear processes, but they are modelled on Berger Kaye's (2010) Five Stages of Service Learning (Figure 4), which are in fact understood as a dynamic, cyclic process of interaction of these five different elements. The name 'stages' is indeed confusing, and has caused a fair amount of consternation amongst CAS Coordinators and IB school educators alike, as I have witnessed in online forums and in face-to-face meetings. The fact that the term *service learning* was written into the latest CAS guide (IBO 2015), as a recommended approach to service means that there was an intention that the 'Service' aspect of CAS should be as Berger Kaye envisioned it, namely as a 'research-based approach' (IBO, 2015, p. 20) to community service activities, intended to connect what is learnt in the classroom with needs of a particular community. It was to be 'used in a structured way that connects classroom content, literature and skills to community needs' (Berger Kaye, 2010, p.9).

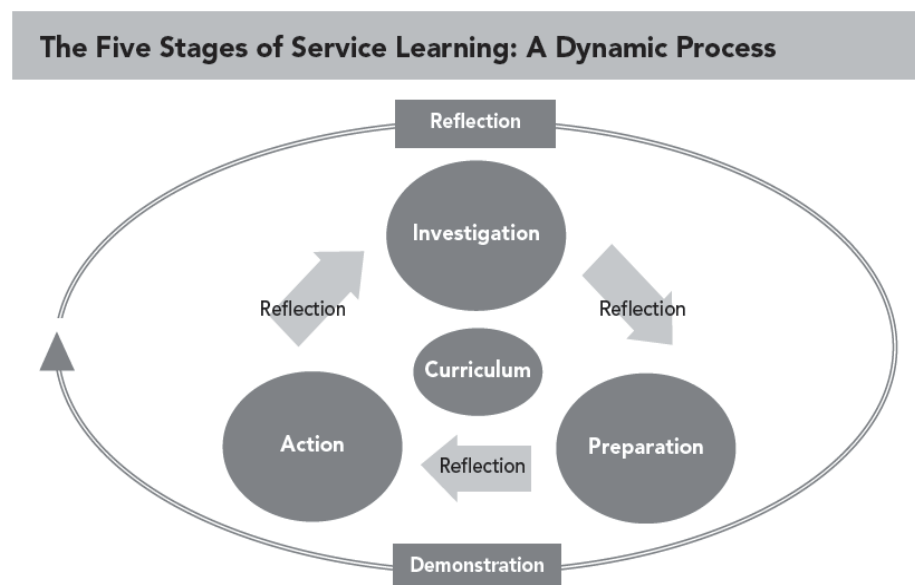


Figure 4: Five Stages of Service Learning (Berger Kaye, 2010)

With its inclusion in the CAS Guide (IBO, 2015), it was clear that service *learning*, as a pedagogical approach, was being hinted at, rather than simply thinking of 'service' being done unto others. This was good news to me, and offered hope that we might be able to start to give value to experiences that were based on a process of inquiry, rather than merely 'delivering' a service. Our school still continued to use the terms 'community and service', 'service learning', IBDP 'service' and MYP 'service as action' (IBO, 2013) interchangeably, but this is understandable given the way that the IB itself also had no fixed term to express what was meant by it, and that it changed every few years with each new curriculum review of MYP and DP guides. However, for the sake of clarity for this inquiry with grade 11 IB students, 'service learning' is located within the IB Diploma Programme as a recommended approach to the 'Service' element of CAS, and my 'Team Change Maker' students, introduced in chapter three, saw our collaborative inquiry as their 'CAS Project'. As CAS Coordinator, this undoubtedly gave me a certain amount of 'power' when it came to our working relationship that was intended to be as 'equal' as possible, but I was quick to address this with my student researchers and to ask them not to think of me in those terms if at all possible. I would 'sign off' their project whatever happened, and in whatever directions our research would take. Our project was certainly unusual and unique to our school, as teacher-student collaboration in this way had not been done before, but it was, ultimately, responding to an 'authentic need' (IBO, 2015) in our community, which was to address our practice of service learning. In admitting this fact about my relationship to the students from the outset, I also hoped that my 'power' was being relinquished a little.

As you are starting to learn, I am not someone who is willing to accept the status quo. To me, the IB is either behind in its thinking about service learning, or it is being cautious not to be too political by being too critical. What the IB needs, in my opinion, is to allow for a more *critical* form of education to emerge (Wasner, 2016), namely a

pedagogy that is 'invested in genuine social change' (Wright, 2012, p. 62). We cannot forget that IB programmes are offered in schools across the world in many different social and political contexts, and an international school in Switzerland is only one such context. However, we can no longer consider globalisation from a 'value-neutral' perspective (Hyttén & Bettez, 2008, p. 175); whatever the context, issues of 'justice and caring' (Hyttén & Bettez, 2008, p. 175) are fundamental in teaching and learning that is focused on humanity (Feige et al., 2011). Whether service learning even continues as part of the IB CAS programme remains to be seen. However, whether it does or not, the term 'service learning' is becoming more common amongst those who understand 'community service' or volunteer work, and it needs to be challenged and broken down into its humane pedagogical aspirations. The next section therefore considers *critical* service learning as a pedagogy that is centred on social justice education. I am convinced that *if* service learning is to be practised and *if* we want to dream of an ethical approach to education, then critical service learning must be considered. My inquiry hoped to introduce the kind of *criticality* involved in critical service learning, with the hope for a more ethical practice in school in the future. The inquiry was not, however, service learning practice in itself.

## **2.4 Critical service learning**

Critical service learning goes beyond 'traditional' service learning as outlined above within the IB context, in that it has a mission towards social justice (Hayes, 2011; Hermann, 2011; Mitchell, 2008). Whilst there have been various definitions of the term since the concept of *critical community service* was introduced into the literature by Robert Rhoads in 1997 (Mitchell, 2008), a broad definition offered by Hayes (2011) is that it can be understood as 'experiential learning that empowers people to recognize, expose, and eradicate the social injustices that structure their lives within a hegemonic social order'

(p. 48). Agreeing with Mitchell (2008), Hayes (2011) goes on to call critical service learning a 'progressive pedagogical orientation' that requires educators to focus on 'social responsibility and critical community issues' (p. 48). (Ross, 2012) describes critical service learning as being based on 'power distribution, reciprocity and authentic relationships' (p. 60); it is an approach that intentionally 'disrupts' borders between individuals from different backgrounds and positions of power. Is critical service learning therefore political? Is there room for an uncovering of our international school as an institution that produces 'Western knowledge' (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 10) and therefore upholds and imposes certain dominant values (Wasner, 2016)? In my view, there is indeed room for this. As a teacher, in my role as an 'intellectual' (Giroux, 1988), I see it as my duty to nurture students who are responsible and who care enough to be motivated to act. Being critical in my pedagogy does not mean that this is at the expense of my own responsibility as a teacher. Being critical and being responsible go hand-in-hand in my view; I am not about to lead my students into a revolution without looking after their wellbeing, or ignoring the risks that such a process may involve for them. In seeking to begin a culture of change agents in my school through my inquiry project, I am acting from a stance of caring, which is, as I see it, fundamentally ethical.

## **2.5 Approach to inquiry: Team Change Makers**

So, how did all of these considerations influence the design of my inquiry? If I wanted to work towards a more ethical practice of service learning, what kind of *pedagogy* would bring this about in my context? How did my feelings of dissonance with service learning fit in with my idea of a democratic practice for social justice as outlined in chapter one? How could I uncover some of the unethical practice happening at my school and begin to address it, without getting shot down at the first hurdle? If I wanted to make my practice more



critical, then I needed to do something to uncover and challenge power imbalances in my school and in our service learning relationships (Clark & Nugent, 2011; Renner, 2011). If I wanted my practice to be more democratic, I needed to give students a voice within the school community and provide them with the opportunity to become 'radical agents of change' (Fielding, 2001). If I wanted to take risks and change the unjust, unethical practices and uncover 'unwelcome truths' (Kemmis, 2006; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015), I needed to try to get others in the school community on board. If I wanted to make the service learning practice within our school more ethical, then I needed to start a process of inquiry that problematised it. If I wanted to keep on learning, dreaming and asking questions alongside my students, then I needed to engage in a practice-situated inquiry with them. All of these aspects pointed me therefore towards practitioner inquiry that involved students as research partners and co-inquirers.

So how could this students as researchers (Team Change Makers) approach work within an IB context? The starting point was to consider an approach that would be practical, manageable and meaningful both for me and for my student research partners. In my role as service learning and CAS coordinator, I considered how I could make this possible within the constraints of the IBDP. The obvious choice was to locate the inquiry within the students' 'CAS project' (IBO, 2015), as explained above. Understanding this specific context of collaborative inquiry within IB CAS helps to explain how the student researchers became initially interested and how they remained motivated and committed to an element of their IB Diploma Programme. I was going to be expecting a lot from my Team Change Makers, so there had to be some meaningful and practical context for them too.

In her discussion about the field of practitioner inquiry, Wall (2018a) suggests that there are two 'dominant standpoints' that contribute to

an understanding of what practitioner inquiry is; namely, one standpoint sees practitioner inquiry as a *stance*, and the other is related to research, or a 'project'. If my epistemological stance was about change and social justice, and my own inquiry was the research, I asked myself what the missing 'pragmatic balance' might have looked like (Wall, 2018a). The key, in my mind, was involving students in the inquiry process. If a practitioner is committed to views of 'democratic purpose and social justice' (Cochrane-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Wall, 2018a) and the process of questioning drives this same practitioner to conduct research in order to commit to these views, then the inquiry *process* itself should be guided by democratic, social justice principles. Such a process is one that sees participation from those whose learning one is striving to improve. For me, therefore, in order for practitioner inquiry to meet its own aims, the missing ingredient seemed to be a methodology that provided for student voice (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2015). I imagined that, together with students, I could make the first baby steps within our school community towards a *critical* rather than a traditional service learning model; namely, a pedagogy that privileged a social justice orientation (Hayes, 2011; Mitchell, 2008). We could work together as a team, engaging in a pedagogy that was invested in 'genuine social change' (Wright, 2012, p.62) and democratic participation (Fielding, 2001, 2011; Hart, 1992). This was how the idea of a group of collaborative inquirers called 'Team Change-Makers' came into being; this approach will be outlined in the next chapter.

### 3 Chapter 3: Team Change-Makers

*Methodologies articulate the inter-twining of the philosophies, principles and practice that shape our research design (Cook, 2011, p. 312)*

'Team Change Makers' (TCM) was my research design that intertwined my philosophies, principles and practice. This chapter is an attempt to provide you with an overview of this methodology. It is difficult to capture the wealth of data collection tools and approaches within one chapter, and I do feel constrained by the nature of having to do this. However, I understand that it is time to explain what my inquiry looked like. This chapter aims to do this. For me, many of my methods were what came naturally to me as a practitioner in my research setting, and this was completely appropriate to my approach as a teacher engaged in educational research (Elliott, 2001; Fichtman Dana & Yendol-Hoppy, 2014; Hall, 2009; Rudduck & Hopkins, 1985). For someone standing outside of my context however, I am aware that my methods will appear alien and, for those critical of practitioner inquiry, perhaps even suspect (Anderson & Herr, 1999). Hence, this chapter hopes to capture the essence of my data collection and the processes that I went through in order to make sense of the data that was generated.

Before I begin, there are however a couple of issues that I must address. The first thing is that you must understand that I did not have a sure-fire plan from the outset about the exact strategies that I would employ throughout the inquiry process beyond a commitment to practitioner inquiry and to including students as researchers. It was not possible to make such firm decisions about the kinds of data that I was going to collect right from the beginning, as I had to respond to the setting that I was in and develop strategies that felt right. These strategies developed 'in dialogue with the unfolding nature' (Holliday, 2016) of my research setting. Therefore, I ask you

not to expect a neat and linear plan that was designed and followed through from day one.

Secondly, as you know from the previous chapter, the subject matter of the inquiry was service learning, and it was me who had decided that. With my dreams of democratic participation, I was well aware that it was not necessarily the best practice to determine what the subject matter of inquiry should be for the students, and that they would have been more authentically involved (Fletcher, 2005; Hart, 1992; Thomson & Gunter, 2006) if I had let them determine what had interested or concerned them. However, whilst being fully aware of this, I had to respond to the situation and what was manageable. I was a fundamental part of this inquiry; I was the one that was driving it and my own context and role meant that service learning was my educational reality. I cared about participation and voice as I have clearly said in chapter one, however, I also cared about service learning and being able to inquire into something that I was passionate about and that was relevant to me as a practitioner. It was no accident therefore that service learning was the subject matter; if it had not been, it would not have been relevant for my immediate, ongoing practice. Without my sense of dissonance with service learning, I would not have had the initial motivation to improve its practice within school. Service learning was the 'stone in my shoe' (Baumfield, Hall, & Wall, 2013, p. 38); it was an area of practice that existed in *my* context, in *my* reality and in that of my students. The challenge that faced me was to find students who wanted to join me on my adventure in learning, questioning, critiquing and dreaming. I had the itch and I needed others to help me scratch it. If the itch had not been there in the first place, I would have had nothing that needed scratching, and my inquiry would have been less of what I care about and more of someone else's agenda.

### **3.1 Recruiting 'Team Change Makers': pitching it right**

Before I begin with an overview of the data collection process, I will depict to you how Team Change Makers (TCM) came into being, and why I decided to recruit the student researchers as I did. How to involve students in a research project is an important issue (Fielding & Bragg, 2003) and it depends very much on contextual factors such as existing school culture and relationships. Being aware of this, I ruminated a great deal about how to involve students before the inquiry began, asking myself questions about how I should frame and pitch it, wondering whether I should ask for volunteers or whether I should target specific students. At this point in time, I began an electronic reflexive research journal which would accompany my notebook that I had had since the beginning of my doctoral studies. I was facing my first real methodological dilemma and it made sense to capture my thoughts and feelings in order to help me understand what my various options were.

My first decision to name and pitch the project as 'Team Change Makers' was so that it was clear from the outset that the purpose of the group was to create some kind of change, or have a 'genuine impact' in the school (Fielding & Bragg, 2003, p. 18). The name 'change makers' was inspired by organisations who focus on young social innovators, for example Ashoka ([www.ashoka.org](http://www.ashoka.org)) or Flow in Action ([www.flowinaction.org](http://www.flowinaction.org)). In line with my belief in students working in partnership with teachers as 'change agents' of a school's culture and norms (Fielding & Bragg, 2003), I felt that this name was fitting. I did not involve any students in the choice of this name, as it was a decision that needed to be made in advance of the project beginning. I felt that talking about creating change was the right way of summarising what the project was about, and pitching it in these terms was what I felt was appropriate to these aims. I hoped that the concept of 'change makers' would appeal to a variety of different kinds of students.

In terms of student involvement, I knew that I needed to target current grade 10 students, as they would be beginning their IB Diploma and CAS programmes in the next academic year, and these students would be thinking about potential CAS projects. In my reflexive journal (Figure 5) I thought about my 'sampling' strategy (Bryman, 2012; Creswell, 2013), being aware that there needed to be certain criteria for the students to meet.

Research participants in the sample (Fri 3, June)

Criterion sampling: The first criteria for my research participants is that they all need to have to meet some criteria, namely, that they must be in grade 11 and be studying the IB Diploma programme. All students in the sample must also have been at the school in the previous academic year, so that they have experienced the Service Learning programme in grade 10 and were present at the Service Learning introduction day at the end of that academic year.

Figure 5: Considering criterion sampling in my reflexive research journal

A key aspect of this project was about student voice, and it would somehow seem unethical to seek it from those who were not that interested in the first place. I did not want to involve students in a way that would mirror manipulation rather than participation (Arnstein, 1969; Fielding & Bragg, 2003; Fletcher, 2005; Hart, 1992), so I involved the students through their own choice, as will be discussed below. My reflexive journal (Figure 6) shows how I was considering recruiting issues at the time. One of the ethical considerations within student voice work is to what extent we can balance the demands of our inquiries with the students' other commitments (Bragg, 2010). It was therefore only fair and right that I considered all practicalities and that I set up conditions that were realistic and manageable within my given context (Bragg, 2010; Fielding & Bragg, 2003).

**Recruiting students/purposeful sampling (Sun 5. June)**

I am now in a position where I have to change course with the plans for my next cycle of inquiry. I was going to have a randomly assigned group of students that were dictated by the timetable; whoever was free on their timetables at the same time as me would be randomly assigned to my CAS group, and this group would be my student researchers. The advantage of this would have been that I could have had access to them once a week at a scheduled, compulsory time. The disadvantage would have been that these students may not have had any interest at all in pursuing this project, and as they had been told that they had to do this, the effects of the project would have been quite different. I don't want students to 'carry out the work' required by me with a sense of compliance and having been coerced into doing so. As the timetables are however not ready now in time for my introduction to service learning at the end of the year, I need to re-think this approach. I need to reconsider who I am going to select, what my sampling strategy is and how big my sample size is going to be.

*Figure 6: Considering recruitment of students in my reflexive research journal*

With this in mind, I made the decision right from the outset when recruiting the students to advertise the inquiry as a CAS project; anything else would have been unworkable within the constraints of the IB Diploma Programme and what would be expected from the students in terms of their academic subject areas and additional CAS requirements.

I was also very much aware that I needed to be open about the fact that this project was of interest to me due to my service learning coordinator role, but also that it would be something that was my doctoral research project. There was no need to hide this fact as a potential limitation (Bragg, 2010) and it laid bare the power relations from the outset (Mayes et al., 2017); something that I would take into account and that I would be honest about.

Before making the decision about how to present the project to students, I weighed up the advantages and disadvantages of different recruitment strategies and noted these in my reflexive research journal (Figure 7).

Pros	Cons
Students are flattered into participation	This flattery may not be ethically right
I can present the project in a situation that is much less-threatening than in front of the whole grade	Other students may feel excluded by not having been asked and the student researchers might be resented by others for having been 'selected'
I am sending a message out to the selected students that they are somehow 'special'	I am sending a message out to other students that I don't deem them good enough
I have students that are motivated and will be hard-working and committed	Other students may not be able to relate to this rather 'elite' group

**Selection method 1: I choose the kinds of students that I think would be suited to the project and approach them**

Pros	Cons
Students have the choice to participate	The overview is given on the second-to-last day of term before the summer, where everyone is distracted and ready for a holiday!
I have the attention of the whole cohort, so I have a large pool of potential participants	I may not get anyone to sign up!
Everyone has a fair chance to listen to an overview of the project	Some students do not tend to come forward or ask questions in front of their peers

**Selection method 2: Speaking to the whole grade 10 cohort and hoping for sign-ups**

Pros	Cons
I don't need to worry about students signing up or not	Students are in this project because I am making them be in it – no personal choice, interest or self-motivation
I will definitely see these students once per week	Students may not want to commit to the extra dates and requirements beyond the weekly CAS hour
I reach and include some students who would not normally be the type of student to sign up to something like this, and to get their voices heard	Many students may not be motivated as it was not their choice – may feel like they are doing me a 'favour'

**Selection method 3: complete random selection dictated by timetabling - students who are in my CAS group are automatically my student researchers**

Figure 7: Pros and cons of student recruitment strategies

As can be seen from my reflections, one negative aspect that I could see from speaking to the whole grade was that I may not have got anyone to sign up. Whilst this was in fact a huge risk, it seemed less important to me compared to the ethical issues that the other two methods would have involved. I considered that if speaking to the whole grade did not work out, then I would have had to change my



strategy and then justify why this had been the case. Hence, on the basis of these considerations, I decided to take the risk and allow all students the opportunity to volunteer after a whole-grade presentation of the project and the 'Team Change-Makers' concept (Appendix A). It seemed to be worth the risk so that motivation and commitment would come from having had the choice to participate. A project can also be given more credibility if it has had open recruitment (Fielding & Bragg, 2003, p. 27), and this was something that I felt was important. In recruiting in such a way, I would not have been seen as being elitist and as one of those teachers that only selected certain well-known 'high-flyers'. I was also aware of recognising the students' right to not participate (Wisby, 2011), so I did not want to force anyone into taking part, or make them feel like I had manipulated them into playing a part in my agenda (Rudduck, 2007).

During the presentation to the whole of grade 10 just before the summer holidays, I was clear about certain expectations of participation, including some proposed dates for working together. This clarity was to ensure that I was realistic and transparent about the amount of time and commitment that would be involved (Fielding & Bragg, 2003). I also aimed to offer an overview of how involvement could be advantageous to the students (Appendix A). These included having your voice heard within school, doing something completely different and unique as a CAS project and learning research methods that would be valuable for further study. In line with my aim for the project to be 'truly' participatory, I adhered to some important requirements as suggested by Hart (1992, p.11);

1. The children understand the intentions of the project
2. They know who made the decisions concerning their involvement and why
3. They have a meaningful (rather than 'decorative') role

4. They volunteer for the project after the project was made clear to them

In doing so, I felt I would be less likely to be in a position where I would be seen as 'manipulating' students (Fletcher, 2005; Rudduck, 2007).

As the presentation came to an end, seven girls came and approached me and told me that they would be interested in participating. I scheduled a meeting a few days later with them where I gave them further details and handed out a participant information sheet and consent form (Appendix E) that they could read over and then decide whether participation was something that appealed to them. As was stated on the form, and according to ethical guidelines (BERA, 2011), the students could withdraw at any time and would not need to feel as though they were bound to the project. Rather than exercising my 'teacher' powers, I wanted to make it clear to the girls that there would be no consequences or ill feeling if the inquiry became too much for them. As we were all working within our own setting in school, and as I knew some of the girls in other contexts, it was important that they were aware of this right to withdraw and that I would of course respect it.

They were all interested to continue and begin participation, so we agreed that our collaboration would commence on a scheduled day at the start of the next academic year when their grade 11 began. Team 'Change-Makers' had come into being; seven female students and me. To all students, I was their project facilitator and CAS / Service Learning Coordinator. To one student I was also her German teacher, to another I was a fellow member of the clarinet section of the school chamber orchestra, and to another I was her trip leader for our PDW trip to India. Even though we were entering a new relationship together through this inquiry, there were other underlying relationships that were at play, and these were recognised and taken

into account throughout. This openness or 'coming clean' (Boomer, 1988) about power relationships is something that students are often not a part of (Mayes, 2013), but in line with the ethical nature of this inquiry, it was an important aspect of my methodology.

As you have read, the group that volunteered were all girls. This is a fact that did not escape my attention and is certainly worth addressing, because as if nothing else, I was conscious that other voices were being missed. Aware that evidence suggested that girls typically became more involved in student voice work (Bragg, 2010), I was concerned that my project would not be as inclusive as it could have been (Nind, 2014). Who gets to speak is an important factor in student voice work (MacBeath et al., 2003) and involving those who are 'harder to reach' (Bovill, 2017) should be important to ensure democratic practices.

A key issue in student voice work is however the commitment and interest on the students' part (Fielding & Bragg, 2003). I had given all students in grade 10 the choice to participate in the TCM project, and, whilst teachers can be good at 'poaching' students to participate in projects or initiatives, I felt uncomfortable with this strategy in this instance. I wanted to be able to work with students who were interested and who had had the choice to participate, and because of this, I stood by my decision to work with the seven girls who had volunteered. After having understood the project as a yearly commitment and what it entailed, the girls were still interested to continue. I considered myself lucky to have had a group of students come forward and that I did not have to put myself in a position where I needed to offer 'bribes' to anyone for participation. The fact that the inquiry 'counted' as the students' IB CAS project (2.3) was enough of an incentive for them and they could see that it could be an interesting alternative to the usual kinds of CAS projects. There had never been a CAS project that we had heard of in our school where students and teachers had worked together on a matter of

school practice, and this new territory was an appealing aspect for them.

I was aware that the findings from my data would certainly have been much different had I included other student participants who may have been less motivated or 'academic' as the TCM girls. Having had male participants would certainly have had an effect on the group dynamics for example, and other boys may have felt inspired to have seen one of their male peers being involved in something 'different' as this inquiry was. In fact, on reflection, the method of presenting at a whole grade level may not have been the most effective way of appealing to boys. Without wanting to sound stereotypical, I know from my 15 years' experience of teaching in coeducational schools that boys are generally less likely to come forward and volunteer for something that might seem like an extra amount of work, especially if they would be the only one amongst their peers to do so. I could therefore have targeted a few boys that I felt would either have been engaged or who would have benefitted from getting their voices heard, and they may have felt flattered at having been approached. However, this would have gone against my principle of choice in recruiting my student researchers. The fact therefore that the seven girls who volunteered became Team Change Makers was a repercussion of having given all students in their grade the choice to participate, and I still stand by that overarching principle as I did at the time of recruitment. The issue of gender balance in student voice work is certainly something to bear in mind in the future however, and I would be interested in exploring to what extent boys and girls become involved in student voice projects, what their reasons and motivations are and if there is more that can be done to be more inclusive (Nind & Vinha, 2014).

Table 2 below shows the nationalities of the TCM girls, the languages that they spoke and the age that they were when we were engaging in our inquiry. The girls chose 'Disney Princess'

pseudonyms; a choice that will be discussed below (3.2). I have included my own demographics as well, as I was also a member of TCM with my own pseudonym. As Table 2 shows, all the girls were the usual age for grade 11, apart from Mulan, who was one year older than her peers. Whilst at a high level academically, transferring from a Japanese system had influenced which grade she had joined when coming to Switzerland.

<b>Researcher pseudonym</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Languages</b>	<b>Age/birthday</b>	<b>Years at school</b>	<b>Other schools</b>
Cinderella (CI)	German	German / English	15/16 (Nov)	2	1
Belle (BE)	German	English / German	16 (17 20. June)	10	1
Aurora (AU)	Dutch	English / Dutch	16/17 (Oct)	3	7
Mulan (MU)	Japanese	Japanese / English	17/18 (Oct)	4	2
Pocahontas (PO)	French	French / English	16/17 (Jan)	4	4
Rapunzel (RZ)	Dutch	English / Dutch	16/17 (Nov)	15	0
Snow White (SW)	Italian	Italian / English	16/17 (June)	3	2
Aerial (AL)	British	English / German	39 (Nov)	6	2 (as a teacher)

*Table 2: Demographics of Team Change Makers*

I have also chosen to include the students' nationalities and languages in the background information in Table 2, as their background would have played a role in their own perspectives and subjectivities (Jackson, 2003). In the context of this inquiry, it is also important to stress that these students did not identify with being Swiss or coming from Switzerland, but had been brought up in different countries and contexts, sometimes having been to several schools. These different factors became apparent in some of our discussions. For example, Mulan, coming from Japan, felt differently to the other girls when we were discussing the concept of 'white privilege' and how other communities saw us both here in Switzerland and during our service learning 'PDW' trips. Additionally, when a student identified with a language other than English as

being their strongest language, this meant that they may not have felt as naturally confident in expressing themselves as others, and it may not have been as easy for them to get their voices heard in group discussions that we had. I was aware of these potential linguistic constraints and made sure to be patient and sympathetic to this fact. As a language teacher I did not take it for granted that speaking in a language other than one's 'native' tongue, or strongest language, was always easy, and that language fluency may have held back a student when speaking in a group discussion, or it may have led to misinterpretations by others of what was trying to be conveyed.

### **3.2 Pseudonyms: respecting student choice**

With my focus on establishing a group identity, and adhering to ethical principles of working with pseudonyms as researchers in order to remain anonymous (BERA, 2011), I approached the issue of alternative names that TCM could adopt for our research journey. I used the consent form that I had given the students to remind them of the importance of confidentiality (Appendix E) and then I proposed that we adopt names that we could use with each other. I told them that these names would be used in my presentation of the project, including this thesis, and that it was also a safe way of ensuring that no one else would be able to recognise who said what and when. This was an effort to make the girls feel comfortable in the knowledge that they could be open and honest without fear that their thoughts would go any further than beyond the group; it was a step towards trust (Cook-Sather, 2002).

Rather than imposing my own ideas upon them, I chose to give the girls ownership over these names; they were to choose something that made them feel comfortable, and I proposed that the names could be funny if they so wanted. These were 16-18 year old girls whom I wanted to respect, and it was also important to me that they

recognised and in turn respected the fact that I had given them choice and ownership. One of the girls (I can't remember who, and neither could the students when I asked them) proposed the idea of 'Disney Princesses', and the others soon welcomed this idea. It was a relaxed atmosphere sitting with the girls and listening to how they negotiated the names with each other. I let them debate about who would be which princess and I also suggested my own name. I wanted to make this experience an enjoyable one, and was conscious of not acting as the 'serious', authoritative teacher who put a stop to creative ideas. I am aware that the 'Princess' names may appear to be either childish or inappropriate, as Pocahontas for example may be criticised and the 'princess' ideal does not necessarily represent most people's modern way of thinking about the role of women and their aspirations. However, the girls came up with the idea and liked having this identity as opposed to me having thought of a pseudonym for them. In the name of choice and voice, I preferred to give them this autonomy rather than impose my own views upon them at this stage. Being named after Disney Princesses was not going to cause anyone any harm, and it helped them to feel like a group, which was an important intention of mine at the start (and throughout) the research journey.

### **3.3 Data collection: naming the mess and embracing the whirlwind**

As hinted at above, the research process has been anything but straightforward and I am still going through it as I write. In fact, the process has been incredibly messy (Cook, 1998, 2009; Letherby, 2003) and full of 'muddy ambiguity' (Finlay, 2002). The path that has taken me from the 'corpus of raw data' (Holliday, 2016) to this written thesis has been anything but linear. Creswell (2011) describes this typical uneven path of qualitative inquiry as a contour in the form of a spiral and Holliday (2016) describes it as a constant movement

between data collection, analysis and writing. For this inquiry, it is not quite as simple as saying that my research was one whirlwind that involved these different elements however. What I was actually faced with was the first whirlwind of data collection, where my methodology was shooting off in various directions in response to my practice with my Team Change Makers. I was kept on my toes by the breadth, depth and speed of what we were exploring together, and I was challenged to keep on top of and respond to my own and the students' reflections throughout the data collection process. The whirlwind then came to an abrupt end as the academic year turned into the summer holidays, and I was left with a very different kind of storm to weather as I was faced with the vast amounts of data that the whirlwind of data collection had left in its wake. I have written draft upon draft of every aspect of this thesis, and I have had to accept that the writing has had to constantly change as data has emerged and as ideas have developed. I have had a bumpy ride; I have come crashing down to earth many times, but also been lifted up again as I have gradually understood what my data has shown me and what my inquiry has become.

I can sympathise with Cook (2009) when she talks about how she recognised that her own research was not following one particular path of inquiry, but that it kept branching off into 'other areas of discourse and discovery' and that new 'loops and pathways' were continuously added. This is certainly what happened to me. I felt like I was caught up in a whirlwind, being sped along by something forceful and tumultuous that threatened to carry me away and leave me in strange territory. This metaphor of a whirlwind is also fitting in terms of the emotions that I felt as I was grappling with the pace of everyday life in school and in keeping track of the wealth of data that was emerging around me. This whirlwind is not however to be seen as something negative; on the contrary, this discomfort, uncertainty and chaos has been a necessary part of my learning (Doerr, 2011; Wall & Hall, 2017). As someone engaged in practitioner inquiry, I



have accepted, embraced and even welcomed the mess that a whirlwind leaves in its wake; I have 'disciplined' myself into believing that 'messes can be attractive and even exciting' (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood, & Maguire, 2003, p. 21).

The mess does not however mean that the inquiry has been without rigour. Whilst mess and rigour may appear to be 'strange bedfellows' (Cook, 2009) I would argue that the mess is in fact a 'vital element for seeing, disrupting, analysing, learning, knowing and changing' as Cook (2009, abstract) identifies. In practitioner inquiry, there is no denying that the 'mess' exists, and we, according to Cook (2009) should not be afraid to articulate it. In pretending that it doesn't exist, we researchers engaged in practitioner inquiry are merely succumbing to what others might feel is a desired 'neat and tidy' (Cook, 2009, p. 3) research model. Practitioner inquiry is not in any sense neat and tidy, so why should I try to present it in a way that makes it seem that way? I am, therefore, being honest with you about this mess, and the fact that my data was collected in a whirlwind of activity of the workings of school life. I am offering an account of practice that is called for amongst those that support teacher voices from within the field (Leat, 2015; Lofthouse, Hall, & Wall, 2012; Wall, 2016; Wall & Hall, 2017). Yet, as practitioner research, carried out in my 'own backyard' (Creswell, 2013), to what extent could my research be considered to be of 'rigour'? How could I assure that it was 'good' research (Paetcher, 2003) or 'trustworthy' (Williams & Morrow, 2009)? I will dwell on this briefly before talking through my research questions, as I want to make it clear that my inquiry was indeed aimed at being of 'quality' through centralising trust and ethics (Campbell & Groundwater-Smith, 2007; Campbell & McNamara, 2010), and that ethical issues were the primary criteria that allowed it to 'meet the norms for quality' (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2007, p. 204), before issues of 'trustworthiness' (Mitchell, Boettcher-Sheard, Duque, & Lashewicz, 2018) or 'goodness' (Paetcher, 2003) could be taken into account.

### 3.3.1 An issue of 'goodness': ethics and quality

The fact that my inquiry was in partnership with students is something that can indeed act as a catalyst to teacher professional learning (Bovill & Felten, 2016; Cook-Sather, 2014; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2016) and help to seek and embrace 'unwelcome truths' (Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015, p. 604). As my data shows in chapters five to eight, the momentum of the TCM inquiry allowed some of these 'unwelcome truths' in my school to begin to be uncovered and addressed. With this thought in mind however, it is important to stress that I am not under any fantastical illusions that my inquiry could be considered as 'good' or of 'quality' simply because it was in partnership with students. What I wanted to achieve as a basic starting point was a kind of 'framework of ethics' that highlighted and brought fidelity to stories that mattered to me (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2007) as a practitioner. My interests and those of consequential stakeholders in my school were more important than any 'top-down' agendas, and this, as Groundwater-Smith & Mockler (2007) argue, must be a fundamental criterion for any practitioner research that can begin to be considered to be of quality. When considering my own 'ethical guidelines' and in setting up the inquiry with the students (5.1), I had in mind that it should be guided by the following principles, as suggested by Groundwater-Smith & Mockler (2007):

- *Observation of ethical protocols and processes*
- *Transparency in its process*
- *Collaborative in its nature*
- *Transformative in intent and action*
- *Justifiable to its community of practice*

In addition, in order to make my inquiry 'good', I hoped that it would be 'related to ends, purposes and intentions that are themselves morally justifiable' (Paetcher, 2003, p. 109). Paetcher (2003) talks

about the term 'goodness' as opposed to 'rigour' or 'efficiency', stating that we should not be afraid to identify this as a moral question, and that educational research should be, at a minimum, 'founded in explicit and morally defensible principles' (Paetcher, 2003, p. 109). Once this starting point has been established, other factors that influence whether research is 'good' or not can then be considered; these include rigorous planning, execution and reporting, transparent methods and a process that is ethical. Paetcher (2003) also stresses the fact that education is an area in which 'usefulness' is often 'seen as being central to the purposes of research' (p. 112). Three categories of 'usefulness' are seen to be:

- *Immediate utility in schools*
- *Immediate utility in terms of government policy*
- *Furthering educational knowledge*

These categories, together with the desire that research should be 'good', create tensions and 'opposing forces' (Paetcher, 2003, p. 115) to which we should react. Paetcher's (2003) proposal is that, as educational researchers, we should 'focus on conducting good research' and 'trust in its utility' (p. 116). We will not always be able to predict the impact or the usefulness of what we research, but, as long as we 'pay due regard to an underpinning moral imperative, rigour, transparency, connection to theory and research ethics' (Paetcher, 2003, p. 116) then we will be making a contribution to knowledge in the field of education. I hope that I am able to demonstrate how my research could be considered to be both 'good' and 'useful' if set against these particular criteria and that my contribution of a 'Pedagogy of CARE' (chapters four and nine) can, if anything, initiate some discussion about the theory and practice of education.

### **3.3.2 Degrees of student participation**

With student participation also having been at the heart of my intentions for this inquiry, I have decided to include a reference in chapters five six and seven to the levels or ‘degrees’ of participation that each stage or ‘cog wheel’ of inquiry involved. The pyramid diagram (Figure 8) shows the hierarchical, yet interconnected degrees of participation that were present in my collaborative inquiry. The degrees of participation found in this pyramid are the same as those that are to be found on Hart’s (1992) ladder; the brightly coloured levels depicting participation itself, and the grey levels representing non-participation. Whilst the different degrees do appear here in a hierarchical arrangement reminiscent of the ladder metaphor originally by Arnstein (1969), by placing the text on top of the pyramid background, the interconnection of these different elements is portrayed.

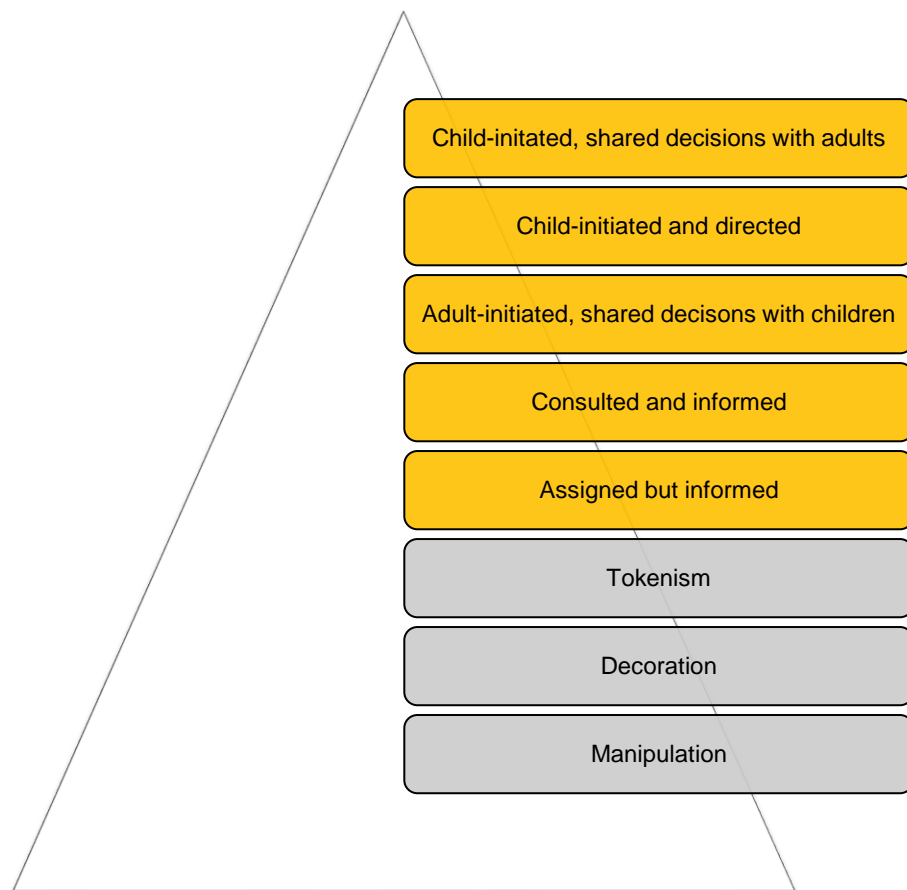


Figure 8: Pyramid of Participation (based on Hart's ladder of participation, 1992)

At different points throughout the inquiry, the levels of participation were also different; it would be unrealistic to expect that every phase and every cycle involved the students initiating our meetings and the topics to be discussed. Studying six subjects as they were for their IB Diploma was enough to keep the Team Change Makers preoccupied, so it is clear that there were times when I had to make the decisions and not expect the girls to schedule our group discussions. In hindsight, I could have let the girls initiate everything, but the practicalities of practice and busy school life for the girls meant that I was ultimately the one who kept the momentum going. As a teacher in the school rather than a student, I had access to other people and ways of working that the students did not have. I certainly had 'power' that allowed me to act in a certain way; however, this did not mean that I ever used 'manipulation under the guise of participation' (Hart, 1992, p. 9). With my *critical* approach as outlined in chapters one and two, (1.8.1; 2.4) I was concerned with eradicating methods of non-participation, so manipulation was certainly something that I was very conscious of avoiding.

As part of my presentation of data in chapters five, six and seven, and with my democratic participatory intentions in mind, I mention how each cycle and/or phase of the inquiry fits into the pyramid model as described above. In this way there is a clear link between the processes being presented and the participatory nature of the research methodology.

### **3.3.3 Representing student voices**

The writing that follows is also not confined solely to the final year of my studies as a doctoral student, where I, at a distance, attempt to report my findings in an isolated vacuum. Rather, it has been a continued attempt to triangulate the different voices that have been present in my collaborative inquiry and it is the result of draft upon

redraft of the research process. Referring specifically to action research projects, Chandler & Torbert (2003) emphasise that it is indeed the balancing of these different voices that adds quality. Within this inquiry, just as the data collection happens within an ethical space where knowledge is co-constructed, the writing equally sits within this space; it is the manifestation of a 'messy' yet detailed and in-depth process of critical reflection. Rather, therefore, than viewing the data collection as the inquiry, and the writing as something separate, data collection and writing are all part of the same research process and together they are my representation of the inquiry as a whole; the 'themes, fragments of data and argument are woven to make a coherent whole' (Holliday, 2016, p.127). The 'whole' that was my inquiry included methods of data collection that I see belonging to a 'bricolage' (Kincheloe, 2001; Canella & Lincoln, 2011). I expand on this in a further section of this chapter (3.3.6). Through the lens of 'bricolage', I aim to frame and further justify the 'messiness' that I refer to both here and at the beginning of this chapter (3.3).

As well as my own teacher, researcher and learner voices receiving a platform, the remainder of this thesis will ensure that the voices of my student research team, my Team Change Makers (TCM) are also heard. Caring about voice, it would be thoroughly unethical not to do so. As a piece of academic work owned and ultimately produced by me however, I will be the one making the decisions as to what is included and how. This could of course be seen to be going against the idea that this research is ethical (Campbell & Groundwater-Smith, 2007; Campbell, 2011; Nind, 2011). However, as already mentioned, the students were consulted throughout the process through feedback loops, (Baumfield et al., 2013) and ultimately I am in a position where I am the one who is making sense of the process as a whole. This is my task as a doctoral student undertaking the writing process after and at a distance from the face-to-face inquiry or 'data collection process' that took place.

### 3.3.4 Guiding research questions: wondering and wandering

There can be no inquiry without questions. Wondering about something is the catalyst to search and *re*-search. As a starting point therefore, I will begin with an overview of the initial research questions that I identified and how they served as an impetus and backdrop to the Team Change Makers (TCM) collaborative project. These questions were what drove the beginning of the inquiry, however they were the foundations that made way for a number of other questions that emerged as the process took its course and wandered off into many different directions.

In planning my research strategy, I needed to formulate research questions that would guide my initial actions. I was aware that I needed to think about my teaching practice in a service learning context and how I could engage in inquiry together with students in a way that was meaningful. The main research question that drove my inquiry therefore was;

- How does meaningful teacher and student involvement as collaborative inquirers *into* service learning model a pedagogy *for* service learning?’

This question needed breaking down. If I was talking about ‘meaningful’ teacher and student involvement, what did I mean by this? Hence, I wondered;

- What does meaningful teacher and student involvement in inquiry look like?

From my engagement with the literature and on the basis of my beliefs and assumptions as outlined in chapter one, I knew that my approach was going to be a collaborative inquiry with students as research partners. In line with the principle of democratic participation (Fielding, 2011) as outlined in chapter one (1.8.4), I wanted to adopt a strategy that saw students as participants; as

'resources and producers of knowledge' and not just 'recipients or targets' (Fielding & Bragg, 2003, p. 4). This, according to Fielding and Bragg (2003), is the difference between students being *involved* rather than merely being *used* to suit an adult's agenda. Rather than engaging in practitioner inquiry that would position students as objects of my study, the students should be collaborators instead. Indeed, this positioning of students as objects within the teacher-as-researcher movement has been criticised (Groundwater-Smith & Downes, 1999). Hence, in establishing that meaningful involvement would mean a participatory, collaborative approach, I asked myself how I was going to try to achieve this in my research setting. I would have to adopt particular methodological strategies within my teaching practice that would embody the democratic principles that I believed in. Hence, a second sub-question was developed;

- How can I model meaningful involvement through my practice?

In asking myself this question, I was aware that I needed to keep in mind the principles that I believed in, as outlined in chapter one, but I had to be open to whatever emerged throughout the process of inquiry and to however my practice developed. The last research question that was initially formulated was guided by my beliefs about research as a transformative and radical act (1.8). It was important to me that there was an emancipatory and social justice purpose to the inquiry, and I wanted to keep this in mind. Hence, the third key sub-question became;

- How can my practice act as a catalyst for change?

Knowing that I was embarking on a learning journey, I knew that some kind of change would happen as a result of my inquiry. Exactly what kind of change this would be, and who would benefit from it, was not clear at this stage. Perhaps I would change as a practitioner through having become a researcher. Perhaps the students would come to see things differently, for example the concept or practice of



service learning, or the power relationships that exist within the school and in wider society. Perhaps an aspect of service learning practice in our school would change as a result of our inquiry. Whatever the change may have turned out to be, the transformative intent was there, and I would keep this in mind as I worked with my 'Team Change Makers', wherever we ended up on our research journey.

I knew at the time of data collection as I certainly know now, that it would have been so easy if my research questions had stopped there; how neat and organised that would have been. Knowing what you know already however, I am sure that you have predicted that the research process was much more complex than that. Take it as you will, but I saw this complexity as an opportunity to create new and exciting questions; rather than working from a foregone conclusion of predetermined questions, we were in fact creating new ones as our inquiry stormed through our lives. The questions outlined here were, however, at the back of my mind throughout the process, and they were shared with the students at times when they were unsure as to where our path of inquiry was taking us.

### **3.3.5 Cycles of inquiry**

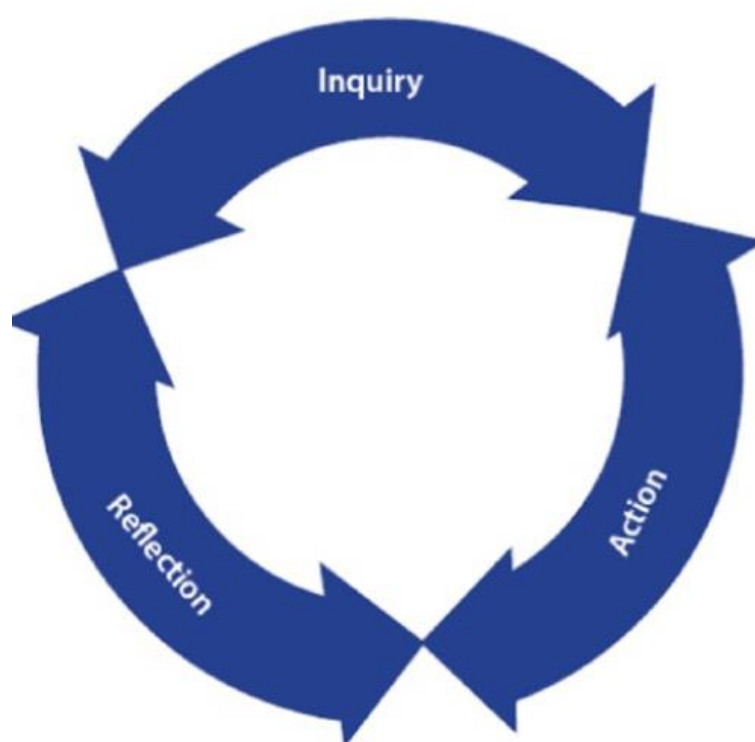
In terms of what I identify as the process of 'data collection', I see it as being represented by the time I spent working together with the students throughout the academic year of their grade 11. Table 3 gives an overview of this period of time, showing the seven cycles of inquiry and the six 'phases' of research that the inquiry involved. As can be seen (Table 3), each cycle was firstly driven by my own practitioner questions; these were questions that made me think critically about my practice and how I was going to work together with the students to achieve these aims. The questions arose throughout the research process as a result of my own reflections in

my research journal, and as a consequence of having engaged in feedback loops (Baumfield et al., 2013; Wall, 2018b) with the students. At times I also recorded my thoughts through a voice recording app on my tablet and then played it back to myself.

Each cycle also contained 'collaborative' (TCM) questions that were co-constructed as a group. These questions were linked to my practitioner questions so that I could help the students to understand how my own reflective practice was connected to our collaboration as a group. This meant that they learnt the importance of having questions as a driving force to inquiry (White, 2009) and that they could get a sense of the purpose of our collaboration. I also hoped to openly model the kind of 'questioning and acting' practice that I was encouraging them to develop. There were times when the students felt disoriented and frustrated at not knowing where our inquiry would 'end up', as they were not used to working in such an open-ended way. The students were learning to become researchers just as I was, and it involved ups and downs for all of us. However, as we progressed through the different phases of inquiry together, the shared questions gave us a focus and allowed us to adopt a 'question-led approach' (White, 2009, p. 97) that gave us something common to explore together.

The 'data collection' period was also the TCM girls' collaborative 'CAS project' as outlined in chapter two (2.3), and it met the fulfilments of such, so as not to be too much extra commitment for them. This is not to say that collaboration ceased completely with the students once the year was over, as they were involved in some aspects of subsequent analysis and writing via email contact, but the 'CAS project' was where we spent our time inquiring together in our school setting and where as a result the data came into being. During the data collection process, I was aware that nothing was going to be linear by any means. I may have begun the inquiry with one main research question, but TCM's work together was most

definitely characterised by a cyclic process as in the IB's model of teaching and learning. Figure 9 shows this model as an ongoing, cyclic process of inquiry, action and reflection (IBO, 2013, p.4). This cycle is reminiscent of a typical inquiry process in the action research tradition (Baumfield et al., 2013; Munn-Giddings, 2012) and in Fletcher's (2005) conceptualisation of meaningful student involvement. According to Fletcher (2005), by following such a cycle as outlined in his model, student participation is 'transformed from passive, disconnected activities into a process promoting student achievement and school improvement' (p.5). This cyclic nature also falls in line with Dewey's understanding of inquiry as a form of experience that involves many cycles that link beliefs and actions (Morgan, 2014). Located with an IB context, the IB model of teaching and learning (Figure 9) was therefore also appropriate to the cyclic nature of our TCM inquiry.



*Figure 9: Model for teaching and learning in the IB Diploma Programme (IBO, 2013, p.4)*

Stage of research project / time of year	Research Questions / Cycles of inquiry	
	Practitioner / self-reflexive questions	Team Change Maker (collaborative questions)
<u>End of 10<sup>th</sup> Grade / summer</u> <u>(Phase 1)</u> June / August 2016	<b>Cycle 1:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How can I establish an identity of 'Team Change-Makers'?</li> <li>2. How can I ensure a practice of partnership?</li> <li>3. How can I establish a mutual, respectful relationship with the students?</li> </ol>	<b>Cycle 1:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How can we establish an ethical framework of working together?</li> </ol>
<u>Research sessions (whole group)</u> <u>(Phase 2)</u> Sep – Dec 2016 / Jan 2017	<b>Cycles 2/3:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How can I be a risk-taker and provoke critical thinking?</li> <li>2. How can we problematise service learning?</li> <li>3. How can we practise dialogue?</li> </ol>	<b>Cycles 2/3:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How can we think critically about our own situation and challenge our assumptions?</li> </ol> <b>Cycle 2:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. What is service learning and are we doing it right?</li> </ol> <b>Cycle 3:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. What does it mean to be privileged and what implications does this have for our service learning relationships?</li> </ol>

<p><u>Planning research (student projects) (Phase 3)</u></p> <p>Jan / Feb 2017</p>	<p><b>Cycle 4:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What does it mean to think like a researcher and how can I model these skills?</li> </ol> <p><b>Cycle 5:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How can I involve students in teacher discussions about service learning and provide for authentic voice?</li> <li>2. How can I model an inclusive, democratic process to others in the school community?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Cycle 4:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How can we design a research project that helps us to find out what we want to know?</li> <li>2. How can we behave ethically as researchers?</li> </ol> <p><b>Cycle 5:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How can we collaborate with others in our community?</li> <li>2. How can we make our voices heard?</li> </ol>
<p><u>Starting research (student projects) (Phase 4)</u></p> <p>Feb - Apr 2017</p>	<p><b>Cycle 6:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How can I effectively act as mentor?</li> <li>2. How can I balance keeping the project moving with allowing students enough autonomy and freedom?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Cycle 6:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How can we work together effectively and manage our independence?</li> </ol>
<p><u>Summarising research (Phase 5)</u></p> <p>May 2017</p>	<p><b>Cycle 6:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How can I support students in analysing and presenting their own data?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Cycle 6:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What conclusions can be drawn from our data?</li> <li>2. How can we present it /show what we have learnt?</li> </ol>
<p>Final meeting / moderating panels (Phase 6)</p> <p>June 2017</p>	<p><b>Cycle 7:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How can I facilitate critical thinking on a school-wide level?</li> <li>2. How can Team Change Makers act as pedagogical role models on a wider school basis?</li> </ol>	<p><b>Cycle 7:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How can we demonstrate what we have learnt about service learning and what it means to think critically and ethically?</li> <li>2. To what extent are our PDWs ethical?</li> </ol>

Table 3: Overview of TCM data collection process

The research project was designed to be a collaborative IB CAS project (IBO, 2015) that consisted of me and a group of IB student researchers. In line with the IB requirement that a project be sustained over a long period of time (IBO, 2015), the collaboration was planned to last for a full academic year; in this case, it would last for grade 11 for the 2016/17 cohort of IB students. As the TCM project was framed as a collaborative CAS project for the IB Diploma, it was important that it was seen as such by the student researchers. If this factor were to become lost, then it would not have helped to support the argument that CAS projects can be a perfect opportunity for student-teacher partnership and as a vehicle for student voice. This is indeed something that will be argued for in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

As mentioned in chapter two (2.3), any CAS project should consist of the five 'phases' of *Investigation, Preparation, Action, Reflection* and *Demonstration* (IBO, 2015). As already discussed, reflection is understood as an on-going process (IBO, 2015) and the phases are not considered necessarily linear in their nature. Within TCM there were in fact several cycles of inquiry that had different stages within them, and each cycle informed the development of the next; this is in line with the nature of practitioner inquiry as a spiral of activity (Carr & Kemmis, 1986).

It would have been nonsensical to break down the year into specific 'CAS stages' as outlined above, as different research cycles contained different CAS stages. In considering therefore how to divide up the academic year into particular 'stages' of inquiry, and to map the research process against this timeline, I draw on the students' own instinctive understandings of what we did and when; this allows the students' voices to come through as is the intention.

A 'fortune line' technique (Wall, 2017) was used at the end of the year as a reflective tool. During this reflection the TCM, as a group, divided the year up into six 'phases', as can be seen in Figure 10. I have therefore used the 'phases'; that the students identified to organise the research questions and cycles that were developed as the research progressed (Table 3), and refer from now on to 'phases' rather than 'stages' of inquiry as a result. As different cycles are discussed in chapters five, six and seven, I highlight the specific research questions relative to the data that is presented in each of these chapters, so as to offer a helping hand through the tangled web that was the reality of my data collection process.

### **3.3.6 Methods of data collection: acting as a *bricoleur***

So what do I mean when I refer to the process of data collection as a 'tangled web' and being caught up in a 'whirlwind' (3.3)? What was the justification for this 'mess' and what did this look like in terms of my data collection tools? This section will outline the tools, or 'mechanisms' that I employed during the different cycles, or 'phases', of inquiry in order to offer an insight into the complexity of the research process and to justify why this complexity is rigorous as a research methodology. I offer an explanation of my methods as a process of 'critical bricolage' (Kincheloe, 2001; Canella & Lincoln, 2011, Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010) with myself as practitioner-researcher as *bricoleur*, a 'handywoman who makes use of the tools available to complete a task' (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 680) as in the original French meaning of the word.

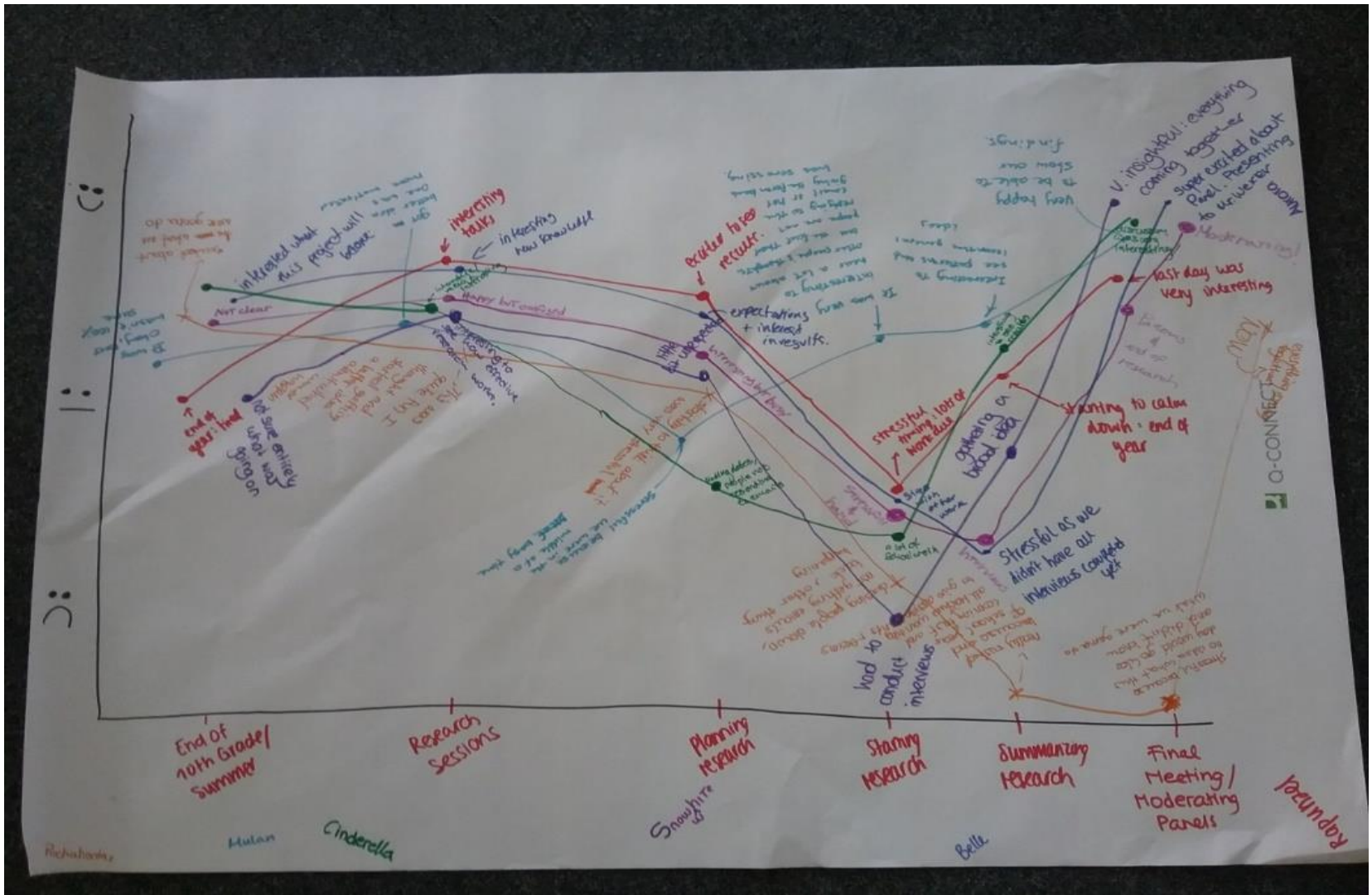


Figure 10:  
TCM Fortune  
Line



I have already emphasised in the introduction to this thesis (1.8.1) that a theoretical underpinning of my inquiry is that it should be *critical* in its nature. This criticality, influenced by critical theory developed by the Frankfurt School, means that my research would need to be founded in a moral, democratic framework that would aim to work against the forces of power that would enslave it. As mentioned in my introduction (1.4), an inquiry that were to be founded in social justice aims would involve ‘conversations in the field’ (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2007, p.201) and an emancipatory approach that would see ‘new forms of connectedness with others’ (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2010, p. 143). The ‘mess’ that I encountered through my multiple methods of inquiry as *bricoleur* was therefore not simply something that happened by accident; rather, it was a planned course of action that recognised the limitations of one single method (Kincheloe, 2001) and instead embraced the complexity of a multidisciplinary approach. The combination of ‘different methodological processes as they were needed in the unfolding context of the research situation’ (Kincheloe, McClaren & Steinberg, 2011, p. 168) meant that I understood that my inquiry was inseparable from its context, and that my methods needed to reflect this reality.

Being aware of the context of my research setting and adapting my methodology to suit what felt appropriate was not only based on practical, authentic conditions and opportunities within the school research setting (Coghlan, 2016); there was more to it than that. Admittedly, as an experienced classroom teacher I often acted on instinct, deciding for example when, where and for how long it was reasonable to expect the TCM students to come to a group discussion; this was one pragmatic aspect of my methodology. Being a practitioner – inquirer, in the moment, rather than at a distance in a detached research setting, means that inquiry can often be highly pragmatic. This pragmatism does not however imply that there is a lack of rigour or ethical

underpinnings; on the contrary, it would be unethical to force a situation that would mean discomfort for the research participants, or 'manipulation' (Hart, 1992) on the part of the teacher. In the case of my inquiry, each mechanism employed to collect data was therefore both pragmatic and ethical in its nature; I would have been going against my beliefs of democracy, social justice and voice if I had pushed an agenda that did not sit well with my student research participants and their own school and personal lives. I would have been acting against the critical nature of the inquiry, that saw power relations as something that needed to be addressed. The 'methodological bricolage' (Kincheloe, McClaren & Steinberg, 2011, p. 168) that characterised my inquiry meant that I was committing to a social justice inquiry that aimed to uncover the 'social world from the perspective of the interacting individual' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, xiii). If I was privileging practice and method in my pragmatic approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, xii), I was not doing this at the expense of an inquiry that was aimed at being fundamentally ethical, namely, a process that was aware of and responsive to the Other (Canella & Lincoln, 2011), namely my TCM research participants.

Justifying the role of *bricoleur* as I saw myself is linked to a justification of the ethical, critical nature of my inquiry and the level of self-consciousness and reflexivity that I was involved in. As I have already mentioned (3.3), the process of practitioner inquiry is somewhat 'messy' and is certainly not a linear, straightforward path; were it to be so, it would go against the nature of qualitative, practitioner-based research as interdisciplinary, complex and context-bound (Kincheloe, 2001). Seen from a critical standpoint, research as *bricolage* is seen as a 'power-driven act' where the world is a complex 'web of reality' (Kincheloe, McClaren and Steinberg, 2011, p. 168), and the researcher recognises and respects his or her position within that web. Within a 'students as researchers' approach, as my TCM inquiry was, there were many

power relations at play, and in my efforts to recognise and counter these, and to avoid 'tokenistic' (Hart, 1992) methods of participation, I felt it important to adapt my methods in line with such conscious and intentional considerations.

As a starting point, knowing that I wanted to capture the voices of my TCM students and that I wanted to work together with them in a collaborative partnership, a vital mechanism that was an integral part of our data collection was the ability to be able to work together as a group. Whilst two semi-structured interviews at the beginning (L1INT1) and end (L1INT2) of the year allowed me to capture individual student reflections, the collaborative process of methodological bricolage allowed so many further opportunities for data collection as a group, and much of this happened within discussions, mainly face-to-face, but also online through the use of a virtual learning platform (3.3.8). It was with both a sense of excitement and a certain amount of trepidation that I immersed myself in the unfoldings of our inquiry, and that I let the data emerge as was fitting. My excitement was fuelled by the momentum that our inquiry was gathering, and by the learning processes that we were all going through. There were moments when I reached for my electronic recording device to capture my own reflections following a group discussion, or where I noted down ideas for guiding questions for our subsequent inquiry cycle. The trepidation that I felt was as a result of the amount of data that was amassing, and out of fear that I would not be able to store, organise and analyse it all in a way that would reflect the dynamic processes that were happening.

There was simply no choice but to use a variety of different methods of data collection. One method alone would never have sufficed to offer a picture of the in-depth understanding of our context that I was searching for. Acting as a methodological *bricoleur*, I wanted to be able to gain new perspectives on my

object of inquiry (Kincheloe, 2001) whilst being part of that very object myself. My subjectivity would be connected to my object the more that I was immersed in and bound to the data as it emerged. If I had tried to dominate its course too much, and attempted to reduce the inquiry to fixed, pre-determined methods, it would have failed in its democratic, critical and rigorous intentions. I was being sensitive to the multivocal nature of the inquiry (Kincheloe, 2001) and acting as a 'multi-competent' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) researcher-in-context. In employing a variety of different data collection methods, I wanted to capture the collaborative learning process in its richness and to be able to compare and contrast different dimensions of the inquiry; this would add a process of 'triangulation' (Salkind, 2010; Bryman, 2012) and therefore rigour to the analysis and interpretation of my data.

The tools, or mechanisms, that I used to generate the rich variety of data that the inquiry produced are laid out in Figure 11 below. The codes that I developed for my data are also to be seen; I explain this coding system later on in this chapter (3.4.3) and then I refer to them in chapters five to eight, when presenting my data. As Figure 11 shows, some tools elicited verbatim data, such as interview transcripts, notes, written documents and audio recordings, some tools elicited visual representations such as a 'fortune line' (Wall, 2017), brainstorming from students or their own 'ice cream cone' models (Brownhill, Ungarova & Bipazhanova, 2017) and some tools produced audio and audio-visual records such as a video recording of a debate or recordings of group discussions. The use of the online platform Google classroom (3.3.8) also allowed documents to be shared and collaboratively produced (school policies, IB documents), descriptions of behaviour to be collated (observation notes in research journal) and descriptions of events to be shared (reflective journals/written reflections).

Code for tool	Description	Phases used
L0RJWN	Research journal written notes	1-6
L0A	Reflective audio recording	1-6
L1GD	TCM group discussion	1-6
L1GC	Google classroom	1-6
L1IV	Individual visuals	2
L1PLC1/2	PLC teacher/student meetings	3
L1ICCM	Ice Cream Cone Model	3
L1INT1	Individual interview 1	end of 2
L1INT2	Individual interview 2	beginning of 6
L1GVFL	TCM group visual fortune line	6
L1PDW	PDW forum	6
L1O	Observation	6
L1EM	Email	post 'data collection'
L2FG	TCM focus groups student-student	4
L2FG	TCM individual interviews student-student	4
L2RJ	TCM student research journals	1-6

Figure 11: mechanisms for generating data

In acting as a *bricoleur*, my methods were allowing me to learn alongside the students; rather than following a set of 'top-down' orders, as a TCM team were creating the rules of the game ourselves, and by doing so, we were constructing our own 'critical school culture' (Kincheloe, McClaren & Steinberg, 2011, p. 166). Many of the mechanisms used for generating data were used because the TCM group had decided that they would be interesting to try out; the 'fortune line' for example, which was used at the end of the year, was mentioned by me in some of the final interviews, and one student (Belle) suggested that we could try using it as a group. The 'ice cream cone' model (Brownhill, Ungarova & Bipazhanova, 2017), mentioned briefly later on in this chapter (3.3.9), was also a tool that I suggested to the TCM girls after having heard Simon Brownhill present about it at a conference at the University of Cambridge'; they found it appealing as a way to help them develop their research questions for their own small research projects (3.3.9), and were willing to try it out. This method of negotiation and choice in how we generated our data was an intentional effort on my part to 'peer through a conceptual window to a new world of research and knowledge

production' (Kincheloe, McClaren & Steinberg, 2011, p. 168) and to locate our inquiry and its methods within its historical situation (Kellner, 1995; Kincheloe, 2001).

During the inquiry process it became clear to me that so much of what I would consider to be sound, collaborative ways of working with my students as a teacher was in fact at the same time a research methodology that was rich in data that 'counted' (Clandinin & Connelly, 1987; Holliday, 2016; Luhrmann, 2010). The 'tools', or 'mechanisms' (Fichtman Dana & Yendol-Hoppy, 2014) I was employing were generating such a wealth of data that I could not have foreseen, yet, as already mentioned, I was both swept away by the momentum of the inquiry but aware that remaining critically reflective was an important element of remaining true to my democratic and critical aims. As I was immersed in the inquiry process and all that I was seeing, hearing and understanding, I knew that the different 'bodies of experience' Holliday (2016) that were emerging were all important individual parts of the research as a whole.

In the following two sections, I have chosen to focus on two mechanisms of generating data that were crucial to the inquiry process, as they facilitated the kind of dialogic practice that underpinned my 'radical' approach (1.8) and allowed for a wealth of collaborative data to emerge. Working in a group was fundamental to our way of engaging in our teacher – student research partnership, and our virtual learning environment was a tool that allowed for continued dialogue beyond what was always practical within the constraints of daily school life.

### **3.3.7 Group work: democratising classroom relationships through dialogue**

This project has a commitment to dialogue as a means of constructing knowledge in a collaborative and democratic way (Freire, 1970). I outline here how TCM worked as a group through planned, face-to-face discussions in both a physical and conceptual space that was simultaneously 'safe' and 'brave' (Abbott & Been, 2017; Cook-Sather, 2016; Cook-Sather, 2017) and how this process generated data. My premise was that if my students did not feel comfortable, then there could be no room for them to be brave enough to take risks. Without knowing they could be honest and open with me as their teacher, they would have been less likely to contribute honest and open opinions themselves. This would have meant that their true voices would have been held back and my data would have contained opinions that they wanted me to hear rather than what they had really wanted to say. A safe environment was therefore important to ensure generation of data that was authentic. If the students felt that they had nothing to lose in the process of being honest, and that I welcomed and respected their genuine voices, the inquiry was much more ethical in its nature. The aim of the group sessions with the students was to establish an identity as a team, build up a sense of mutual understanding and respect, and to be able to pose questions and share knowledge with each other in an interactive, honest setting, where all opinions and contributions were as valid as each other. As Wall (2018b) rightly states, there can be no voice without listening, and our TCM group discussions were where we learnt the art of listening to one another.

The discussions that we had were what O'Reilly (2008) describes as 'planned discussions'; they were similar to traditional focus groups (Morgan, 1996) but not always as prescriptive (Bryman, 2012) in terms of how they were managed and what their purpose was. Prior to some discussions, I devised guiding questions and had a specific research tool in mind, such as the use of a visual brainstorm as outlined in chapter five, or inviting students to reflect

on the research process through a 'fortune line' (Wall, 2017). In some discussions, I either played the role of a moderator or encouraged the students to take on this role, and the focus was on the interactions between the students, as would be the norm for a focus group (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2013). Other discussions were more like practical meetings however, such as organising the logistics of the students' own interviews or focus groups when they were carrying out their own research projects (3.3.9). Even though some such meetings may not have had involved an additional data collection tool, they were an important way of touching base with each other, and for allowing me to act in my naturally supportive teacher role, without needing to 'collect' data from the students.

The main reason that I used group discussions was so that we could continue to feel that we were a research team, and so that our relationship amongst each other could be built up over time (O'Reilly, 2008). This mechanism allowed for a wide range of data to be generated that had been fostered in a democratic, dialogic way. I favoured the method of dialogue that this group work produced and the potential for the empowerment of individuals who would otherwise not talk about issues that may be contentious or personal. Chapter five discusses the way that we worked together in a small group and how we established our TCM group identity.

### **3.3.8 Google Apps for Education: an online tool for collaboration**

As a huge amount of data was gathered over the course of the year, it was vitally important for me and the students to be able to keep on top of it and for us to know where we could store and then find something. Our way of working was to be transparent and open with each other, collaborating with each other each step



of the way. In our very first meeting together, when consent forms and participation information sheets had been shared and discussed, we had talked about ethical ways of working together; something that is mentioned in chapter five (5.1). The system that made the most sense for our TCM group was the cloud storage service Google Drive; a service that enables files to be stored beyond the limits of a hard drive (Cloudwards, 2017) and edited and shared from anywhere, irrespective of the geographic location. Due to the fact that Google Drive was an established method of working within everyday classroom practice in our school, it was an easy and practical way for me and the student researchers to work together. I also used Google Drive as a way to keep track of the data that was being collected and to produce an overview of what was done when (Appendix D). This will be discussed in the data analysis section that follows in this chapter.

One of the most effective features of Google Drive for collaboration is indeed the 'sharing' ability that it offers; any kind of file (videos, pdfs, images, word documents) can be stored and these files can be shared with anyone who has a Google email address. All teachers and students at our school had a school email address that was linked to Google Drive, so this made it easy to set up our TCM collaborative online space. When two people or more wished to work on one document at the same time, a Google 'doc' (short for document) could be created and everyone shared into that document could edit it simultaneously and see any changes that were made by anyone else working on it (G Suite Learning Center, 2017). The changes were automatically saved and stored on Google Drive in the web browser. Figure 12 below depicts an example of how the students used Google Drive to organise their folders for their own research projects.

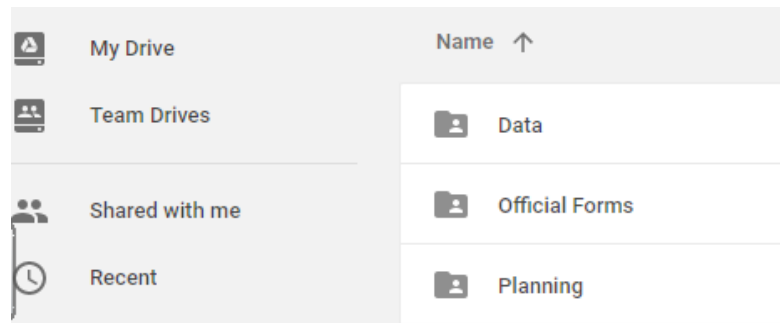


Figure 12: TCM students' use of Google folders

Each student had access to each folder and could view and edit everything within them at any time they chose. As a member of the team, I was also shared into everything that the students worked on, so that I could see what they were getting on with and make any comments or questions on the documents themselves. Students also had access to all of my stored data and reflections, so that the process was as transparent and open as possible.

A further platform for collaboration that belongs to the Google Apps for Education (GAFE) is Google Classroom, a 'one-stop platform for facilitating digital production, workflow, and communication between teachers and students' (Catapano, 2009). Google Classroom was used as a space in which all members of the research team could communicate with each other at any time. I set up a group on Google Classroom called 'Team Change Makers' and invited all students to take part. It was a practical way of uploading resources that all members could see, and it was also easy to enable students to add thoughts or comments to the resources. One example is when I wanted to begin discussing the concept of service learning with the students (phase 2) and how they understood it. I used Google Classroom to post some relevant resources that students could download, read and comment on in advance of one of our group meetings. Figure 13 shows what the interface looked like in this instance for each member of the TCM group. The students had the opportunity

to comment directly onto Google Classroom using the Google Classroom tools, and if they did so, the page would tell me who had completed the task through the platform. The students were aware that this information was obvious to me and everyone else in the team, but they did not feel pressured to 'perform' and commented in this way only if it was practical for them.

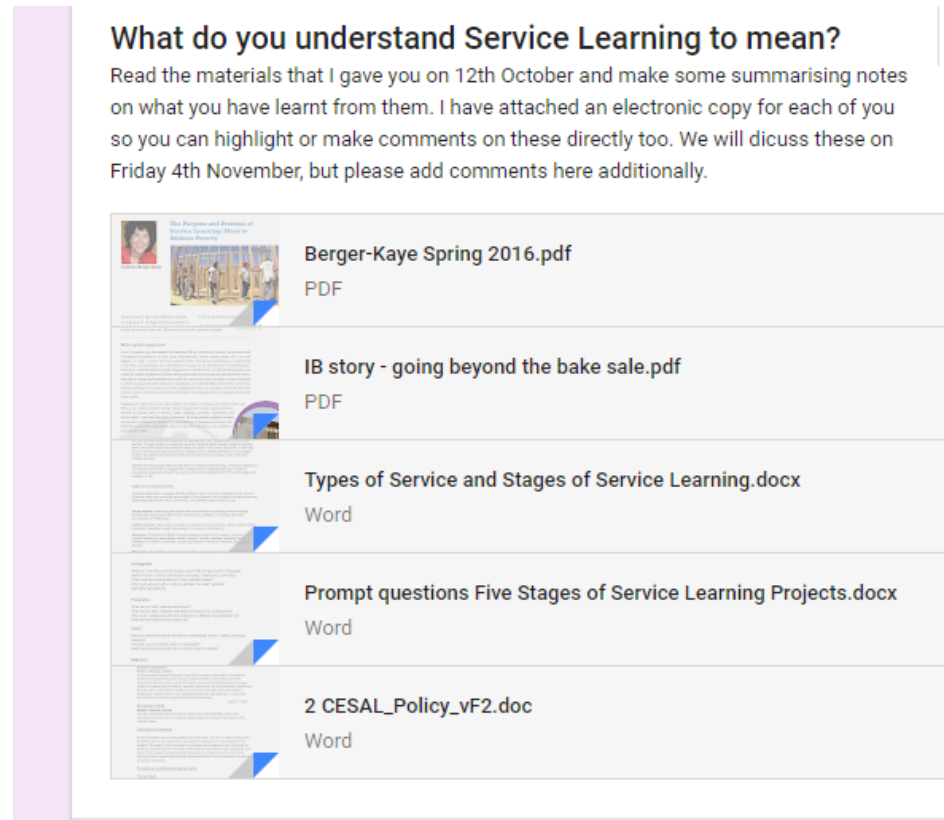


Figure 13: Using Google Classroom to share and comment on resources

Having been able to use Google Classroom in this way was a practical example of how technology was a helpful addition to our face-to-face interaction as group. It facilitated the generation of a wealth of written data in addition to data arising from our discussions.

### 3.3.9 Student research projects

An important part of the TCM inquiry was the students' own research projects. The idea was that the TCM girls would try to

collect some of their own data regarding an aspect of service learning in our school, so that they could put some of the principles that they were learning about ethical research into practice.

In phase three of the TCM inquiry, many of our group discussions involved me guiding the students in their research designs. The girls had the choice to group themselves as they wished, or to work individually, and they decided that splitting into two groups would make the most sense practically and was a way to address their own interests. From our group discussions in phases one and two of our inquiry, two main aspects of service learning became apparent to the girls (PDW trips/continuity between grades) and they developed two different guiding research questions addressing these aspects (Figure 14).

### Students taking action: small-group inquiry projects

**Group 1:** (Mulan, Pocahontas, Cinderella)

Service Learning in Grades 9 and 10

**RQ:** *How can we make the service learning in grades 9 and 10 more cohesive?*

Method: One focus group meeting per grade (9, 10, 11) with all 3 facilitators

**Group 2:** (Rapunzel, Belle, Snow White, Aurora)

PDW trips (international service learning)

**RQ:** *To what extent can PDW experiences be improved in order to create a continuous, meaningful and effective service learning experience in the high school?*

Method: Individual, semi-structured interviews (one interview per student with a student from grade 9, 10, 11, 12) – 16 interviews in total

Figure 14: TCM student research designs

In order to guide the students, I used the 'Ice Cream Cone Model' (Brownhill, Ungarova, & Bipazhanova, 2017) method of developing research questions for example (Figure 15) and I

created an interview/focus group guide (Appendix C) to help them to think about how to be an effective interviewer or moderator. As can be seen in Figure 14, one group decided to conduct focus groups with students in each grade and the other group carried out individual interviews.

Data relating to these student research projects do not feature in my data presentation chapters, as the data that the students collected themselves did not end up being as relevant in terms of the findings of this inquiry as a whole. Whilst data did tell me that the TCM students felt that they had learnt something about how to plan research questions or how to think about questioning and interview behaviour, what the research projects really provided the students with was the confidence to feel like they had an 'informed' voice to carry into different collaborative 'spaces' as the inquiry progressed.

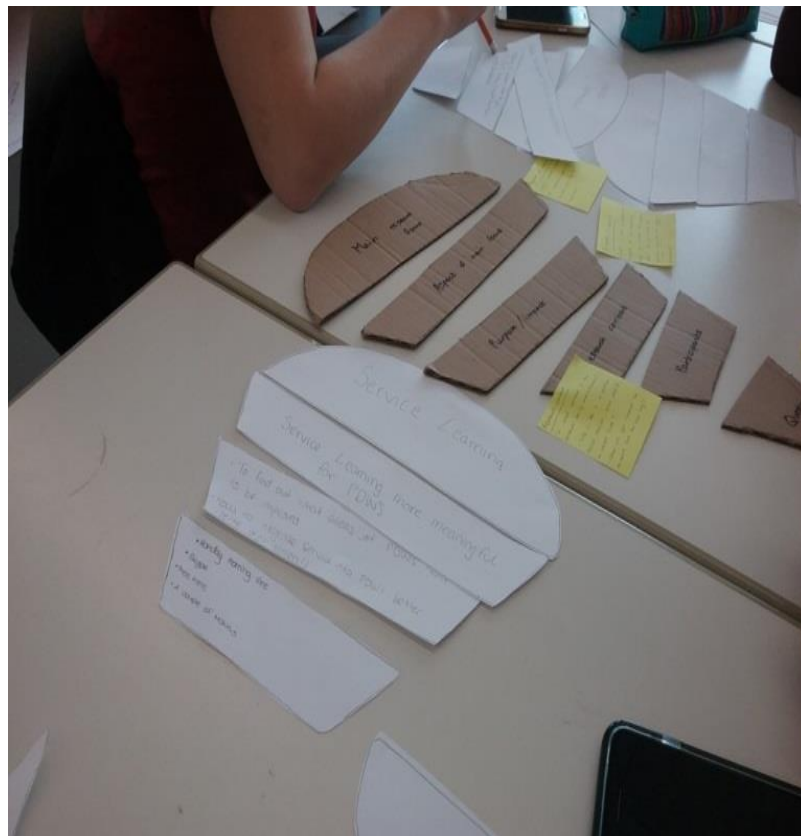


Figure 15: Students engaging with the 'Ice Cream Cone Model'

They had been able to consult their peers on aspects of service learning that they had deemed to be important, and this enabled them to transfer their knowledge to other collaborative spaces and to increase the impact of their voices. Chapter six addresses this point (6.4). Learning some research skills also helped the girls to understand what *inquiry* looked like, and to add some authenticity to the IB model of teaching and learning (3.3.5). Having also used a students as researchers 'toolkit' (SpeakUp, 2013) with the TCM girls was a way of showing them that 'students as researchers' was in fact 'a thing', as Pocahontas commented in one of her interviews. This understanding added a certain amount of 'validity' to our inquiry in the students' minds; a sense of being accepted by the 'academic' world beyond our school was an exciting prospect for them.

### **3.4 Data analysis process: approaching the creature lurking in the shadows**

After the whirlwind of inquiry that had carried me with it throughout the year with the TCM girls, I was left with the daunting task of discovering what the data had to say to me (Holliday, 2016) and how I could use what it said to build my story. I had to 'manage the transition from raw data to text' (Holliday, 2016, p.102). There was a short period of calm after the storm as the summer holidays began, but this did not last long; the data was stored on my computer and in various folders and notebooks on my desk, and it lurked like some creature of the night in the corners of my mind, waiting to come out of the shadows and whisper its secret to me. The problem was, the creature could not simply sidle up to me and impart its secret wisdom to me as I listened intently. Instead, I had to dare to approach it on my own, grab it and rip it limb from limb. Only that way would I find out what it was able to tell me.

Sitting at my desk at a point in time after the contact with the student researchers had finished, and after the summer holidays were over, I was in a different frame of mind than I had been during the research process at school. Firstly, the fact that I had taken a year away from teaching to write this thesis meant that I was about to embark on a way of working that I had never encountered before. I was positioned at a distance from the school research setting, and I could take a step back from it and have the kind of time to think that I had never seemed to have had whilst teaching full-time. This could be seen to have been a huge advantage, and on reflection, it certainly was preferable to having had to return to the hectic life of school and teaching. However, I cannot pretend that I was not overwhelmed by the sheer amount of data that I had at my disposal. Patton (1980) talks about how he has never been able to find a way of preparing his students for the volume of information that arises from qualitative research, and I can certainly relate to that. No amount of skilled supervision or mentoring could have prepared me for what I was faced with. However, despite the feeling of dread and panic that began to take hold of me as I contemplated how to approach my data, at least I did have the opportunity to concentrate on what had happened in the previous academic year without being immediately caught up in another whirlwind. Instead of the whirlwind, I was now entering the shadows and approaching the creature within.

#### **3.4.1 Feedback loops: student participation in on-going analysis**

Having made the point about facing my data retrospectively of the collaboration with students in school, I do not, however, want to create the impression that data analysis happened solely at this point. In fact, in line with the cyclic nature of the inquiry, reflection

on data collected within each cycle happened during or at the end of it, and it was then used to inform the next cycle (Munn-Giddings, 2012). This meant, therefore, that there was a certain amount of data analysis happening already during the process itself, which can often be the case in qualitative research (Holliday, 2016). Being aware that I wanted to involve the student researchers as much as possible in the research process however, and to make their participation more meaningful (Hart, 1992; Fielding & Bragg, 2003; Fletcher, 2005), I also endeavoured to engage them in continued reflection and analysis. I therefore facilitated a series of feedback loops (Baumfield, Hall & Wall, 2013; Wall, 2018) that became part of the research process.

Through use of Google Classroom, I invited students to read my summaries of what we did and/or talked about together and they could leave feedback and further comments and questions as they saw fit. The purpose of this process was to focus on 'learning and implementing change, rather than...on description or constructing an interpretation' (Munn-Giddings, 2012, p. 72). The students were consistently happy with my representations, although every student did not always comment every time. By having given them the opportunity to do so however, I was being open with them and I was attempting to act according to ethical considerations about the quality or 'goodness' (3.3.1) of the project as a participatory inquiry. Some would argue that student 'researchers' do not possess sufficient skills to be able to carry out data analysis, and that in suggesting that they are researchers in this sense can be seen to 'trivialise professional research' (Fielding & Bragg, 2003). It was not possible to sit down together as a group and identify codes and themes, due to lack of time and students' schedules; even meeting together was always a challenge. Therefore, whilst I was 'in charge' of the data analysis, what was important was that I could feel safe in the knowledge that my interpretations fit with the students' understandings (Baumfield, Hall & Wall, 2013).



### **3.4.2 Getting to grips with the data: making sense of the mess**

The first step in the process of moving from raw data to text (Holliday, 2016) was to create an overview table of data in a Google document. This table chronologically listed everything that had happened with the student research team and what data I had available. Once I had discovered the extremely useful function of inserting hyperlinks to the raw data from any word in this document, I had a way of locating everything that was stored on my Google Drive. Whilst the whole table is in the appendices (Appendix D), I have provided a snapshot of it Figure 16 below.

As can be seen, at this point I was logging the second group discussion that I had had with the student researchers. I had been able to insert hyperlinks to all of the data connected with this discussion, including my agenda, my reflections on the discussion, the document we were working on together, and the output, which was in this case student suggested changes to learner outcomes and guiding questions for the PDW trips.

A further hyperlink took me to additional student reflections on having used this changed document in their own PDW meetings, and a further link added later on included an initial written description of this whole discussion. Working with such an overview made it much easier to begin the process of data analysis, and the sense of being overwhelmed was reduced somewhat.

### **3.4.3 'Levels' of data and coding**

In order to keep on top of the immense amount of data that was emerging throughout the process of inquiry, I developed a system

Date / length	Purpose	Methods	Data available	Resources used	People involved	Location	Notes/questions/write-up
Fri Aug 26. (30 mins) <a href="#">L1GD2</a>	To share the newly created PDW learner outcomes with TCM and to ask for their thoughts/input.  To then encourage students to use these where possible with their PDW groups and to reflect on them / record their thoughts if possible	Group discussion  Analysing a document together	Audio recording - <a href="#">my reflections</a>  Original PDW learner outcomes with student additions  Some students reflected on having used them in their PDW meetings - reflections on google classroom ( <a href="#">RZ</a> , <a href="#">AU</a> , <a href="#">SW</a> , <a href="#">BE</a> , <a href="#">MU</a> )	<a href="#">PDW Learner outcomes sheet</a>	VW / TCM	VW office - round table	Outcome - <a href="#">their ideas were added to the document</a> and this was shared with teachers  Some students were PDW leaders, others not (find out who from audio/transcript on 14th Sep)  <a href="#">Write-up</a>

Figure 16: Snapshot of overview of data table

of coding my data into different 'levels'. Devising a system that made sense to me was absolutely necessary, as during the data collection process, I was faced with trying to stay organised whilst being immersed in my regular, day-to-day, full-time teaching role as a German teacher and service learning / CAS Coordinator. I needed to develop a system that I understood and that I would be able to rely on once the period of data collection had ended and I was faced with the challenge of making sense of it. The students' own research projects also meant that there was an additional 'level' of the students' own data in addition to *my* TCM data. It all needed to be organised and identified so that I could differentiate between my interviews and the students' for example.

The 'levels' system of coding my data items was within excel spreadsheets on Google Drive. 'Level 0' referred to my own written or audio reflections, 'level 1' was *my* TCM data and 'level 2' was the TCM *students'* data. Figure 17 shows the 'level 1' sheet as an example.

As can be seen in the spreadsheet, I added various codes to the levels that told me what kind of data collection tool or mechanism had been used. In addition to these codes, when it came to data analysis, I added abbreviations for the 'Disney Princess' pseudonyms that we had adopted; hence L1INT1BE would refer to a piece of my own data (L1=level 1), namely the first interview (INT1) that I had with the student Belle (BE).

As well as using these codes for data analysis, I also use them throughout chapters five to eight when presenting my data. At times, the girls' voices interweave with each other in these chapters, and are balanced against other bodies of evidence, so these abbreviations serve as a reminder of who is speaking, without interrupting the flow of the narrative in a clumsy way. I hope that they make sense as you come across them.

Level 1 (my TCM data)	
L1WRPPDW	Written reflection prompted PDW forum
L1VD	Visual diagram
L1GCWRP	Google classroom written reflection prompted
L1GCWRUP	Google classroom written reflection unprompted
L1GCOR	Google classroom oral reflection prompted
L1GCORUP	Google classroom oral reflection unprompted
L1GDA	Group discussion audio
L1GD	Group discussion
L1PLC1	Professional Learning Community meeting 1
L1PLCGVD	PLC visual diagram
L1PLC2	Professional Learning Community meeting 2
L1GVFL (D)	Group visual fortune line (discussion)
L1IV	TCM individual visual
L1AVPDW	Audio visual
L1INT1 / 2	Interview 1 / 2
L1EMPI	Email post-inquiry
L1INT2	Interview 2
L1RER	Rules of Engagement for research
L1GDWSP	Group discussion written summary prompted
L1PGDWRP	Written reflection prompted pre- group discussion

Figure 17: Level 1 Codes for data items

### 3.4.4 Making connections: arriving at emergent themes

Returning to the point in time when the in-school collaboration was over, I knew that in order to make sense of what my data was telling me, I needed to make links and connections between the many different sources of data that I had collected. I wanted to search for a way to create the ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1993a) that would reveal the collaborative research experience ‘as a process’ (Denzin, 1994, p. 505). This meant not only looking for repetitions and similarities and differences (Bryman, 2012) but

trying to identify emerging themes on the basis of initial or open codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006) that I created. As a researcher, I was aware that I was 'the person who (was) challenged to apprehend the meaning of things and to give these meanings ongoing life' (Moustakas, 1990, p. 12) and that the interpretation and analysis of my data was something that emerged from my own researcher positionality.

The first decision that I made was to transcribe the two individual interviews (L1INT1/2) that I had conducted with the students I was aware that interview transcription would take time and I knew that until I had this verbatim data, I would not be able to begin to work with it and it would be hard to include such data in the thesis if I did not have it transcribed. The process of transcribing every line myself was a helpful process of getting to know what was said; indeed, it was an 'interpretive act' (Riessman, 2008) in itself. As I was transcribing, I was already making electronic notes in some of the margins when I came across an interesting comment or thought and I would return to these thoughts at a later stage of data analysis, once I had printed out the transcripts.

As I had such an abundance of audio recordings of group discussions that we had had over the course of the year, I initially decided that a summary of each of these was sufficient to remind me of the key themes that were emerging. These summaries happened during the data collection process, and were used as part of the feedback loops with the students as mentioned above. When returning to the group discussions after the face-to-face research process was over, I did however add further notes to my original summaries, comparing and contrasting this data with the other bodies of experience (Holliday, 2016) that I had. In some cases where the recordings were not longer than 20 minutes, I did also change my initial decision to stay away from transcribing

them however, as transcription simply made the search for themes much easier.

As I read and reread the transcripts, written reflections and summaries, I highlighted sections that were of particular interest, made comments in the margins and then copied and organised these quotes into Google documents within folders named under a particular theme. Figure 18 is a snapshot of a document in a folder Concerned with the emerging theme of *mutual understanding*. Themes that were similar to each other such as *acknowledgement / listening or risk-taking / courage* were then given the same coloured folder. Through this method I ended up with four different groups of themes plus the themes of *voice, engagement, dialogue* and *power*, which did seem to transcend all others. The themes were grouped as Table 4 shows.

<b>Pink</b>	<b>Light blue</b>	<b>Orange</b>	<b>Green</b>
Acknowledgement Honesty Listening Mutual understanding Openness Respect Responsibility Solidarity Trust	Agency Change Engagement	Critical thinking Consciousness	Controversy Courage Dissonance Experimentation Risk-taking

Table 4: Categorisation of emergent themes

Once I had organised data items under these themes, this started a different process (Figure 19) that was ultimately linked to how I would present them in a coherent narrative. As can be seen (Figure 19) the ‘CARE acronym’ and the ‘cog wheel metaphor’ were important stages of the process of data analysis, and they will be described in the next two sections. After having considered the main themes (Table 4) for quite a while, I wondered how they

Data item	Evidence	Chapter?
L1GD7PO	it was stressed that going into service learning, the fact that <b>“we should expect to learn something too and to be helped, like it’s not a one-way street” “you should be open to the fact that you are going to get something back from it”</b> (reciprocity, mutual understanding/critical thinking)	4b
<u>L1PLC1WRPBE</u>	I thought it was very effective that we actually got to sit down together and put our ideas together as it seems that teachers and students have been noticing similar things (solidarity)	Reference to PLC - ch 5
L1GD7PO	Didn’t we talk about it last time, like maybe they don’t need money, some of the places? But they just need us to be there, just to have connections with other people	4b
L1INT1CI	I think I have a <i>closer</i> relationship to the Swiss community than other people do, and I, I think... the Swiss people, of course they see us as, like ‘others’ kind of, because we speak like a different language, we go to a private school.. I think, like, these preconceptions are like, like .... they come from both sides,	Refers to brainstorm visual - 4

Figure 18: Example of data item organisation according to emerging themes

related to the beliefs and principles of democratic practice that I had had at the start of my inquiry.

Quite unexpectedly, whilst sat in the university library and drawing lines between themes on paper, I had what I am calling an 'epiphany'; the moment that my 'Pedagogy of CARE' framework came into being. From this 'epiphany' onwards, my themes became the principles and attributes of this framework.

### **3.5 Presentation of themes: metaphorical 'cog wheels'**

The themes that emerged from the data from the inquiry process are presented in chapters five, six and seven. However, the themes did not occur singularly or independently at one phase of the inquiry; rather, they were present in all phases, feeding into my understanding of a Pedagogy of CARE (chapter four). For their presentation therefore I decided to use the metaphor of cog wheels (Figure 20) to show how the principles and attributes emerged within different collaborative relationships of inquirers. Cogs are integral, interconnected and ever-moving parts of a machine, and as they interlock with one another, they gain momentum and the machine works to its full capacity. This sense of momentum and interlocking is what happened with my themes within different collaborative spaces. Once this cog-wheel metaphor made sense to me as a way of presenting my data, the writing of chapters five, six and seven came together much more coherently. I could see how different pieces of data could be grouped and presented, and from this second 'epiphany' onwards, this thesis began to take shape.

In chapter five, the data refers to the inquiry process that happened within the conceptual collaborative learning space of the Team Change Makers (TCM); namely seven high school girls



and me as the project facilitator and teacher – researcher. I considered myself a fellow ‘team’ member and belonged to this group. The cog wheel of chapter five then interacts with and gives momentum to a learning space presented in chapter six that involved TCM collaborating with other teachers; this was through participation in Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings. This PLC consisted of a group of eleven teachers, including me, who had formed at the beginning of the year to discuss how our service learning could become more than simply fundraising that was disconnected from other areas of students’ learning. This collaborative space then interacts with and gives momentum to a further learning space, presented in chapter seven, that involved a significant part of the school community; a ‘PDW’ student forum saw the whole of grade 10 and 11 participating in a TCM-led event.

The main themes or ‘principles’ and ‘attributes’, as will be explained in the next chapter, were present within all different stages of the inquiry as a whole, but their organisation within chapters five, six and seven into these different inquiry ‘spaces’ also mirrors the chronological ‘phases’ of the research that the students themselves identified in their ‘fortune line’ (Wall, 2017) diagram, as discussed already in this chapter. The chronology in terms of time is not, however, the reason that I have chosen to present the data in this way. Rather, two main ideas occurred to me during the data analysis process that influenced my decision to do so.

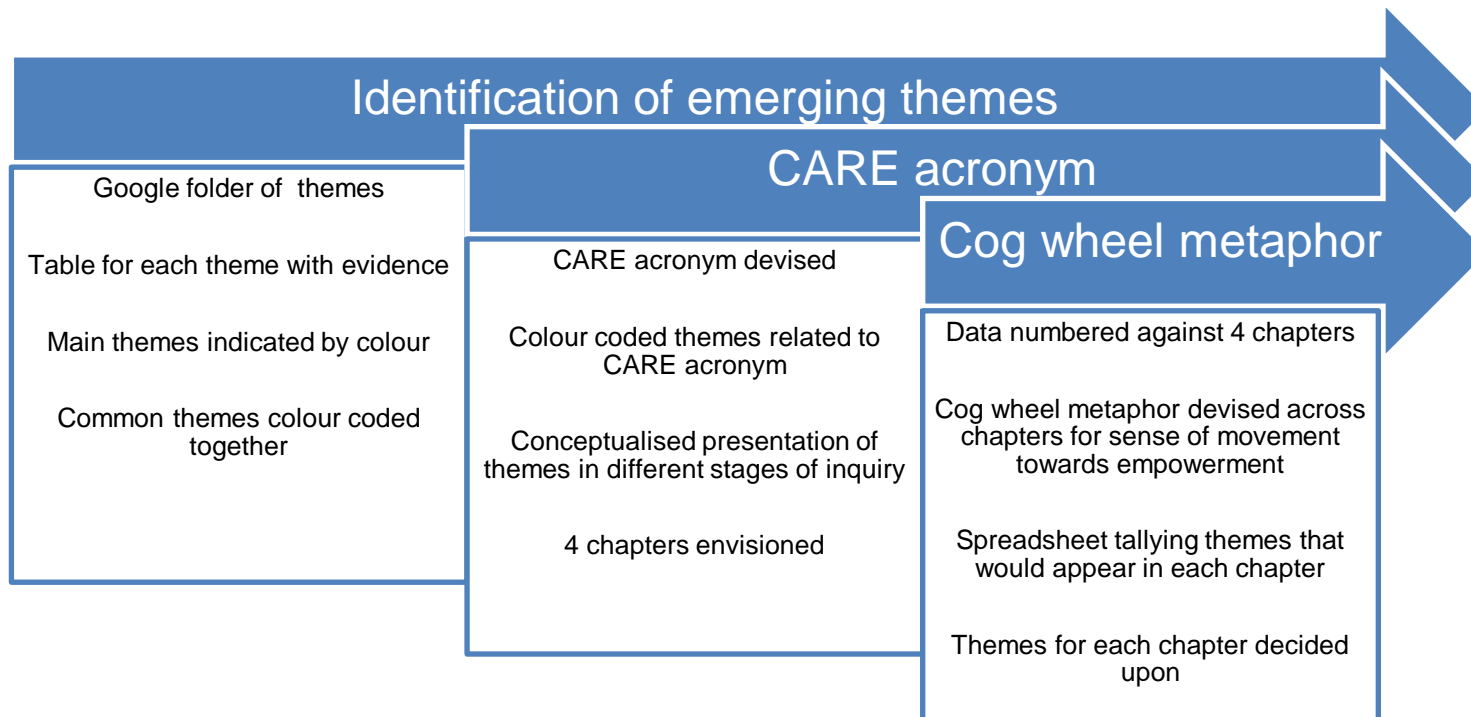


Figure 19: The process of arriving at themes and their organisation

Firstly, in order to create a culture of collaborative inquiry, there needs to be some core momentum, something that drives and pushes forward. This is what the TCM was; this is represented in Figure 20 by the darker coloured cog wheel. This 'core' group of inquirers did not stop existing as other group of collaborators formed; rather, it kept on turning within itself. This 'core' group, involving me as a teacher-researcher, was vital to the whole functioning of the 'machine' of inquiry. Chapter five indeed argues that at least one teacher is a necessary part of this 'core', and that risk-taking and experimental practice is needed in order to create and build up that first, initial 'safe space'.

As the cog wheels become lighter in colour, this represents the diffusion of the TCM group of inquirers into a wider learning community; chapters six and seven present this.

The second reason that I have chosen to present the data in this 'chronological' way, with each chapter presenting its own 'cog wheel', is the way that the interlinking and momentum of the cogs parallels an increased sense of *empowerment* amongst the students in TCM. The gradation in colour of the arrow in Figure 19 is intended to represent this. This does not mean that the students travelled on a linear road from having no power towards an 'all powerful' end point; rather, as they increasingly felt *listened to* over the course of the year of our inquiry, they increasingly felt a sense that they had the power to contribute towards change in our school. As the themes move from one cog wheel to another through chapters five, six and seven, they represent an increasing sense of engagement, motivation and, ultimately, *hope*, from the student researchers. Student voice was always at the heart of this inquiry, and this was because I acted from a stance of *caring* about it. From this initial stance, the *caring approach* (Wall, 2018a) in the TCM inquiry involved ever-increasing momentum, levels of power and empowerment, participation and dialogue, and the cog

wheel is therefore an appropriate metaphor for the presentation of the data in chapters five to eight.

Having considered these different 'phases' of the whole inquiry, chapter eight then draws on a small amount of data collected a few months after the year of TCM collaboration, and argues that it is indeed the *process* of collaborative inquiry that can bring about change. It is not about one or more teachers being the ones who empower; rather, it is the collaborative process itself that does this.

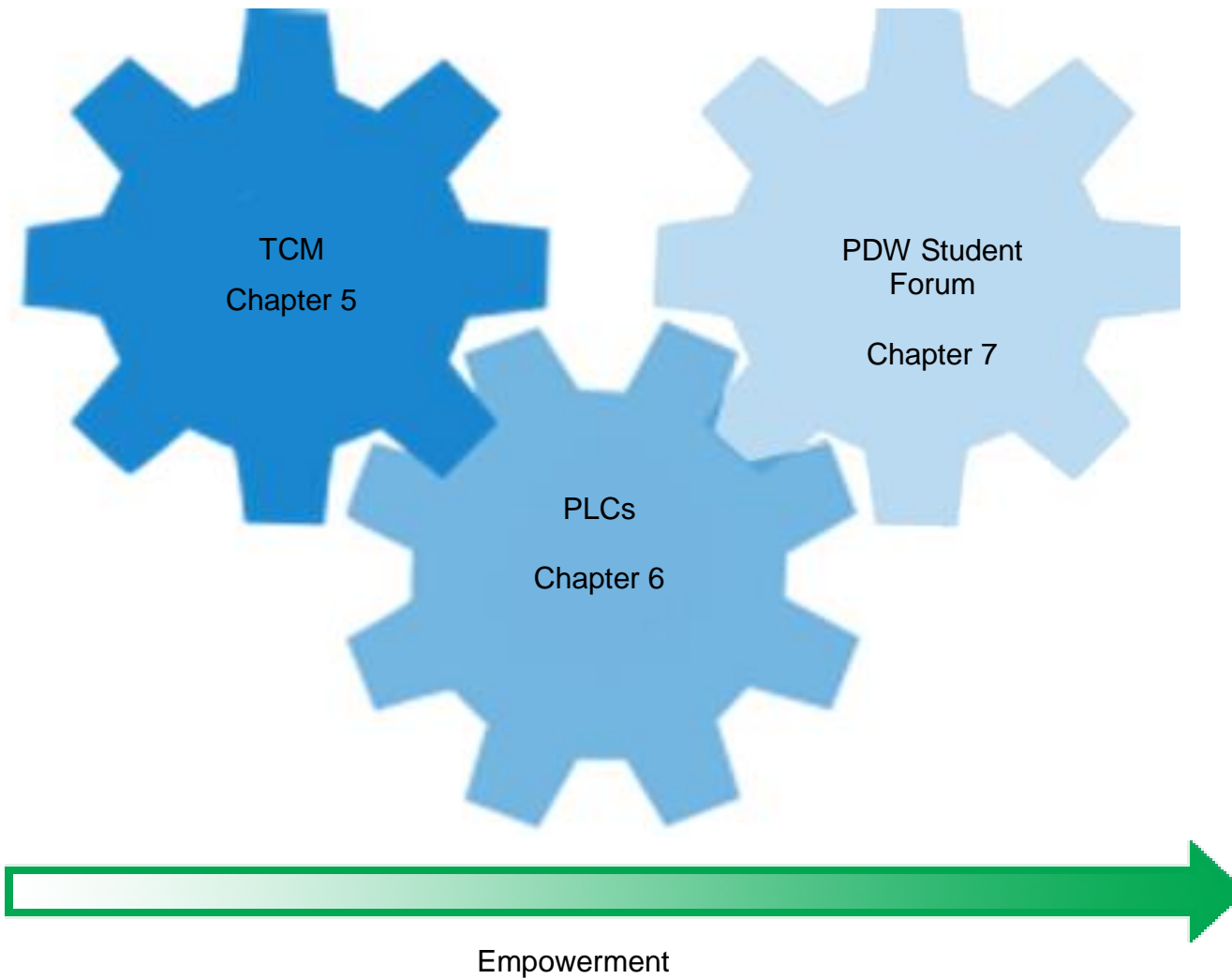


Figure 20: Themes presented through cogs of collaboration

Chapter eight presents how students came to understand what this idea of 'voice' meant in our context, and how it could lead to a culture of collaborative inquiry, and, ultimately to change. This leads the reader into chapter nine, which brings the data together with the principles and attributes of my framework of 'CARE' and discusses their implications for practice.

## **4 Chapter 4: Pedagogy of CARE**

This chapter introduces my framework in order to contextualise the themes that emerged from my data and to introduce you to the key principles and attributes that arose out of my inquiry.

In order to understand and help visualise the interrelationship of the different principles and personal attributes of my 'Pedagogy of CARE', I have conceptualised their interrelation as a four-faced 'pyramid' model'. I begin the explanation of my framework with an outline of this model before I turn to the principles and attributes themselves.

### **4.1 Pyramid Model of CARE**

Influenced by the action research tradition of cycles (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988) and the cyclic nature of my inquiry (3.3.5.) and tempted also by the 'cog wheel' metaphor that I have used to present the themes that emerged from my data (3.5), I was searching for a visual representation for my framework. What I wanted to achieve was to position the different principles of the framework in relationship to each other, and what was important was that the non-hierarchical, democratic intentions should be reflected. I decided upon a four-faced, three-dimensional pyramid model without any specific 'top' or 'bottom'. Figure 21 shows the model in its 'net' form; it is the flattened, two-dimensional representation of a free-standing, three-dimensional model. Unlike a pyramid that has elements in some kind of hierarchical relationship, with some being fundamental before others can be achieved, as in Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943) for example, my pyramid, in its three-dimensional form, should be imagined as being suspended in the air without any principle being at the 'top' or 'bottom'. Figure 22 shows a three-dimensional version of the model in order to help visualise it. The three-dimensional nature of

the four faces means that no one principle or attribute is more or less important than any other; even when looking at one face, the others are still connected to it. Through this model I therefore argue that every principle and attribute of the Pedagogy of CARE has equal importance, and that the different parts interact with each other to make the whole. I will explain this more fully below.

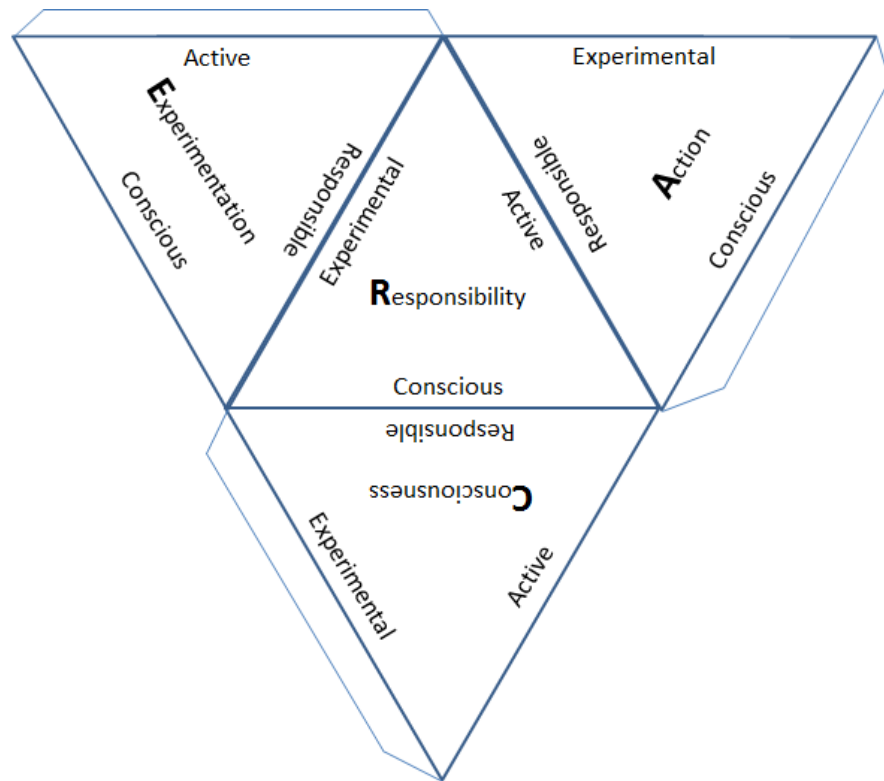


Figure 21: Pyramid Model for a Pedagogy of CARE

There are four 'principles' of a Pedagogy of CARE (depicted on each face of the pyramid) and each principle has a related personal 'attribute' (on its external edges). The related principles and attributes are *Consciousness* (conscious), *Action* (active), *Responsibility* (responsible) and *Experimentation* (experimental). The first letter of each word spells the word 'CARE', as everything is underpinned by this

On each face of the four-sided pyramid there is one of the four principles (nouns) plus the three attributes (adjectives) related to



the other three principles on its three *internal* edges. The placement of these attributes on the internal edges of the faces is deliberate; it symbolises that they can all be placed in front of the principle (noun) and all be equally relevant to the concept of ethical, collaborative practice. On the three *external* edges of each face of the pyramid is the personal attribute (adjectival form of the noun) on a different face. The placement of these attributes (adjectives) is also intentional. The attributes connect one face to another to show that the principles are interdependent of each other, and these attributes bridge any gap that may exist between them. One face does not contain a principle that stands on its own; the pyramid brings all of them together in an interconnected way.



Figure 22: Three-dimensional Pyramid Model

For example, one could be engaged in a practice of *experimental responsibility*, *active consciousness* or *conscious experimentation*. Alternatively, the pedagogy could consist of *responsible experimentation*, *conscious action* or *experimental action*. In total

there are 12 possible combinations of principles and attributes. I see these words as individual elements that belong to the same whole and interrelate with one another; this will be explained in the next section (4.2), and reflected through my data. Ethical collaborative inquiry is, in my view, about how values and actions interrelate and are interdependent of one another, hence the interrelation of these principles and attributes is important. The combinations of nouns and adjectives do not matter but they all belong to the same pedagogy that I am suggesting, and should all be present somewhere.

This model therefore reflects the interrelationship of pedagogical principles with inquirer personal attributes with collaborative inquiry; there cannot be an ethical pedagogy without principles, and there is no use to principles if there is no inquirer, or human 'actor' embodying them. Alternatively, inquirer attributes are useless and unethical if they are not founded on principles. The model therefore brings together the principles and attributes that I understand my inquiry to have contained, and that I propose as a way forward for collaborative inquiry. The next section outlines these, before moving on in chapter nine to a consideration of what implications they have for research and practice.

#### **4.2 Pedagogical principles and personal attributes: CARE**

As I have already mentioned, the acronym 'CARE' in this framework is intentional. It may seem a little contrived to say that the moment that this acronym emerged from my thinking, it changed everything. However, this is in fact what happened; as I began explaining in chapter three; it was my researcher 'epiphany'. Once I had conceived of this idea, I found a direction for my writing and a message that I could convey to my reader. The acronym 'CARE', whilst representing the underlying stance of caring, stands for both pedagogical principles and required and

desired attributes within collaborative inquiry; it involves engagement in a practice of *consciousness, action, responsibility* and *experimentation* through being *conscious, active, responsible* and *experimental* as an inquirer.

The cog wheel metaphor introduced in chapter three (Figure 20; 3.5), and the data presented in the next four chapters is of course only one example of a methodology that incorporates the attributes and principles as envisioned in my 'Pedagogy of CARE.' Just as that process could be adapted and shifted according to context, so can the proposed framework that follows. The framework is however relevant to my inquiry and my practice and is a proposed pedagogy based on what my inquiry has told me. I am at the centre of all this and that of course must not be forgotten.

#### **4.2.1 Consciousness / being conscious**

The inclusion of this principle is inspired by Freire's (1970) concept of *conscientização*, or 'critical consciousness'; a dynamic process of action and critical reflection upon the world in order to transform it. Being *conscious* is about being engaged in an ongoing process of critical reflection that allows us to see ourselves as 'historically formed creatures capable of learning and transformation' (Stevenson, 2012, p. 148). It is about being aware of our place in the world and questioning the structures and systems within which we find ourselves. This stems from the notion of 'critique' in critical theory, where 'existing conditions' are explored (Marx, 1967) to find how 'particular perspectives, social structures or practices may be irrational, unjust, alienating or inhumane' (Kemmis, 2008, p. 125). It is an aspect of an education that allows us to 'liberate ourselves from the myth that we are unable to move beyond the social constructs of the world as it currently exists' (Smith, 2016, p. 23). This also involves

uncovering and analysing power relationships and questioning the status quo. As practitioners, we raise students' consciousness and prepare them to enter society with skills that 'will allow them to reflect critically upon and intervene in the world in order to change it' (Giroux & Penna, 1988, p. 34).

Being *conscious* is the process of recognising and critically reflecting on our positionality and our relationship to the world and others, and it is a critique for social justice (Kincheloe, McClaren, Steinberg, & Monzó, 2018). It is about developing a worldview that recognises the interconnection of larger structural and systemic forces and individual and collective issues and dilemmas. As our consciousness is raised, the more we discover reality (Freire, 1976) and this discovery then leads us to become an agent of the world, making and re-making one's existence. Rather than just adapting to the world, we transform it (Freire, 1976). Working together with others colleagues and students and critically reflecting on our own positionalities and values can also allow us to change our practice.

*Consciousness* is also about being aware of what we are doing as we are doing it and considering why we act as we do in the act of doing. Related to the principle of *responsibility* as will be outlined below, it is also about intentionality; a forward-looking, hopeful practice that has a sense of transformation and purpose

#### **4.2.2 Action / being active**

*Action* is related to consciousness as described above, however it takes the inquirer beyond a mere process of critical reflection or 'disposition of critical intent' (Habermas, 1972; Kinsler, 2010) towards being able to exercise agency in a situation (Elliott, 2005). This agency is exercised through practice which is oriented towards an ideal. A practitioner who is *active* goes through

processes of inquiry that are geared towards fighting against the unjust practices or conditions that one uncovers through being critical. An *active* inquirer strives to bring about change and to achieve social justice through engaging in a practice that is in itself democratic. Being *active* is the process of becoming an engaged, doing *subject* rather than a passive object. In the process of action, we translate democratic values into democratic behaviour, and we are involved in 'sensuous human activity' (Bernstein, 1971, p. 11) or *praxis*.

Collaborative inquiry is oriented by both a practical and an emancipatory interest (Kemmis, 2010) and sees educational *action* as a form of *praxis* in both an Aristotelian and post-Marxian sense (Kemmis, 2010). For Aristotle, *praxis* is 'action that is morally-committed, and oriented and informed by traditions in the field' (Kemmis & Smith, 2008, p. 4) and for Hegel and Marx (Marx & Engels, 1932), *praxis* is 'history-making action'.

A key aspect of this action is dialogue. Working together with consciousness, action involves the 'active exploration of the personal, experiential meaning of abstract concepts through dialogue among equals' (Kolb, 1984, p. 16). The concept of dialogue is related to the practice of intentional listening (Hoveid & Finne, 2015), which is a key aspect of what it means to be *responsible*, as will be outlined below.

#### **4.2.3 Responsibility / being responsible**

In a friendship, the common purposes arise from the care and delight in each other. If you care for someone you want to do something for them and with them, and the mutuality of those intentions gives rise to the practical ground of its shared reality (Fielding & Moss, 2011, p. 50).

Being *responsible* is to engage in practice that is relational, and founded on a sense of community. The root of the word 'responsible' is to listen and to answer (Moran, 1996, p. 59) As Moran (1996) points out, the English word is in fact derived from the French *repondre* and Latin *respondeo*, whilst the German equivalent *verantwortlich* is similar to the etymology of the English 'answer'. With this in mind, Moran states that the image of being responsible in European languages is generally the same, namely, 'an address having been made, there is a return or answer' (Moran, 1996, p. 59). This root meaning is highly relevant to the principal of responsibility and the attribute of being responsible in my framework. Indeed, it parallels the reciprocity and *response* in collaborative inquiry that emerged from my data as being vital to the act of listening. As will be indicated in the next chapters, it was the *action* or the response to students' contributions that gave the listening its power, and, as a consequence of this, the students felt an increasing sense of engagement, empowerment and meaning to their participation in the act of inquiry.

Hence, the principal of *responsibility* is about listening; it is an act of reciprocity and 'mutual affection and care for one another' (Fielding & Moss, 2011, p. 48). *Responsible* practice is a 'person-centred' education (Fielding, 2011; Fielding & Moss, 2011) that is about the relationship between person and community. This 'personalism' (Fielding & Moss, 2011) is in stark contrast to 'personalisation', which, whilst seeming to be about individual persons being at the heart of education is, 'in most cases and in ultimate intention, another articulation of market-led individualism' (Fielding & Moss, 2011, p. 48). As (Macmurray, 1961) phrases it, the 'unit of personal is not the 'I', but the 'You and I' (p. 61). Within responsible practice, a commitment to voice therefore becomes unavoidable.

*Responsibility* is at once an act in the present, whilst also being future-oriented (Richardson, 1999). In its present, relational form, it is about acknowledging others (5.1) in their individuality and alterity (Irigaray, 2001; Levinas, 1969) and, driven by the act of caring, one listens for the intentionality of the other (Hoveid & Finne, 2015). Such a *responsible* practice allows for traditional power relations to be shifted and space is created for active listening. Any process of empowerment addresses issues of cultural difference (Weiler, 1994) and ‘complex realities’ (Stevenson, 2012) rather than essentialising subjectivities. In its forward-looking sense (Richardson, 1999), responsibility is about moral responsibility that addresses concerns and, being related to consciousness and experimentation, it is about the ‘authorization of some kind to depart from stated rules in order to serve those concerns’ (Richardson, 1999, p. 222).

A *responsible* practitioner therefore listens to students and facilitates their voices being heard, guiding them in the process by being open, honest and flexible. A *responsible* school leadership team listens to the voices of teachers and *responsible* students listen to each other. *Responsibility* is also about respect, mutual understanding and an appreciation of individual subjectivities and perspectives; it is a two-way, reciprocal process.

The act of responding through listening and acknowledgement does not however mean that there is always a moral obligation to act. Our *responsibility* is ‘embodied in response to ourselves in a context of intersubjective change’ (Moran, 1996, p. 72) and our critical reflection, or our ‘discriminating intelligence’ (Moran, 1996, p.72) allows us to determine to what extent of ourselves we listen with. We have our own standards that we admit to from within our own self-understanding (Blackburn, 2001) but, through respectful and reasonable dialogue with others, we can learn to ‘take up the

reasons of others and make them their own' (Blackburn, 2001, p. 132), developing a concern for humanity.

A sense of *social* responsibility is not something that simply comes with being human. We learn to understand what matters through critically reflecting on matters of concern, through becoming *conscious* about them, and through a collaborative process of *action*. Social responsibility in this sense is therefore linked to both of these other principles in that it is an orientation towards the world that comes about through the practice of consciousness and action. As with the other principles, it is part of a pedagogy where practice is influenced by values, and where values are developed through practice.

#### **4.2.4 Experimentation / being experimental**

*Experimentation* is when teachers and students, as inquirers in the act of research, are willing to think differently, to take risks and to try out new ways of doing things. It is about a 'venture into the not yet known, and not to be bound by the given, the familiar, the norm' (Fielding & Moss, 2011, p.44). It is also about a willingness to be resilient in the face of the consequences of our actions. As opposed to simply experiencing something *experimentation* 'expresses the attitude of somebody who intentionally searches for something with curiosity' (Freire, 1976). This *experimental* attitude allows us to go beyond the stage of a spontaneous consciousness of reality, simply by being a human in the world, to a critical stage, where we search for deeper knowledge (Freire, 1976; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015).

*Experimentation* is linked to risk-taking and being brave in our pedagogy. I will begin with the concept of 'risk-taking' and consider how I see *experimentation* to be slightly different. There is a current prevailing discourse of 'risk-taking' within international



education, which I am sure is just as common outside of this field, however, I will refer to what I know. Being a 'risk-taker' is one of the IB Learner Profile attributes (IBO, 2013). Worded as if the students are speaking, risk-takers;

*approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change (IBO, 2013)*

This sounds promising. However' in reality, 'risk-taking' is too often linked to the idea of schools developing 'leadership development and training' for students (Andain & Murphy, 2013, p. 175). Whilst students should feel 'supported in taking risks in their learning' (Andain & Murphy, 2013, pp. 174-175), the examples of such learning or 'risk-taking' situations often include activities such as adventurous outdoor pursuits. There is no mention of the kind of *critical thinking* that would be risk taking. There is no mention of leadership beyond these 'outdoor' confidence-building skills. This is not enough. I am tired of hearing about 'risk-taking' as the kind of physical challenges that involve jumping off or climbing up, cliffs. I am tired of talking about students being taken out of their 'comfort zones' by hanging off a zip wire over a gorge somewhere. 'Working independently and cooperatively' as in the learner profile (IBO, 2013) should be about thinking together, talking and listening together, acting together, learning together. This 'risk-taking' should involve a learning process that is dialogic, that pushes boundaries and that may, ultimately, uncover some 'unwelcome truths' (Kemmis, 2006; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2015) about oneself, one's relation to others, or about the institutions in which we find ourselves. Paired together with a sense of *responsibility* however, this *experimentation* becomes less of a 'risk-taking' endeavor, and more of a collective pursuit of transformation.

*Experimentation* is, as I mentioned, also about being brave. We have to be willing to put ourselves up for scrutiny, to open ourselves up to both critical self-reflection and to critique from others. If this critique is also complimented by *responsible* practice, then there can be no danger of it being damaging or harmful. The two principles compliment and interact with each other to ensure a practice that is ethical.

In having outlined this framework for a 'Pedagogy of CARE', I hope that it helps the presentation of my data that follows, and that the themes that emerged can clearly be related to these key principles and attributes. In the act of inquiry, I was aiming at embodying and nurturing certain attributes that were based on my beliefs and values, but what they were specifically only became clear to me in the process of data analysis, as I explained in chapter three (3.6). All principles and attributes were all present in some way in each metaphorical 'cog wheel' of the overall inquiry (3.7), and as the inquiry process gathered momentum, they all shifted gear slightly and took on new significance.

## 5 Chapter 5: The 'core' momentum: driving the inquiry 'machine'

*Only dialogue, which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking' (Freire, 1970, p. 73)*

This chapter considers how Team Change Makers worked together as a group of researchers engaged in a pedagogy of critical practice in a Freirean sense; a praxis that involved a methodology of *dialogue* and *problem-posing*. The chapter is divided up into two sections that present data relating to these two areas separately. As introduced in chapter three, the data in this chapter refers only to the inquiry process that happened within the conceptual collaborative learning space of the Team Change Makers (TCM) group, in what the students identified as a phase called 'research sessions' (Figure 23). Data that refers to collaborative experiences had with other members of the school community follow in subsequent chapters.

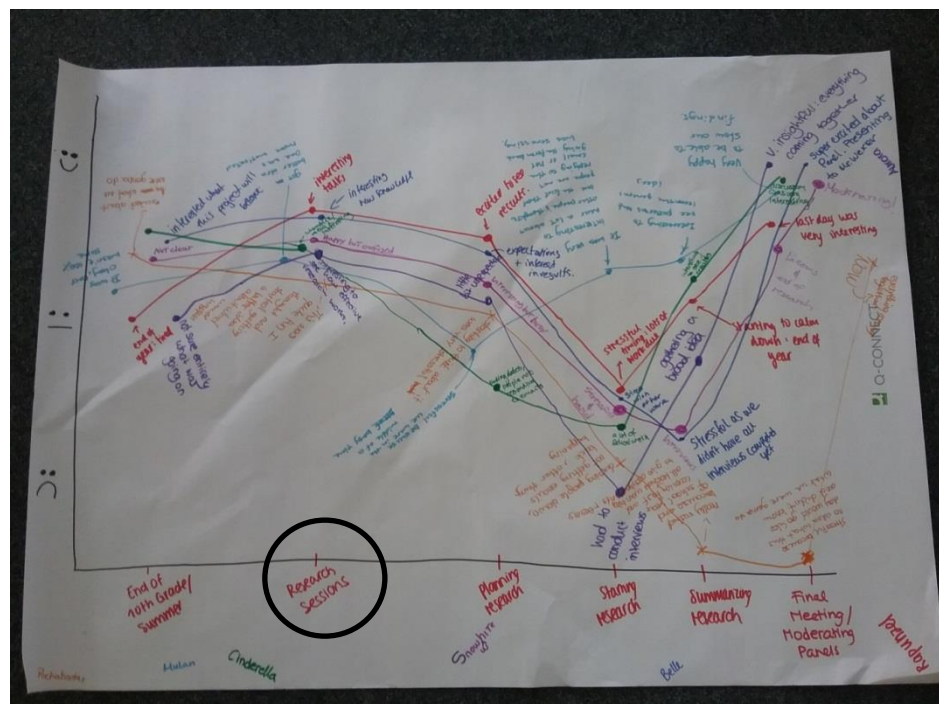


Figure 23: 'Research Sessions' phase of inquiry

The students' own fortune line (Wall, 2017) reflection on the whole year of inquiry, (Figure 23), shows where in the year the TCM collaborative 'research sessions' happened. The line that appears on the fortune line diagram indicates that this was a time that the students found to be 'interesting' and their overall mood here was a 'satisfied' one, indicated by the smiley faces that they chose to use along the vertical axis. Table 5 shows the research questions that drove the cycles of inquiry within this phase.

	<b>My research questions (PRQ)</b>	<b>Student questions (TCMRQ)</b>
	PRQ1: How can I be a risk taker and provoke critical thinking?	TCMRQ1: How can we think critically about our own situation and challenge our assumptions?
Cycle 2	PRQ2: How can we problematise service learning?	TCMRQ2: What is service learning and are we doing it right?
Cycle 3	PRQ3: How can we practise dialogue?	TCMRQ3: What does it mean to be privileged and what implications does this have for our service learning relationships?

*Table 5: Research questions in phase 2 of inquiry*

As can be seen from my (practitioner) research questions, I was concerned with engaging in a practice that could be seen to be 'risky', and I associated this with provoking critical thinking amongst the students. The intention was to problematise service learning so that we could discuss implications for our own, in-school service learning practice, and I hoped to do this through a method of small-group discussions within our Team Change Maker group.

The theme of *power* is present throughout the whole inquiry; indeed, data from every phase involved the issue of power in one way or another. In this phase of inquiry however, power was not explicitly discussed as a concept, rather, we situated ourselves in relation to others in the communities that we worked with in our international service learning 'PDW' projects and in doing so, students did begin to uncover, deconstruct and address their 'White privilege' (Larsen, 2016; Leonardo, 2004) as international school students. They then also began to consider the implications for our school practice and individual behaviours that came along with this. As a practitioner, I was intent on posing problems within the group in order to provoke an increasing critical consciousness, (Freire, 1970, 1976) and our collaborative (TCM) research questions were a reflection of this aim. The students were aware that this was our focus at this stage, even if I did not discuss the issue of 'power' explicitly here with them.

The degree of participation at this phase of the inquiry could be seen as 'adult initiated' (Figure 24) ,as I was the one deciding when we should meet and what the focus of our group discussions would be, even though we did make decisions together about what our collaborative (TCM) research questions would be. Students were however also given the flexibility to choose how they presented their thoughts, for example they could brainstorm on paper or on their laptops or they could use their research journals or share their thoughts with me through Google classroom. In this phase, students were not yet however taking control of their learning; their agency was limited as the critical thinking was being nurtured by me, and I was the one provoking the questioning rather than them being at a stage where they were posing critical questions independently. This is why students' participation could not yet be seen as being 'child-initiated' as in the higher rungs of the ladder (Figure 24). As the data chosen for

this chapter shows however, although the students were not initiating our discussions, their critical thinking was beginning.

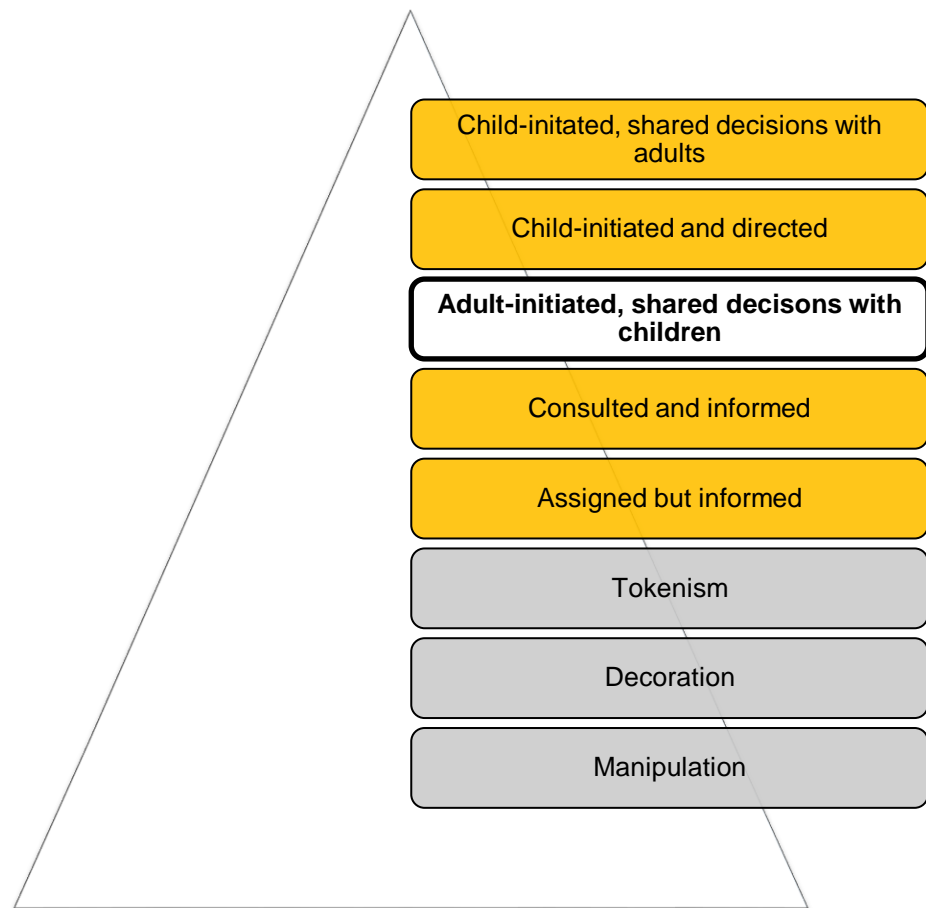


Figure 24: Degree of student participation in phase 2 of the inquiry

This chapter therefore presents the phase of inquiry that saw the beginning of my experimentation with a collaborative teacher-student practice that was firstly influenced by the Freirean sense of *dialogue*, where people work *with* each other to come to understandings, rather than one person imposing something upon another in a 'banking' concept of education (Freire, 1970). Creating space for dialogue was what I considered to be a practice grounded in the principle of responsibility. With a commitment to social justice, the *responsible* element was a methodology of dialogue, where we created knowledge as teacher and students together. At the same time, this chapter outlines how

the creation of the TCM 'safe space' allowed us to work at the same time in more risky territory ,or in a 'brave space' (Cook-Sather, 2016). Positioning myself as an ethical teacher-researcher, I was aiming to uncover 'unwelcome truths' (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2015) or 'unwelcome and uncomfortable news' (Kemmis, 2006) about our context that could potentially lead to personal and social change. In being more 'risky' through exploring positionality and subjectivity, I hoped that students would be able to engage in dialogue in a personal and open way with each other and with me.

We did this however only within our small TCM group in this phase; critical thinking on a larger, whole-school level came later. With service learning as the focus to this critical thinking, *critical* service learning pedagogy, as outlined in chapter two, was therefore a theoretical backdrop to my methodology of dialogue and problem-posing.

The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section considers our group discussions, and how working as a small team of inquirers that valued the concept of *dialogue* enabled different voices to be heard. Starting from an experimental stance of practitioner inquiry, a safe space was able to be built up in order to pave the way for critical thinking. The second section then goes on to present this critical thinking and to discuss the implications for our practice that emerged from the data.

In the first section of this chapter, the themes that emerged from the data are presented under a title that gives a sense of collective student voice; the intention of this is to hear what the students felt and experienced, rather than reading the themes in a way that seems to come from my own perspective only. Whilst I have conducted the data analysis without the students and whilst it could be argued that in this way the students remain 'passive'

recipients of research,(Gillett-Swan & Sargeant, 2018) my ‘shared’ presentation of the themes is an intended effort to bridge that obvious participatory gap. As the students were in grade 12 during my data analysis, and as I was absent from school during that time taking a sabbatical year, it was impossible to involve the TCM students in this process. I did share some drafts of my chapters with them, but in the middle of their exams, they did not come forward with any extra amendments to what I had written. The second section of the chapter presents the students’ engagement in critical thinking hence the findings are presented under a heading in the form of a question. These questions are intended to capture the process of questioning and critical reflection that the students were going through in some of the TCM group discussions that we had in this phase of the research project. The questions have been written by me after the data analysis process and at the time of making decisions about how to organise the themes within each data presentation chapter.

As a final introductory point, I should mention the sources of data used in this chapter and how I identify them, as this method continues in subsequent chapters. Table 6 shows the relevant data items and the corresponding codes that I used on Google drive during the data analysis process. This overview is intended to facilitate recognition of who was speaking when and in what methodological context.

<b>Data code</b>	<b>Data item description</b>
L1INT1/ L1INT2	Level 1 (me/TCM student), Interview 1 or 2 (INT1 or INT2)
L1GD6 /8	TCM group discussions 6 / 8
CI	CI (TCM pseudonym added to the end of an item, Cinderella in this example)

*Table 6: Data codes used in chapter 5*



## 5.1 TCM group discussions: experimenting together

As a group, our Team Change Maker identity had been established at the start of the year by exploring and agreeing on certain ways of behaviour that we would strive to adhere to. We had agreed on the fact that our research journey was going to be an unknown process and that we were going to work together along the way. In order to do this, we explored what it would mean to behave *ethically* as researchers. After consulting BERA's Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (BERA, 2011) and a 'Students as Researchers Toolkit' (SpeakUp, 2013), notes were made together on a Google document, and various ethical issues were discussed, such as voluntary informed consent, and how a fundamental principal was to ensure that nobody came to any harm. On the basis of this, together we drew up some 'rules of engagement' that we would all agree to keep in mind and make efforts to adhere to. We each had our own copy of this document that we could file as we wished. Figure 25 shows what we agreed.

### ESTABLISHED VALUES BETWEEN TEACHER-RESEARCHER/STUDENT RESEARCHERS

- Be clear in communicating the purpose and nature of the research (to each other / to others)
- Anonymous participation
- Right to withdraw without judgement
- Stay neutral and unbiased
- Don't judge others
- Respect others' perspectives
- Be considerate about practicalities
- Be realistic
- Be flexible and ready to adapt
- Treat everyone equally



Figure 25: TCM 'rules of engagement'

The 'Disney Princess' images were also on the document, to remind us of our pseudonyms, and again, to reinforce the idea that we were a group. As mentioned in chapter three (3.2), these may not have been symbols of women's empowerment, and perhaps not wholly appropriate to the nature of this inquiry, however, they reflected student choice and some kind of group identity. These 'rules of engagement' (Figure 25) were the first steps towards establishing an open, respectful working relationship needed for our collaborative inquiry that was based on ethical behaviours; the data presented in this section shows how we tried to adhere to them in this phase of critical inquiry in which we engaged, and how this fit into a methodology based on *dialogue* in a Freirean sense.

### **5.1.1 We communicated with each other**

Democratic partnership and voice is about inclusion and listening (Wall, 2018b) and in our 'rules of engagement' (Figure 25), we recognised that by agreeing that we would try to respect other people's perspectives and be non-judgemental and non-biased. As Wall (2018b) states, 'without listening there is no voice', so our first step in our inquiry was to create an environment where we learnt to be active listeners. Cinderella recognised that the group dynamics worked due to the different types of personalities that existed within it,

*I think we're a really good group, because we have some very loud people, and some very quiet people  
(L1INT1CI)*

and Pocahontas saw this too;

*I think it's really nice because we have some definitely very outspoken people and then some people that are maybe not so much (L1INT1PO)*

More importantly however, was not simply this recognition, but that some of the girls expressed their sensitivity to the fact that there may have been voices that were not heard as much, and that there may have been views that we ended up not taking into account. In her first individual interview, after we had worked for a few months as TCM in our 'research sessions', Pocahontas mentions this issue directly, and in relation to one of her peers specifically;

*I think the dynamic is pretty good, but I just think we could try a little more maybe to incorporate the one person who's a little more shy, because I'm sure she has some great ideas, we just don't get to hear them*  
(L1INT1PO)

She recognised that the dominant behaviour of the louder and more confident girls may have meant that the shier girl (in this case she meant Mulan, who also had less of a command of English than the others), may have been deprived of her voice at times; in our fast-moving conversations, we may have been too easily falling into the trap of listening to the most obvious voices (Fielding, 2004), which is something that goes against the idea of involving all students (Wisby, 2011). In her second interview at the end of the year, Pocahontas came back to this concern;

*I think there are definitely some people's opinions that we might not have heard as much, and they could have brought valid things* (L1INT2PO)

In her interview after the phase of our research sessions, Cinderella recognised some of her peers' efforts to be inclusive;

*I think, but then some people who try to like, incorporate everyone, and I think that works really well actually*  
(L1INT1CI)

She may have tried to be considerate herself too, but the fact that she does not directly say this, but rather recognises that others

may have been sensitive to doing so, tells me that she was able to validate the positive efforts of others to think about whether everyone was having an equal say within the group. Those that were able to actively facilitate listening were behaving in more of an ethically appropriate way in her mind. Mulan, the perceived and self-confessed 'shier' member of the group, and the object of Pocahontas' concern, did in fact mention how she felt that she was respected as a group member;

*as you know I don't really talk in the group in the discussions but, yeah when we're discussing as a group, I think the other students are respecting my idea even though it might not be on the topic or it might not be a good idea (L1INT2MU)*

Mulan did feel validated and listened to by her peers when she did speak, even though her contributions may not have been as frequent. Perhaps the efforts of her peers to be mindful of respecting her, as in Pocahontas' concern, allowed for this to happen. Other girls also talked about how the group were respectful of each other's contributions, and for some, this was a new way of working. Rapunzel, used to being dominant and a natural 'leader' within a group setting, talked about how she enjoyed the experience of working in a group where the leadership was distributed amongst different people;

*So I think I've learnt about working in a group. Like, I feel like there's not really any leader, but everybody kind of contributes equally most of the time, so I think that that's kind of refreshing, cos if I work in groups at school, usually there's just one person who takes control and does most of the work, whereas with this everybody just sits and talks and really likes to talk, so I think like that setting is good (L1INT1RZ)*

The working space that was created through our small group allowed different students can take on leadership positions, thus creating more of a democratic process (Giroux & Penna, 1988).

Belle also talked about the shared leadership amongst the members of the group;

*when people feel like they have a really valuable experience, they might step up, so I think it's really equally balanced about how, taking on leadership roles (L1INT1BE)*

Giroux & Penna (1988) suggest that such roles would traditionally be reserved for the teacher alone, so, in allowing for different leaders to emerge, there could be seen to have been a diffusion of power and the breaking down of rigid, hierarchical roles and rules. Through listening to one another and making efforts to respect each other's contributions, we were engaging in dialogue. Snow White summarised this feeling thus;

*it was nice to kind of like, be able to, I don't really know how to say this, but, to communicate (L1INT1SW)*

Our way of working had been about *communication*. This, to me, is an important element of what it means to collaborate. As will be seen as the narrative moves through the next chapters, this student-teacher communication does involve listening and being heard; however, it is the *action* or the response to students' contributions that gives the listening its power, and that allows the students to feel an increasing sense of engagement and purpose to their participation. Within a social justice framework however, it is action, together with critical reflection (Freire, 1970) that can lead to transformation; listening alone, whilst vital, is not enough.

### **5.1.2 As learners we were equal**

In my democratic imaginings about partnership and dialogue, I wondered whether, within TCM, there could have ever been talk of me, as a teacher, being equal to the students. Was I able to

relinquish my already existing power in my role as a teacher and be considered as their equal? As I questioned the students about this in their final interview (L1INT2) at the end of the year, the TCM girls were, rightly, not so convinced about this idea; they luckily did not fall into the fanciful trap of imagining that our relationship could ever be this way. Their comments showed that they were able to be realistic and honest about our group power dynamics, and that I had to check myself before being too naïve in viewing our inquiry as an empowering process (Chadderton, 2011). As Belle commented;

*I feel like we ... always in the back of our heads or minds, we have you as a teacher or you as our supervisor so I don't think it's ever really, I don't think there's a possibility for us ever to really be equal, just in the fact that you are teacher you are the CAS advisor and everything*  
(L1INT2BE)

She was aware of the existing hierarchy between teachers and students in schools in general and, in the context of our collaborative inquiry, she could see that I was always going to have more power than the students in the team as I was, after all, coordinator of the very 'CAS' programme for which they were completing their project. Had this not been my role, I might have had more of a chance at seeming less invested in her eyes, and in this way, I may have been perceived as more of a disinterested participant, rather than one with vested interests in 'meaningful' CAS projects. Pocahontas also saw quite clearly through any potential imaginings of equality between me and the students; she noted in her end-of year interview;

*I think that the power has definitely been more towards you since this is your studies, or your project so with regards to that because you obviously have to follow some sort of method, methodology with us... so, it wasn't us that decided what we, we were doing if that makes sense?* (L1INT2PO)

The fact that this inquiry was part of an academic award for me meant for Pocahontas that we were never going to be equal; I was ultimately benefitting from the collaboration in a way much different to her. Indeed, it reminded me of the fact that the idea of teachers and students being wholly equal with one another is a false assumption, as the relationship between us was not an entirely 'horizontal' one to begin with (Au, 2009). Belle also saw that we could not consider ourselves as being equal;

*Well in a way like I don't mind the relationship we have like this, it's not completely equal because you're the teacher (L1INT2BE)*

The fact that I was a 'teacher' meant to her that there were definite established roles that could not be changed; the 'regulative discourse' (Bernstein, 2000) and the hidden curriculum (Apple, 1995) of our school and school culture was too embedded into her expectations. I appreciated however the fact that these girls were able to recognise and express this issue of our power imbalance and it reminded me of the importance of the need to take a more complex view of power and empowerment in my romanticised imaginings of this or any student voice project (Chadderton, 2011). At the end of the year, as opposed to at the beginning of our journey, we were openly discussing and addressing the power dynamics in our context, which is an important element of student voice work (Wall, 2018b); without addressing this, student voice work could be critiqued as being patronising and simplistic (Kvale, 2006). Pocahontas' level of critical reflection was much more preferable than having heard her say that she believed that we were equals; it ties in well with the fact that these 'claims' to relinquished power on the part of the teacher should not be taken at face value and we should not be caught in the trap of believing that we are 'equal' to students and that power relations are not always shifting (Chadderton, 2011; Wall, 2018b).

Despite these recognitions, what *did* however seem to disrupt the power imbalance somewhat and contribute to the sense of us being more equal, was the fact that we were all *learners* in our inquiry; through our dialogic journey, there was a perceived 'reconciliation of the poles of contradiction' (Freire, 1970, p.53) so that our discourse meant that we were both 'simultaneously teachers *and* students' (Freire, 1970, p. 53). Belle appreciated the non-judgemental nature of our relationship, which stood in contrast to the fact that I was always going to be the 'teacher';

*...but I feel like I'm open, I can say many things without being having to be worried about whether it reflects on me as a student (L1INT2BE)*

Despite the fact that I naturally had more power in her eyes, the fact that she felt free to express herself with me, without feeling that this would 'disrupt' our relationship, meant that there was an element of solidarity rather than hierarchy between us.

Pocahontas also expressed the idea that our working relationship had been more 'free' than in a usual student-teacher relationship, due to the fact that I was on a learning journey with the TCM; I did not possess any knowledge that I was 'delivering' to the girls, rather I was discovering and questioning alongside them;

*I think you said you didn't have a clear idea of, like you still don't know now what your clear idea is and I guess it gives us more freedom than we would have if this had been a teacher saying alright this is what we're going to do, I want to find this out, you know we're going to do this by doing that, so I think there's definitely more common ground in our situation than if you were an independent researcher or a teacher that had, just a teacher (L1INT2PO)*

The fact that I was a learner and a co-inquirer meant that I had somehow been a 'different' kind of teacher than what would be expected in her view. My open admission at the start and throughout the inquiry that it was an ever-spiralling whirlwind of a



process, as described in chapter three, meant for Pocahontas that we had more 'common ground'. Her mention of an 'independent researcher' here is also noteworthy; a more distanced researcher would have also had some kind of fixed agenda in her opinion. This has implications for the argument that 'in-house' practitioners are indeed in a unique position to produce knowledge in a more democratic and relational way. Aurora also recognised that our co-inquiry gave us something in common;

*I think the sense that our, we, both our finding things out at the same time, would be the common ground, that we're both learning, under different circumstances, but we're both learning (L1INT2AU)*

Despite the fact that I was somehow a different kind of learner, the fact that we were discovering things together was what made us more similar to each other, and the traditional teacher-student hierarchy shifted in some way. This sense of achieving something *together* meant for Mulan that, whilst I was still seen as a teacher for her, she was able to feel like she was moving more in my direction and feeling less like she was a student in the traditional, 'inferior' sense;

*Well you're the teacher so it was kind of feeling that you are the teacher but I didn't see myself as a student like one of the students but as a.... I don't know like, we are kind of working together as a team and we are kind of like in between a teacher and student (L1INT2MU)*

Perceiving us as a 'team' with a shared purpose was something that gave us a sense of solidarity. This feeling began here, in our TCM group, before it expanded to include other members of the school community. Indeed, in order to capture student voice, the first step should be to create the appropriate conditions in which the students feel 'confident, safe and valued' (Campbell, 2011, p. 271) enough to do so. Rather than simply advocating for a certain type of ethical practice, the key was to *practise* it myself; I wanted

to show consistency between what I preached and what I practised (Lipman, Sharp, & Oscanyan, 1980) so that students could learn what it looked like to engage in democratic participation.

Through our dialogue, we were able to create, re-work and re-create a new relationship as learners (Cook-Sather, 2002; Cook-Sather, 2017; Freire, 1970) and within this relationship, there was a social process of 'active reflection in relation to other human beings' (Au, 2009, pp. 222-223), and hence, I was not "depositing" ideas into my students from a position of power, but learning alongside them (Au, 2009). Through learning together in our group dialogue, it could be seen that I had given the students 'an opportunity to serve an apprenticeship in teaching' (Giroux & Penna, 1988, p.39); I had been a *responsible* practitioner. Having discussed one element of *praxis* in a Freirean sense (Freire, 1970), namely dialogue, I now extend this to bring in the element of critical thinking, or 'critical consciousness' (Freire, 1970); the raising of consciousness through a dynamic process of reflection and action upon being and acting in the world. As outlined in chapter two, our particular context for critical reflection was service learning. This *conscious* practice interacts with the responsible practice as described above.

## **5.2 Problem-posing: critical thinking and raising consciousness**

*It is incredibly unfair for you to impose yourselves on a village where you are so linguistically deaf and dumb that you don't even understand what you are doing, or what people think of you. And it is profoundly damaging to yourselves when you define something that you want to do as 'good', a 'sacrifice' and 'help' (Illich, 1968)*

In his speech to the Conference on InterAmerican Student Projects (CIASP) in Cuernavaca, Mexico, Ivan Illich (1968) was

expressing his distaste of students' desires to act as 'helpers' to other communities. As discussed in chapter two (2.2), our school, as with many international schools, believed in this idea of 'helping' others. Being altruistic surely cannot be a negative human attribute in itself, however, what does this mean in terms of the power relationships that this creates and potentially upholds? With this in the back of my mind, but making an effort not to influence free thinking, I explored the concept of power with TCM. This section of the chapter therefore outlines how I endeavoured to raise the consciousness of the students through engaging them students in an 'ethical relationality'(Bruce, 2016) towards the Other. Through problematising their own subjectivities as international students and what implications their inherent 'privilege' could have, the TCM girls were beginning to form understandings about what an ethical relationship in terms of service learning could look like, and, in turn, what ethical service learning *practice* could be. This practice of 'raising consciousness' was intended to be within the realm of 'critical pedagogy', an expression originally coined by Freire to denote an educational philosophy grounded in neo-Marxist critical theory (Hanan, 2018). In such a context, 'pedagogy' is 'critical' in that it refers to the 'cultivation of a consciousness appropriately attuned to problems associated with power and to the fostering of practices suited to addressing those problems to the extent possible' (Hanan, 2018, p. 903). Service learning that is 'critical' is in effect critical pedagogy in action, and this was the kind of service learning that I was hoping for in the long-run at our school. The 'Other' is understood as either the communities that we 'served' or the local Swiss community beyond the boundaries of the school. Bruce (2016) uses the term 'Other' to describe 'one who is radically different to oneself', and I also use this meaning. In critiquing ourselves in relation to the Other, we 'reverse the gaze' and reflect upon our own subjectivities (Bruce, 2016). This approach towards service learning is a postcritical approach that is 'not about doing,

helping or serving; it is deeply relational' (Bruce, 2016). It is about 'being taught by the Other' (Biesta, 2013) rather than 'learning from the Other' and it involves a pedagogy of interruption (Biesta, 2013) based on an ethical responsibility towards the Other. Such an approach is a move towards a critical service learning pedagogy (Doerr, 2011), where 'the positionality of students, faculty and community are critically examined' (Doerr, 2011, p. 78).

The first cycle of inquiry in this phase of the research project was aimed at exploring how students saw themselves in relation to other communities. This cycle was a first step for the TCM girls to consider their own positionality and to uncover and share something of their identities in terms of being students at an international school in Switzerland. Whilst the TCM girls were all in the same grade studying for the IB Diploma, they all had unique contexts and backgrounds, and exploring this question together was intended to be a chance for them to understand something about themselves as well as to consider this understanding in light of others' understandings in addition. Recognising each other as having 'multiple subjectivities and contextual realities' (Jackson, 2003, p. 697) meant that we were also able to move away from the idea that we all had unified experiences that could be essentialised in the name of 'authentic voice' (Andreotti, 2010) or through belonging to a specific 'culture' (Holliday, 2013; 2011); in this case, the culture of our international school.

As can be seen from the collaborative research questions (Table 5, p.119), the second cycle of inquiry was then an attempt to explore the notion of privilege within our international school context and to consider the implications that this had for us in our service learning relationships.

### 5.2.1 Does going to an international school make us different?

In exploring how we saw ourselves in relation to other communities, the fact that we were members of an *international* school community seemed to make a difference. For Snow White, this was hinted at in the group discussion (L1GD8) that we had that focused on the concept of our privilege. She commented;

*the fact that we, you know go to these places and the, I mean (our school) is still like a private school, an international private school, and so I feel like there will always be..(L1GD8SW)*

She did not finish her comment, but it was within the context of us talking about how other communities may perceive us when we turned up as a group abroad and offer our 'help'. The fact that our school was a 'private' school may automatically have signified wealth and may have made us distinct in many ways from the communities that we visited. In another group discussion, the theme of us being 'different' was apparent. In this group session, students drew visual depictions of how they saw themselves in relation to other communities. Rather than simply exploring how the student researchers felt within a group discussion (L1GD6), I had made the decision to use a drawing based visual method with them so that we could work together through an activity that was open (Dockett & Perry, 2011) and participatory in the sense that it was not manipulated by the researcher (Wall, 2017). I felt that the topic of inquiry lent itself well to drawing, and the process of 'doing something' rather than just talking in response to a researcher, would allow the girls to feel connected to the research process and it would create 'a sematic memory of participating in the process' (Dean, 2015).

Rather than collecting verbatim data from this discussion through a recording, I summarised the key points and then subsequently shared this in a document with the girls on our Google classroom space. I felt that as we were spending a full hour together, and our discussion involved drawings, it would be more appropriate to try to focus on the images themselves as the data item. A subsequent summary shared with them however ensured that the girls were happy with how I had captured their images and that they knew that my own notes would be representing their thoughts as accurately as possible. This was an intention on my part to address the ethical implication of collecting data with students and to allow for an accurate representation of their voices (Bragg, 2010; Wisby, 2011). Realising and recognising at the time that there were implications of such an open activity when it came to analysis and interpretation (Wall, 2017), the summary and subsequent sharing was an example of a feedback loop (Baumfield, Hall & Wall, 2013) as mentioned in chapter three, or a chance to allow the students' voices to become more authentic (Cook, 2011). As each girl spoke separately and explained her drawing, I was in a position to take notes at the same time without others talking over what they said.

As indicated by the question heading this section, a prominent theme that emerged from the students' drawings was the idea that it was our international school context that made us different within our local Swiss surroundings and within our relationships with communities internationally. The girls were aware of their own prejudices in relation to Swiss peers of their own age, and they had all had experiences in the local community that had been of a judgemental, at times prejudiced or discriminatory nature, based on the fact that they were students from an international school rather than from a local one.

In one example drawing (Figure 26), Belle chose to divide her paper into two and to show the school in relation to other communities on one side, and herself in relation to communities on the other. She felt that there was a distinction between the two, as many of her interactions with other communities had been through the school, yet there were also others that were independent of this, for example her relationship with her country of birth (Germany), where she spent a lot of time growing up (Spain) and her country of residence for the past ten years (Switzerland). She felt that our school, although located in Switzerland, was very much an island that looked to connect beyond Swiss borders, rather than within them. As an international school student therefore, whilst being in an environment that has many 'international' influences in terms of the student body and the IB curriculum, one was still bound beyond the 'island' of the school to distant relationships with people in other countries. Belle's idea of dividing her understandings into the two categories as mentioned above was replicated by all other girls; they caught onto the idea and felt that it made sense to present their perspectives in this way.

These 'distant' relationships are, however, in the students' opinion, influenced by the fact that they come from an *international* school rather than any other type of school. Without being able to fully integrate themselves into the local environment, it was somehow easier for the students to establish long-distance connections. Indeed, in terms of our service learning practice, and in our general collaboration with other learning communities, this does have implications for us as an international school. I will return to this in the concluding chapters.

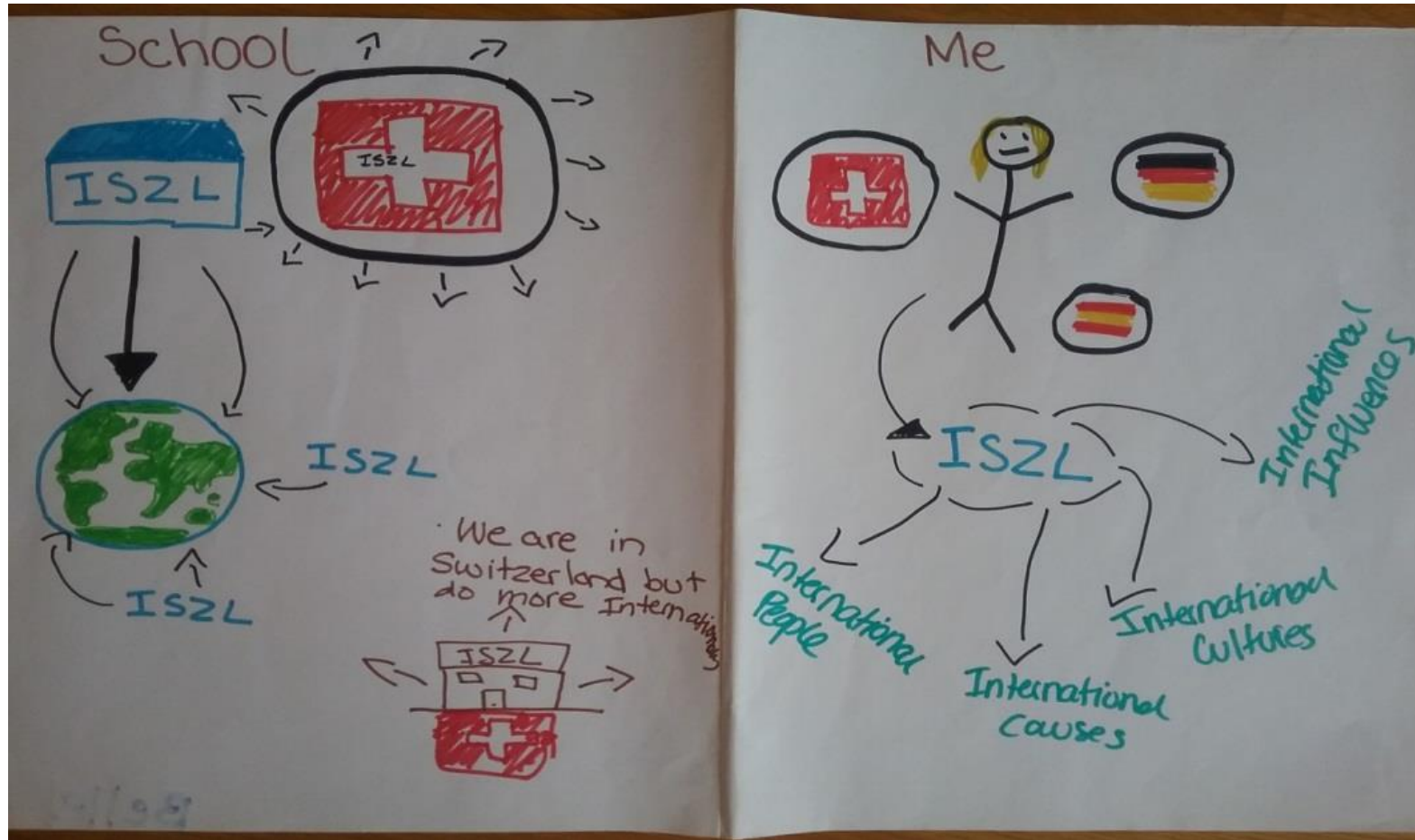


Figure 26: Belle's interpretation of herself in relation to other communities



### **5.2.2 What does our specific privilege look like?**

Before considering the implications of our privilege, I firstly present to you how the students perceived this notion from their own understandings and realities. The idea of ‘deconstructing’ privilege was inspired by Cousin (2006) who mentioned that one teacher in her department of Cultural Studies talked about how he got his students to ‘deconstruct their middle-classness as a starting point to understanding Otherness’ (Cousin, 2006, p. 139). As students at an international, fee-paying school, there was undoubtedly a certain social and economic status that was characteristic of all students; my interest was in whether the TCM would also come to this conclusion, and if so, on what basis this could be claimed. In one of our group discussions (L1GD8) in this phase of inquiry, the students firstly produced visual brainstorms of what they felt privilege meant to them, and then we began to talk about them as a group. The choice of visual representation was open to the girls, and what they produced ranged from bullet-pointed lists on the computer to colourful flow charts in a hand-written research journal. Figures 27 and 28 show two such examples.

Whilst there were a number of similar themes common to the students’ brainstorms, the most common idea was that it was somehow ‘money’ or ‘wealth’ that gave them certain opportunities that others might not have. Even as a teacher at an international school, I would not personally describe myself as ‘wealthy’ by any means, but in comparison to the kinds of communities that we expose the students to, this does seem to be such a glaringly obvious truth.

30 November 2016

**RAPUNZEL: What does it mean to be privileged?**

- Having access to all basic human rights: education, shelter, gender equality etc.
- Not having to worry about money
- Having a future which is promising
- Having love, friendship and family to support you
- Being happy with what you have
- Having the freedom to do what you want to with regards to everyday life as well as in your job and education
- Being safe: not having to worry about being harmed

Figure 27: Rapunzel's idea of 'privilege'

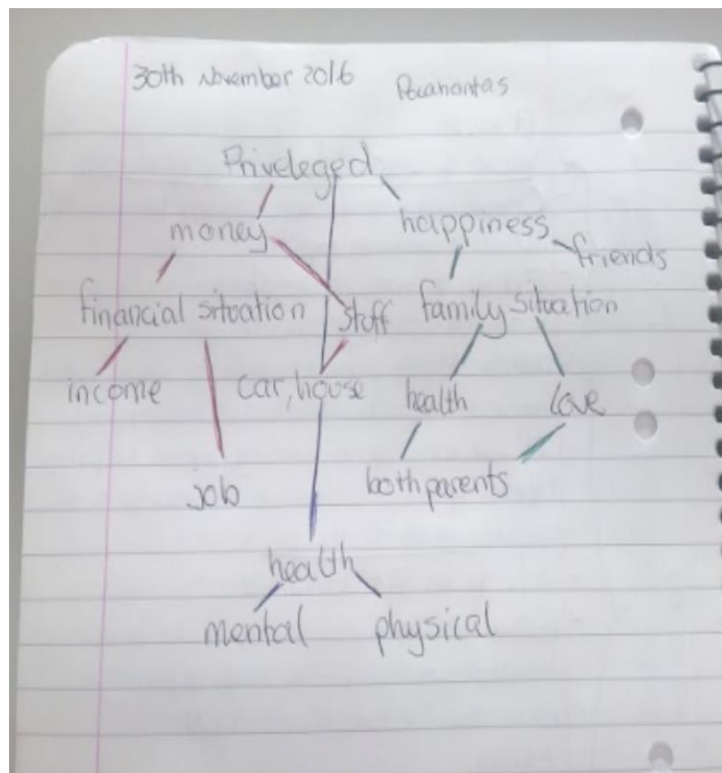


Figure 28: Pocahontas' idea of 'privilege'

Interestingly, the concept of privilege being relative came up in the discussion that followed the act of brainstorming.

### 5.2.3 Is privilege just a matter of perspective?

One section of the discussion (L1GD8) stood out to me in particular. As the girls had begun to share how they defined the concept of privilege, some of them became engaged in an exchange amongst themselves, without any intervention from me,

about how Others may perceive them and how their privilege probably means something quite different from how Others would define it. Part of this conversation (L1GD8) follows below;

- RZ: *I think maybe we consider ourselves privileged but maybe in like a rural village in let's say Kenya, it might be really privileged to have like a cool necklace or like a fishery or...*
- PO: *Maybe we just kind of look ridiculous...*
- RZ: *Yeah and maybe they think our material privilege...*
- PO: *..is like irrelevant*
- RZ: *Is.. strange, because to them it's more about friendships, family or whatever*

Whilst not wanting to claim that my presentation of this piece of data reflects what the girls actually meant, as it is only my own interpretation of it (Chadderton, 2011), I see this account as the girls being conscious that, for Others, the connection between wealth and privilege was either something completely alien to them, or something that may have caused these same Others to look down on them, or laugh at them. The girls were suggesting that other assets such as relationships may have been important. The mention of a 'cool necklace' or a 'fishery' still however suggested that material possessions were valuable; however, a necklace would not be something that would be considered to give someone privilege in the girls' world. These thoughts led the girls on to consider the fact that privilege is relative and dependent on the social context in which one lives. Snow White voiced her own questions to the group;

*How do we know when one is actually privileged? Is privilege considered the same around the world?*  
(L1GD8SW)

She was struggling with the idea that we could describe privilege as something fixed, and with those thoughts, she was engaging in a critical understanding of her own place in the world. Putting herself in relation to Others and their perceptions and values, she

was trying to name the differences, but also inequalities, that exist. Aurora wondered whether there were any 'criteria' for defining privilege;

*Does like the criteria change? Because I think that in some countries it's like amazing to have a house....*  
(L1GD8AU)

To Aurora, as a white, European girl visiting a fee-paying, international school in Switzerland, the existing norm was that one would of course live somewhere. By placing her reality in relation to Others' realities who would not have a permanent, physical home to speak of, she was engaging in the kind of 'ethical relationality' (Bruce, 2016) as mentioned at the start of this chapter. Cinderella brought in a further element of thought that was related to the link between wealth and privilege;

*But then also in contrast to that, if you'd see, if you go to like the richest families in Saudi Arabia or New York, I mean, they look at the way we live and might think we're not privileged because in comparison, I mean, I don't know everyone's financial situation, but I mean we're all financially stable...* (L1GD8CI)

Despite the fact that being 'financially stable' all made us a fairly homogenous group in terms of our privilege, there could always be room for others with more money to consider us less privileged in comparison. For the girls, money and financial stability were certainly aspects that made us privileged in comparison to many Others in different communities around the world, but then, even that should be considered to be just a matter of perspective.

#### **5.2.4 Should we be helping?**

A further issue that our thinking about privilege brought up was whether or not we should be 'helping' at all. Aurora posed the following question to the group;

*Should we be obliged to help the less privileged?*  
(L1GD8AU)

The underlining of the word 'obliged' emphasises how she stressed that word when she spoke. It was a pertinent question. She was wondering whether if one finds oneself in a position of comparative privilege, there was perhaps a moral obligation to somehow 'help' those who did not possess it. I know that I have felt like this; sensing the injustice of some people's struggles compared to the position in which I find myself in life, I have felt that there is an urgent need to do something about it. This inquiry is, after all, driven by the fact that I care about others and the injustices that I have seen. Aurora continued with this thought;

*Often, I was wondering if our privilege, like it's also expected to help those less privileged? I feel like when you're aware of the fact that you're privileged, I feel like, I don't know, people expect you to help those that are less privileged. (L1GD8AU)*

She brought up the idea that when we *know* that we are in a better position, we are more compelled to act in the name of others and in the name of injustice. This is where critical thinking and action link together. However, this action may not be self-motivated; rather, it could be something that is enforced upon us by an expectant community. If one has relative privilege and is not playing one's part, one could end up being made to feel guilty about it. In the quote at the start of this section, Illich (1968) told young people that they were damaging themselves by thinking that they needed to 'help' others, and that 'imposing' oneself on a community without understanding was in turn damaging to that same community. Without understanding what kind of help is needed, and just blindly turning up somewhere with only goodwill and a sense of wanting to 'do good', this does not help a community in the long-run (Cook, 2012; Martin, 2016; Taylor,

2012); it can engage us in an act of 'downward benevolence' (Butin, 2007).

In further moments of the same group discussion, the girls began to consider how they would feel if they were on the receiving end of the 'help' rather than being the 'givers'. They wondered whether it was right to simply presume that people *needed* the help. Without having a real means of sustained communication, or *dialogue*, with the communities that we visit, we were putting ourselves at risk of being unwanted imposters. Rapunzel introduced this idea by considering how they might feel if they were suddenly on the receiving end of help from 'richer' people;

*If the richest family in the world flew over here, each person had a private jet, and they came to us and they were like "Look, we're all the same, we've just come to help you" (in a patronising voice!), I don't know, like, how we would feel about that? (L1GD8RZ)*

The fact that the example 'givers' to her were the 'richest family in the world' shows that this must have been a similar 'privilege' comparison in her opinion as us as international students working with street children in Nepal or tribal communities in Tanzania. I stress the tone of her voice in parentheses in the one part of her quote, as she was deliberately using a voice so as to indicate that this kind of attitude would indeed be patronising. She was aware that the 'rich' family would be claiming to be equal as human beings, but that this would of course not be the case due to the huge difference in wealth. Pocahontas' immediate response was that such 'help' would be unwanted;

*I would feel like pretty offended, I'd be like "Ah-ah, we don't need your help!" (L1GD8PO)*

Being on the receiving end of help could make one feel inferior or patronised; in short, acting on others could become a

dehumanising act (Davis & Freire, 1981; Fanon, 2001; Freire, 1970; Stevenson, 2012). After general agreement on this issue of feeling potentially offended by such an offer of help, Belle came to the conclusion that perhaps the idea of 'help' was not always the right thing to do, and we were just 'inviting' ourselves rather than having been invited;

*Maybe some of these people, they don't want our help you know, maybe they just, I don't know, maybe they, they don't invite us over or something, we go there, thinking they need our help or they want our help and some people might be content with the way their lives are*  
(L1GD8BE)

She was considering the fact that we may just have been imposters in our wish to help and in our act of carrying out 'service learning' in order to fulfil our own desires; we were victims of the 'Too Bad, So Sad' syndrome (Taylor, 2012), wanting to 'feel good about feeling bad' (Simon, 2008). Without having named the term at the time, Belle was playing with the idea that we might have been 'White Saviours' (Bruce, 2016). The kinds of thinking that the students were going through was certainly in the vein of *critical* service learning as outlined in chapter two. In facilitating this kind of critical thinking about our own positionality and relationship to other communities, I had enabled TCM to engage in a pedagogy of critical consciousness (Freire, 1970) that would set the stage for any further consideration of our particular contextual service learning practice. Rapunzel brought the discussion to focus on our school in one of the final comments of our conversation;

*The school is trying to make students who want to help, but then, I don't know if it's always as effective as it could be*  
(L1GD8RZ)

Rapunzel's thought summed up the fact that the girls were beginning to think about whether our service learning practice at the school was as ethical as it should be, and this was a crucial

part of the kind of *conscious* pedagogy that I had been trying to encourage.

### 5.3 Key messages

In summary, the key messages of this chapter are twofold. Firstly, creating space for dialogue is an important part of *responsible* practice. Once this space has been established within a small group of inquirers who form the initial driving force or ‘momentum’ for a culture of collaborative inquiry, there is then room for problem-posing, or a process of *consciousness*. If we are going to work with students within a risky or a ‘brave’ space (Cook-Sather, 2016), and be *experimental* in our practice, then a ‘safe’ space also needs to be established. Within this safe space, there is room for exploring subjectivity, positioning oneself against others and understanding the ‘self’ as situated and located, ‘continually reconstructed in cultural-discursive, social and material-economic dimensions of interaction’ (Kemmis, 2008, p. 126).

Secondly, if our practitioner inquiry has a social justice orientation, where we strive towards change in the name of democratic participation, then as practitioners, we need to be brave enough to uncover ‘unwelcome truths’ (Kemmis, 2006; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015) in our schools, as well as with our students. By being ‘risky’ practitioners and not being bound by the norm (Fielding & Moss, 2011) we are *experimental* in our practice. When this practice is within the context of service learning, particularly international practice, or with groups of people whom we consider to be less ‘privileged’ than ourselves, then what is required is a process of self-reflexivity (Cook, 2012) that allows students to shift their thinking from ‘making a difference’ to ‘mutual learning’ (Andreotti, 2006). This ‘deeply relational’ (Bruce, 2016) approach to service learning can take us beyond paternalism (Taylor, 2012) and help us to focus on understanding rather than



just rushing to action in our wish to ‘make a difference’ (Tarc, 2012). Our process of ‘problem-posing’ as depicted in this second section of this chapter (5.2) was intended as a first step towards a future service learning practice that was critical in its nature and intent, whilst also being a *conscious* pedagogy of critical reflection geared towards action.

The next chapter takes us into a phase of inquiry where TCM took the critical thinking processes and responsible, democratic practice that we had been going through in our small group discussions into a whole new collaborative space. The focus is on the students’ sense of having been listened to and acknowledged by teachers outside of our TCM group, and how dialogue became something much more powerful and energising. Our small-scale, TCM collaboration branched out to include other teachers and this was a different and important cog in the ‘machine’ of collaborative inquiry, adding extra momentum to what we had already set in motion. The principles and attributes of my CARE framework were still there, interacting with one another, and the cog of our TCM group kept on turning; we just connected with a different, more ‘risky’ space that we had previously been used to..

## **6 Chapter 6: Beyond the safe space: acknowledgement and solidarity**

This chapter presents what was a 'rupture of the ordinary' (Fielding, 2004, p. 296) in our school culture as students and teachers worked together in what could be called a 'radical collegiality' (Fielding, 1999). In working together with other teachers on a framework for service learning through two Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings, the data presents how the students experienced what was an 'explicitly intended and joyfully felt mutuality' (Fielding, 2004, p. 296). The chapter argues therefore that teacher engagement with student views can lead to 'changes in understandings and practices that help to facilitate the development of more inclusive approaches in schools' (Ainscow & Messiou, 2018, abstract). The key emergent themes in this chapter are centred on the idea that when one feels acknowledged and listened to, one experiences an increasing sense of empowerment and self-worth that leads to motivation, momentum and hope for change. The practice of dialogue was taken beyond our TCM group through gaining access to and stepping into the world of teacher-teacher collaboration. Having one foot in both of these worlds, and acting as a 'gatekeeper' for the students, I challenged the usual way of working at our school and facilitated student access to the teachers' collaborative space of the PLC meetings.

This chapter argues therefore that the TCM students' involvement in two teacher Professional Learning Community' (PLC) meetings was a 'lever for change' (Ainscow, 2005; Senge, 1989) within our school; it was as an action that was taken in order to try to change certain behaviours (Ainscow & Messiou, 2017). Having been able to invite and include the TCM into a collaborative teacher space on two occasions left me feeling that some kind of change was

possible. Firstly, I felt a shift on a personal level as a practitioner. I no longer considered myself so much of a lone wolf talking about democratic principles of participation to anyone who would listen; I felt a changed sense of acknowledgement of my efforts and I felt emboldened by this. The chance to collaborate with other teachers was, as I was aware, a 'necessary factor' of bringing about change (Ainscow & Messiou, 2017, p. 6) and I was glad to have had this opportunity. The fact that all teachers involved in the PLC gladly welcomed my suggestion to include the students was an indication to me that they valued and acknowledged my efforts to bring about this way of working and were open to trying something new. The teachers all knew me as service learning coordinator, but they had never really understood what I was trying to achieve for my 'doctoral' research. Suddenly, being able to bring this inquiry into the real, working life of the school made me feel respected and acknowledged in my efforts, and I felt like the other teachers trusted me in my professionalism and were in fact energised by a fresh idea. I may have been over-thinking the situation, but I felt like I was leading the way as a pedagogical role-model for a democratic way of working and I was demonstrating how school-based teacher research could become a 'transformative professional development activity for teachers' (Zeichner, 2003, p. 319).

The second reason that the PLCs could be seen as a first step towards change was that they instilled an increasing sense of empowerment amongst the TCM students, and the process motivated them to continue with their own research and to continue with our TCM inquiry until the end of the year as planned, despite the pressures of end of year exams and increased involvement in other activities such as fundraising. Ultimately, they were experiencing what it felt like to be expected to 'perform' and achieve well in school, and they were interested in making this system better for their peers, so they saw that TCM could have a

purpose. I return to this thought in chapter seven. At this point however, both the students and I felt that there was a feeling of belonging to something bigger and more powerful than what we had experienced so far in our group meetings confined to my office or the library. Suddenly, faced with eleven other teachers in the faculty room gave our service learning research a whole different dimension. As I noted in my own reflective journal at the time;

*If other teachers and members of leadership are also positively surprised about the process of having students work with them, then this project can be something that paves the way to future collaboration (LORJWN)*

The TCM students saw the PLCs as defining moments in our inquiry journey, and their recognition of that is one reason that made this cycle worthy of its own chapter. A second reason is due to the fact that I also experienced what it felt like to take a risk and engage in a new kind of *experimental* practice; not only did the students feel acknowledged, I also felt this too.

As in the previous chapter, the particular 'phase' of inquiry in which this collaboration occurred is indicated by the students' fortune line reflection (Figure 29). At the stage of the first PLC meeting, students had already planned and begun to carry out their small-scale research projects in relation to service learning (3.3.9). Whilst this chapter does not present the findings of these projects, it is important to know that they were involved in the role of trying on being a researcher for themselves at the time that they were invited to collaborate with teachers. Having some initial knowledge and insights from their own interviews or focus groups (Appendix B) helped them to feel that they had something relevant and insightful to contribute, and this made a difference to their feeling of having been acknowledged as students with a voice. This chapter endeavours to present this perception.

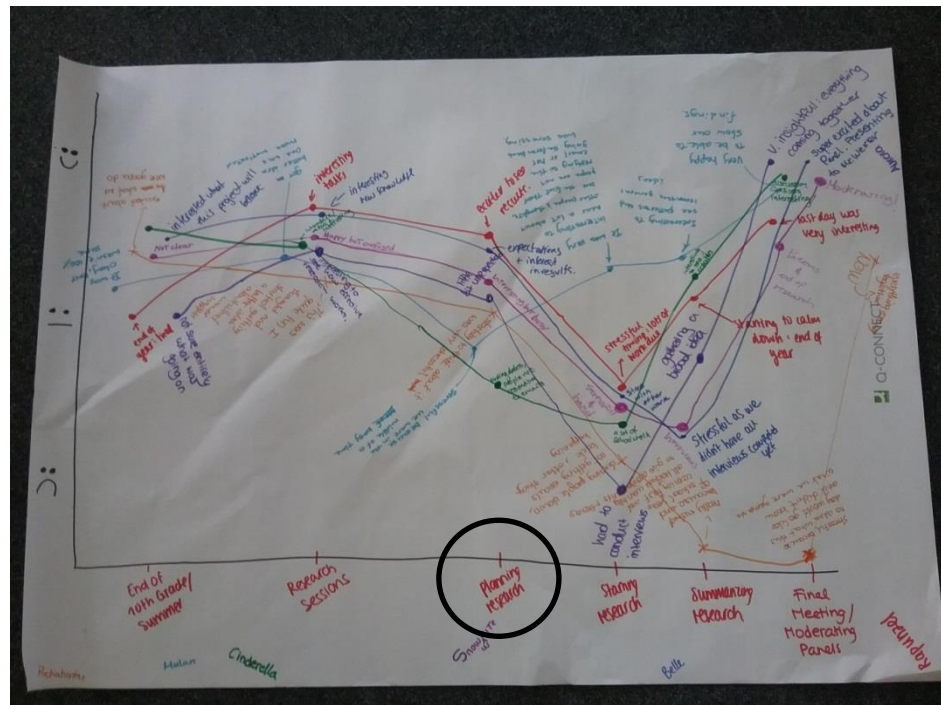


Figure 29: 'Planning research' phase of inquiry

	<b>My research questions (PRQ)</b>	<b>Student questions (TCMRQ)</b>
Cycle 5	PRQ1: How can I involve students in teacher discussions about service learning and provide for authentic voice?	TCMRQ1: How can we collaborate with others in our community?
	PRQ2: How can I model an inclusive, democratic process to others in the school community?	TCMRQ2: How can we make our voices heard?

Table 7: Research questions in cycle 5 of the inquiry

As Table 7 shows, cycle five, which was the PLC involvement, ran in parallel to cycle four, which was about the students planning their own research projects. The spontaneous creation of this cycle whilst another was going on was an example of the 'messy' and unpredictable nature of this inquiry; an example of the methodological *bricolage* that was employed (3.3.6). As opportunities arose that would add potential meaning to our

collaboration, I made sure to take advantage of these where possible. This PLC involvement was an opportunity for student voice that was too good to have been passed over. I was prepared to step out of my own comfort zone and engage in the kind of risky or experimental practice (1.7.3).

As presented in previous cycles, the degree of participation in this cycle of inquiry could be seen as ‘adult initiated’ (Hart, 1992) as the PLC meetings themselves were set up by teachers and the TCM student involvement was encouraged and facilitated by me. As the teachers moved forward with making recommendations for an improved service learning model to be proposed to new school leadership at some point in the near future, the students’ contributions were taken into account, and they were involved in decisions about what was noted down and carried forward.

Table 8 outlines the data codes for the different data items used in this section, so that it is easier to follow where it comes from. As can be seen, some of the data comes from a written reflection immediately after each PLC that was prompted by me, and the rest appeared through two different individual interviews that I conducted with each student. Whilst the prompted written reflection commented on the PLCs specifically, the data that emerged in the interviews was usually prompted by a more open question about what the students had learnt or what they may have felt excited about.

<b>Data code</b>	<b>Description of data item</b>
L1GCWRP	Level 1 (L1), Google Classroom (GC, Written Reflection (WR), Prompted by me (P)
L1INT1	Level 1 (L1), Interview 1 (INT1)
L1INT2	Level 1 (L1), Interview 2 (INT2)

*Table 8: Data codes used in chapter 6*

As with the first section in chapter five (5.1), the themes that emerged from data related to this cycle are presented under a heading that allows a sense of collective voice to be heard. The

data has been organised under these themes to present a sense of increasing momentum and excitement amongst the students, which is intended to lead into chapter seven, when the participation was more student-led and initiated. Whilst there is little direct data from my own reflections in this chapter, as a member of the TCM, each title is also relevant to how I felt as I included the students in the PLC meetings.

### **6.1 We felt listened to and acknowledged**

As discussed in chapter five (5.1.1.), listening was an important factor in our communicative way of working as TCM. If we however wanted to feel like more of a collaborative community of learners within our school, rather than simply as a separate team working on our own, our voices needed to be heard in a forum beyond our safe space. The act of 'listening' was mentioned directly by many of the girls as they reflected on the PLC meetings. Pocahontas, in her end of project interview, focused on this idea;

*they really listened to what we had to say and asked us questions about what we found out and things like that (L1INT2PO)*

The fact that the teachers posed questions about what the students had researched themselves made the act of listening more than just 'hearing'. Pocahontas felt not only that the teachers were being polite in the way that they listened, but that they were interested in what the students had to say. Rapunzel also talked about teachers having listened, and added what implications this had for their working relationship;

*I felt like they were listening and I think like that kind of brought us to the same level in a sense (L1INT2RZ)*

Rapunzel felt that through listening, the teachers were acknowledging her as an individual and in that sense the levels of power were changed somewhat; she felt 'equal' to them. Indeed, before student voice can happen, someone needs to be listening in the first place (Wall, 2018b). For Aurora, the act of listening on the part of the teachers made her feel as though she had something valuable to offer;

*I really did feel like whatever we were saying was taken seriously and appreciated (L1INT2AU)*

Being 'taken seriously' is what I mean by *acknowledgement* in this section. There can be an act of listening and anyone can make claims to this, however, if this listening leads to a feeling of the recipient being appreciated, then it goes one step further. Listening becomes an *active* act rather than a *passive* one; rather than simply being heard, one feels that the listener is engaged and ready to act on what is heard. Through having felt listened to in this way, the students felt a sense of being valued and that the teachers made them feel that their contributions were just as important as anything that they could have offered. Belle expressed this feeling thus;

*I thought it was very interesting to see how the teachers tried to merge our ideas with theirs (L1PLC2WRPBE)*

This 'merging' of ideas on the part of the teachers was a way of including the students and it gave a sense of genuine participation. Cinderella also mentioned the idea of having felt valued as a student;

*I think, what was really cool was that our opinion was just as valuable of all the other teachers .... It wasn't like, "yeah I'm the teacher, erm, my opinion matters more", I think the conversations were really equal and yeah, the relationship was really good (L1INT2CI)*



Cinderella felt that the discussions within the PLCs had been inclusive and that there was not a sense of authority or power on the part of the teachers. Interestingly, the fact that she picks up on having felt this way here could mean that this was the usual state of things; what she said indicates to me that the natural and expected status quo would normally involve teacher opinions somehow being more important. This 'shift' in relationship is discussed in the next section.

For the students, listening and acknowledgement did not always mean that they simply contributed something to the conversation that the teachers had been waiting for or expecting to hear. The unique and sometimes opposing views that the students could offer were also welcomed. Pocahontas reflected;

*if we disagreed they (teachers) really took it into consideration as well (L1PLC1WRPPO)*

Rather than simply having gone along with what the teachers were thinking, Pocahontas appreciated the fact that the student researchers seemed to have had the opportunity to challenge what was being said. They had been in an environment where they had been able to take risks and be honest about what they really felt. Aurora also identified this as having been a positive aspect of the PLC involvement;

*I feel like it was good how we were able to say 'No, I don't think that's a good idea, trust me, students wouldn't appreciate that, they would get bored and wouldn't understand what you're trying to say (L1INT2AU)*

She felt that she had been able to assert herself and had clearly been confident enough to say what she really felt. The kind of collegial environment that was the nature of the PLC meetings meant that Aurora felt comfortable in interacting with the teachers.

She also recognised that it was the *open* nature of the teachers that allowed for purposeful dialogue to happen;

*obviously the teacher has to be open to it, it seemed to be very effective, and er, still respectful at the same time (L1INT2AU)*

The teachers had been willing to listen and to acknowledge what was said; this amounted to more than just having been heard. The fact that I was in these meetings and was a key member of this teacher team is also something that should not be underestimated. I had brought the students there, I had their back and they knew it, and in this way they most probably felt that they could say what they wanted without suffering any consequences. This supports the idea that at least one teacher-mentor is an important member of the cog wheel that drives inquiry. This will be argued further in the concluding thoughts of this thesis.

## **6.2 Our student-teacher relationship somehow ‘shifted’**

The act of listening as described above led to a general changed perspective in the student-teacher relationship; Cinderella described this as a perceived ‘shift’;

*the relationship between the teacher and student kind of ‘shifted’ where it wasn’t like, teacher was at the top and student at the bottom (L1INT2C1)*

The fact that Cinderella comments on the absence of a sense of ‘top’ or ‘bottom’ in the PLC context means that she would usually have expected this to be the state of things; a hierarchy of the teacher being at the top and the student at the bottom. Rapunzel made a direct link between the act of listening and this ‘shift’;

*Well I think I felt really like at ease with the other teachers in the PLC meeting because I felt like they really they kept saying like “yeah well what do you guys think?” So I*

*felt like they were listening and I think like that kind of brought us to the same level in a sense (L1INT2RZ)*

Through the teachers' interest in student opinions, and the way that they consulted the girls, Rapunzel felt a sense of easiness within the meetings. This feeling led her to see herself on the same 'level' as the teachers; the power in the relationship was not the usual student-teacher hierarchy. Cinderella also talked about the sense of having been on the same 'level' through the teachers' acknowledgement of their ideas and contributions;

*the way that they showed us that through, just accepting what we were saying and also kind of... but also the way that we went into groups, and it wasn't like you had to put your hand up to talk... I think small things like that kind of loosen up the atmosphere a little bit and make it more to an equal level (L1INT2CI)*

The way that the teachers included the students was also something that stood out to Cinderella. The meetings had an informal air to them, which made her feel that it was an environment where student contributions were welcomed. The act of having split up into smaller groups made these contributions easier in her view; this confirms the points made about group work in the previous chapter in terms of being a way of establishing relationships and a productive, democratic space. Pocahontas also talked about how she felt more 'equal' to teachers through the PLC meetings, and mentioned the word 'hierarchy' without being prompted;

*we were equal to them, like there was no, not really a sense of like hierarchy in the meetings (L1INT2PO)*

Again, this comment suggested that the normal expectation would be that teachers were the ones with the authority; in this situation there was a sense of 'equality'. It was not so much the common *learning* that was expressed as the thing that made students and

teachers 'equal' here, as was the case in our small-group TCM collaboration, rather it was the fact that there was a sense of mutual respect and openness that allowed for this 'shift' to happen. Mulan, the shiest and most reserved member of the student research team, expressed this mutual respectful relationship through the idea that she saw herself as having acquired a more 'teacher-like' role through her involvement. She reflected;

*at the beginning, I was kind of feeling nervous as I've never been to a teacher's meeting before. However, when I got into a small group or when we had a chance to speak up in the meeting, I wasn't feeling nervous anymore and I thought I was a member, I mean, one of the teachers (L1GCWRPMU)*

Despite being anxious about what she could achieve and whether her opinion would matter, she left this first PLC meeting, the one on which she reflects, with a sense that she was a member of that working team, namely a *teacher*. Feeling like a teacher was for her knowing that she had a voice. It is indeed an interesting perspective that with student voice came the feeling that one was a 'teacher'; this says a lot about who normally has the power and who does not. Being able to be like a 'teacher' gave Mulan a sense of being more powerful in this instance. Finally, Belle also reflected on the sense of having felt like she was somehow 'equal' as a result of the teacher-student collaboration;

*I have never gotten the opportunity to be part of something like this; a time where a group of teachers sit down with a group of students and discuss issues/ways of improvement for something in the school where everyone had an equal say (L1PLC1WRPBE)*

The very act of student participation in teacher discussions was what made her feel as though student voice was just as valuable as that of the teachers. The dialogic method of listening and inclusion had made her feel this way.

The PLC meetings therefore seemed to offer a different kind of dialogue than what the student researchers were experiencing within our TCM space. It is interesting to see that the students were putting themselves into the teachers' shoes and they saw that the teachers could learn something *from* them. This falls in line with Freire's (1970) concept of an emancipatory methodology, where there is a reconciliation of 'the poles of the contradiction' (Freire, 1970, p.53) where discourse allows practitioners to be 'simultaneously teachers *and* students' (Freire, 1970, p. 53). Teachers were able to learn *from* their students, the learning process was somehow 'switched around' (Morgan, 2009) and them being open to this fact was something that the students welcomed. This falls in line with the concept of mutual respect and reciprocity in collaborative relationships; something that in turn fits in with the idea of democratic participation and, as already outlined in chapter two (2.4), underpins a more critical approach to service learning practice. It is also a further demonstration of *responsible* practice as outlined in my CARE framework in chapter four.

### **6.3 Our voices as *students* mattered**

In addition, the girls' contributions as *students* brought something to the meetings that would have been absent without their participation. The fact that they were students gave them a unique perspective; it was their *student* voice in particular that mattered in this context. Rapunzel noted in a written reflection on the first PLC meeting;

*It has gotten me to think about how we can help the teachers make this proposal, as we as students have the ability to easily communicate with our peers and gather opinions about some of the ideas mentioned*  
(L1GCWRPRZ)

She was recognising here that their roles as students might actually enable them to access student opinion more easily than teachers might be able to and, in turn, this would give weight and added value to anything that the teachers might propose about service learning to leadership. In other reflections on the PLC involvement, the girls felt that they, as *students*, could in fact contribute something to teacher thinking that they would otherwise not have had. Pocahontas' commented;

*I think the teachers really embraced our opinions because it would validate what they were proposing from the students themselves (L1GCWRPPO)*

Rather than the teachers simply making claims about what would be in the students' best interests, she saw that *student* voice in particular could 'validate' or add credibility to teacher-teacher collaboration. Aurora also felt that the additional presence of the students in the PLC meeting was appreciated by teachers, as they gained an otherwise unknown insight into what students felt;

*they are getting first-hand feedback from students and how we would feel about certain changes to the PDW programme. It allowed for multiple perspectives to be explored (L1GCWRPAU)*

The students' voices brought in a variety of different viewpoints for the teachers and this added credibility to the work on service learning that the teachers were engaged in. A group of teachers working together may have also brought in different perspectives, as opposed to just one teacher trying to drive change, but the 'multiple perspectives' that Aurora recognised could be better achieved through a democratic method of *student* participation in teachers' thinking and planning together. Rapunzel also recognised that as students, they had the ability to add fresh insights;

*I also thought it was good that we students have a voice amongst the teachers because I could tell some of the points we made were also things that they had never come up with (L1PLC2WRPRZ)*

Collaborating in these meetings had meant that the teachers were also learning from the students; ultimately, the relationship had been a two-way street and the student participation had allowed for the teacher collaboration to be a more democratically inclusive practice. Cinderella's reflection summed up the importance of student voice;

*I think having students involved just makes the whole thing stronger because then you don't have that much of the issue, like "Are we actually implementing something that students are gonna be able to comprehend, or are students going to be willing to open themselves up to?" (L1INT2C1)*

She saw that students, as recipients of changes made by teachers, had a right to be involved in what those changes might look like. Her idea of making 'the whole thing stronger' is really what ethical practice is about; the recipients of change are at once the ones who are involved in making that change. Aurora also emphasised the importance of students being involved in changes that would ultimately affect them;

*The interaction between staff and students...I definitely think that that should be something that should definitely be encouraged.... like more planning with students rather than changing something and then telling the students afterwards, cos I really think that if you're doing it for the students, I feel like it's very important that they have a direct impact on what changes (L1INT2AU)*

In this statement, Aurora was articulating what a 'conscientizing' or 'liberating' education is about; a process where teachers and students 'all become learners assuming the same attitude as cognitive subjects discovering knowledge through one another and through the objects they try to know' (Freire, 1976, p. 225).

The imposition or transmission of knowledge in such a methodology becomes impossible. Aurora saw that we were trying to achieve something *for* the students, then we should do it *with* them; the ‘ethical relationality’ (Bruce, 2016) mentioned in chapter five no longer becomes the relationship between our school and other communities, but rather one that focuses on the relationships between members from *within* the school community with each other.

#### **6.4 Our voices as *researchers* mattered**

It was not only the simple fact that the TCM were students that gave them a certain amount of well-needed input; their roles as *researchers* added extra value. In her final interview, Pocahontas claimed that she felt that the teachers in fact needed the students in their collaboration, as they had an *educated* student voice;

*Well I really liked going to the PLC meetings because I really felt that the teachers needed a student voice or an educated student voice, you know people that have done the research and are actually students because they really listened to what we had to say (L1INT2PO)*

Pocahontas saw that the TCM’s research added to the value of their student voice. Apart from having been involved in inquiry with me on the topic of service learning, their own research projects that they were conducting with students would make them more informed and would make any claims to knowledge from teachers more valid. Through having investigated what some students thought on the topic of service learning, Pocahontas felt that the students were able to feel that they had some credible knowledge to bring to the collaborative table. Their inquiry gave them knowledge, and this knowledge gave them a certain amount of power (Foucault, 1991). This is indeed an argument for allowing students to conduct their own research alongside being a part of a whole-school collaborative team. In feeling knowledgeable and



informed through what they found out, the students were able to feel that they were not just representing the voice of the students who had been researchers, but they were also representing student voices on a wider scale. This falls in line with the idea of being *active* within a community of inquirers. Rather than teachers conducting research about a topic with other students in the school as participants or 'subjects', student researchers can be supported by teachers in how to conduct their own inquiries, and then a common goal can become something shared. In this way, students in a school may be more responsive and feel that they will be listened to, if it is students who are conducting the research with them in the first place, and when those student researchers are seen as being co-inquirers with teachers.

### **6.5 We became hopeful for change**

Fielding and Moss (2011) talk about solidarity as being a 'commitment to mutual support and collective action on matters of shared interest' (p. 44) and that it is a process that 'recognises individuality but acknowledges that this is always constructed in relation with others and is enabled by common purpose and collective effort' (Fielding & Moss, 2011, p.44). Being involved in the PLC meetings was indeed a process that allowed students to feel a sense of common purpose and shared interest with their teachers, and through this feeling, there was a sense of motivation and hope for the future. The students felt more engaged through an increased sense that their voices were being heard (Bron & Veugelers, 2014). As mentioned above in the introduction to this chapter, these meetings were where our project began to seem meaningful to both the students and to me, as there was hope that they could act as a catalyst for a different culture of collaboration in the school. Pocahontas expressed this quite clearly;

*being there felt like I was actually starting to have an impact (L1INT2PO)*

The 'impact' that was meant was twofold; firstly, it was hoped that the system of PDWs would somehow change for the better, and secondly, the culture of student involvement and more democratic ways of working had potentially been opened up.

On reflecting on our project at the end of the year, Belle picked out the teacher-student collaboration through the PLCs as something that could be a model for future practice;

*I think that's interesting to see maybe in the future how, by having these teachers from these different subjects, being part of big discussions like this, like, in the end, like you could maybe work together, and, I don't know, connect it way more (L1INT2BE)*

She sees the potential impact of cross-subject collaboration; teachers not being just confined to their subject areas, but working together towards a common goal. Whilst this was the initial idea of the PLCs in the first place, having a student sense this potential is indeed a worthy insight. If the students can see, or *feel* how we as a school are working out our own 'common sense through mutual engagement' (Wenger, 1998, p. 47), then there is meaning to what we do in our own community of practice (Wenger, 1998). Aurora expressed how the teacher-student collaboration had made our TCM inquiry more meaningful;

*To work with the staff on this, I feel that added a new level of, erm, significance to what we were doing (L1INT2AU)*

The new 'level of significance' implied that what we were doing may have actually had the potential to make a difference to service learning practice within our school; our name as 'change makers' had begun to mean something. Mulan also talked about the fact that she felt that she was making some kind of change;

*It was really interesting to work as a leader to make changes within the school and erm, kind of like be on the teacher side (L1INT2MU)*

Again, she saw herself as being more like a 'teacher' in her new leadership role, but this was connected to actually being able to change something. The students were beginning to dare to think that their role as researchers and collaborators might actually have made them part of some kind of school transformation. A final comment from my own reflective diary at the time shows that I was also hopeful and feeling encouraged in terms of the direction that our inquiry had taken through the PLC meetings and what it could mean for our school in terms of a change of culture;

*I feel that the student research team, in their capacity as the first team of change-makers, have been given the key to a door that has otherwise been left unopened, and that their voice and our collaboration will ultimately pave the way for further such student teams (L0RJWN)*

I had also experienced a 'shift' in having involved students at this level and it had given me reason to hope that this was only the beginning of teacher-student collaborative endeavours within our school. Having taken the time to note this at the time meant that I saw the PLC experiences as having been something that took us into a potential new way of doing things. It remained to be seen whether anything came of this hope. Some of the consequences of our inquiry will be discussed in chapter eight.

## **6.6 Is it all just about power?**

This question is one that I feel needs considering at this point, before I continue to depict the momentum that increasingly took hold of the students within this inquiry. As opposed to the rest of the headings in this chapter, this one question is a personal reflection. As I was organising the data into a narrative that led from this chapter into the next, I realised that regardless of the

themes that emerged, the concepts of power and empowerment had been omnipresent and I had not been able to escape from them. Indeed before data collection for this project began, I had explored the ideas of power within the field of education (Mayes et al., 2017; Wasner, 2016) and I had become convinced of the necessity to 'make problematic the myth power of the slogans which domesticate us' (Freire, 1976). In my case, the 'myth' of service learning was the most pressing concern. Hence, despite the fact that critical thinking, risk-taking and student engagement are the main themes that guide the next chapter, what is really at the heart of it is that the student researchers felt a sense of *empowerment*. The key to this was the fact that their participation was suddenly at a different level to that which had come before; they were initiating and driving whole-school inquiry themselves, and the power of teachers was diffused as a result. On my part, this diffusion was intentional; on the students' part, it was something that just happened as a result of the motivation and hope that they had come to feel.

Hence, before moving on, I present a piece of data that supports the idea of power in this inquiry. In a final interview with Aurora, I explicitly addressed the concept of power relationships in schools and asked her what she thought about this idea in relation to our school community. She answered quickly and forcefully (I had noted this in my transcription as I had considered it to be significant that she was so sure of herself in this answer). Aurora commented;

*the research project has definitely changed how I see it, because for me, before it was like, oh, teachers are teachers and they decide what happens and students just go with that (L1INT2AU)*

This thought shows that there had been a shift in her understanding of what it can mean to be a teacher with power and

as a student with less of it, where one is used to conforming to the normal hierarchical structures that are in place. She continued;

*there's become less of like a 'power' thing, and more just like a mutual appreciation for ideas, and you collaborate on that, and make something from that, rather than having like a teacher make decisions and then the students say "Oh, well that's nice" (L1INT2AU)*

As I came across this in the interview transcript, I used several highlighters to underline in an array of colours and I made several scribbles and stars, as I considered this to be a particularly good way of summing up what the students had felt about having been able to collaborate with teachers. As a result of having been involved in this inquiry, Aurora had seen a shift; she had recognised the power of student voice, and she had seen that change was possible through collaboration and a 'mutual appreciation'. If there ever was a sentence that were to sum up the opposite of Freire's 'banking education' (Freire, 1970) and to speak for Fielding's 'person-centred, democratic approach' (Fielding, 2011), then I think that this one could be a strong contender. The next chapter, as I mentioned, deals with the empowerment of the student researchers. Moving from one metaphorical cog wheel to another (3.5), the students took more ownership and gained a sense of agency as they tried on the role of 'change makers' in front of their peers.

## **6.7 Key messages**

This chapter emphasises the idea of *responsible* practice as a pedagogy that is based on dialogue, namely, an 'encounter of those addressed to the common task of learning and acting' (Freire, 1970, p. 71). Dialogue, and hence, *responsible* practice, is when there is *active* rather than *passive* listening; the listener is open to action based on what is heard, hence the listening is not

empty or 'false'. When this dialogue moves beyond small-group inquiry, as with our TCM group, and crosses over into additional collaborative spaces, such as here with the teacher PLC meetings, inquiry can gain further momentum and this can lead to the feeling of belonging to 'something bigger'. In order to give inquiry such momentum, teachers need to be brave, or *experimental* in their practice, willing to challenge usual ways of working, and to aim to make their inquiry less of a 'solitary activity' (Wall, 2018a) by communicating with other teachers within their contexts. In this way, teacher – researchers become *active* inquirers through exercising agency. The participation of students in such a process can further 'validate' teacher inquiry, making collaboration more democratic. Teachers and students can learn from each other in a dialogic relationship that models what democratic participation should look like (Fielding & Moss, 2011), and engagement and hope for change can be brought about through a feeling of mutual learning, or a practice of *responsibility*.

## 7 Chapter 7: Becoming radical agents of change

*In political terms, the self-pacing and peer-leader features challenge the idea that the teacher is the indispensable expert, alone qualified to define and distribute knowledge (Illich, 1971, p. 40)*

This chapter portrays a half-day student event named a 'Pre-PDW forum' that took place in the very last week of school before the summer holidays. The event, which students planned together with a small group of teachers, including me, allowed the Team Change Makers the opportunity to open up the question of ethical service learning to their peers and teachers, and to bring in their own knowledge gained from their inquiries. The girls were beginning to act as and feel like 'radical agents of change' (Fielding, 2001). As conceptualised in the 'cog wheel' metaphor in chapter three (3.5), the students' collaboration was taken into a space that involved a significant part of the school community, including the entire grades 10 and 11, approximating 200 students in total, plus a number of teachers in their capacity as homeroom tutors and service learning group leaders. In what I would describe as our school's first step towards a more critical service learning pedagogy as outlined in chapter two (2.4), the student researchers acted as role models in front of their peers, taking critical thinking into a more public arena. Whilst we were not yet engaging in the act of 'service' itself, the seeds of critical thought were being sown; an important step towards a more critical and ethical practice for service learning.

According to the TCM girls (Figure 30), this event was the culmination of our year together, and it was identified by students on their fortune line diagram as a particular 'high point', which the plotting of the line against the 'happy' face on the diagram shows. As in previous chapters, the collaborative, TCM research questions (TCMRQ) for the cycle to which it belonged are shown

(Table 9), as are my own practitioner questions (PRQ). As can be seen from the questions, I was concerned with how critical thinking could be made more 'public', and the students were concerned with how they could share their knowledge and relative expertise on the topic of service learning with others in the school, and what they knew about what a more ethical practice would look like. This was our version of our research as 'systematic enquiry made public' (Stenhouse, 1981), even if it was on a small-scale at that moment in time.

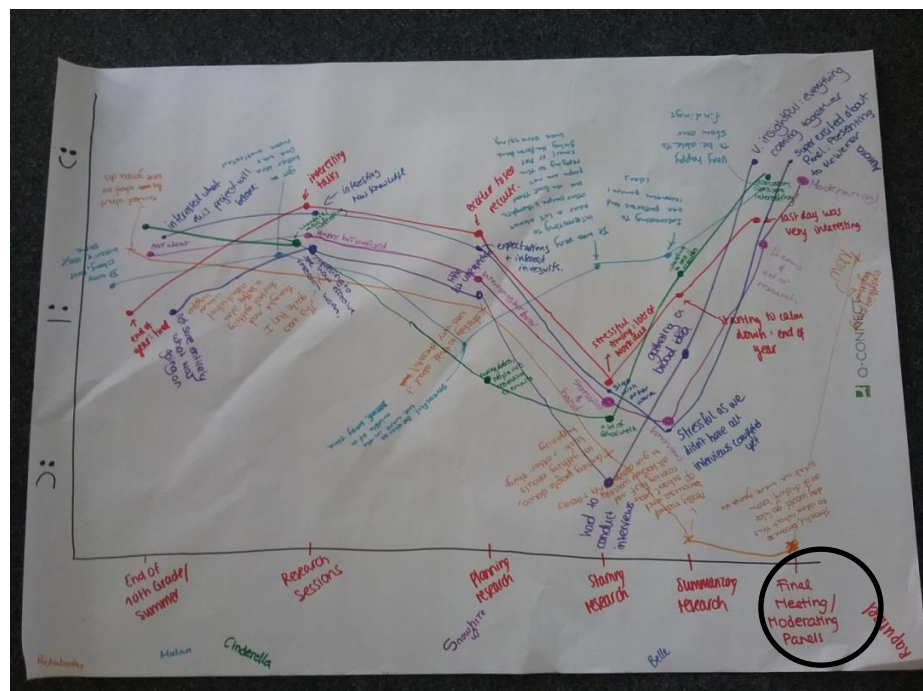


Figure 30: Final meeting / moderating panel phase of the inquiry

	<b>My research questions (PRQ)</b>	<b>TCM research questions (TCMRQ)</b>
Cycle 7	PRQ1: How can I facilitate critical thinking on a school-wide level?	TCMRQ1: How can we demonstrate what we have learnt about service learning and what it means to think critically and ethically?
	PRQ2: How can Team Change Makers act as pedagogical role models on a wider school basis?	TCMRQ2: To what extent are our PDWs ethical?

Table 9: Research questions in cycle 7 of the inquiry



This chapter portrays how change within a school can be brought about through a willingness to experiment, critique one's own practice and provide a respectful yet risky space for students to have open and honest dialogue with each other. Whilst we as a research team had critiqued ourselves and the practice of service learning and hierarchies within the school, we had never done this on a wider school level. As researchers, we wanted to be acknowledged by our own community of practice and take our research beyond something of mere personal interest (McLaughlin & Black-Hawkins, 2004). We were trying out different ways of doing things, something that fits in with the idea of 'experimentation' as a value (Fielding & Moss, 2011) and with the principle of Dialogue in practitioner inquiry (Wall & Hall, 2017). The PLCs discussed in chapter six were a practice of welcoming students to collaborate with teachers, but they were not openly inviting critique of our school practice through a whole-grade community event. The Pre-PDW Forum was therefore something different, something risky, and something that allowed us to feel some kind of culmination of the momentum of our collaboration. Whilst the event was considered a 'high point', and TCM had been enthusiastically engaged in the planning of it, this planning had not however been without its challenges. The different processes that we had gone through in order to get to the day itself had been, for me in particular, full of a moments that had taken me out of my own comfort zone. At times I had felt that I had been losing a grip on my 'girls' as other teachers became involved.

Figure 31 shows how TCM were involved in the planning of the PDW forum event and what the timeline leading up to the day looked like.

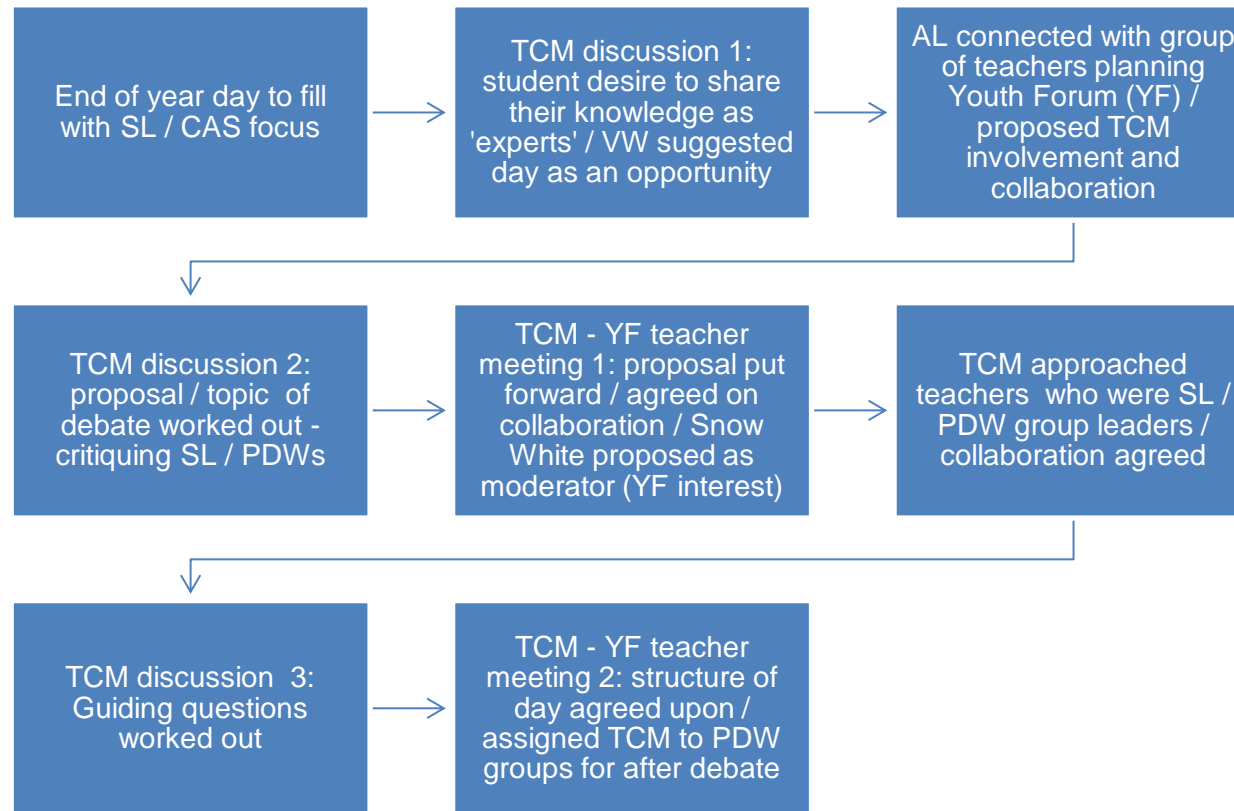


Figure 31: Process of TCM involvement in planning the PDW student forum

The whole process as depicted in Figure 31 happened over a two-week period, facilitated by the fact that there was a whole day available that I was in charge of and that I needed to plan. In previous years I had introduced grade 10 students to the idea of service learning and IB CAS projects on that day and we had had some external speakers coming in to help to give grade 10 students ideas. According to the end of year plans for this year, and in line with what usually happened, most grade 11 students would have had this day off as it was a planned exam 'make up' day for those grade 11s who might have missed exams the previous week. However, after a discussion with the TCM girls, in which I proposed that we could use this one day if we wanted, they felt that they would rather do this than not having the chance at all to share their knowledge, or have some kind of 'culmination' to our inquiry. As a TCM group, we planned on suggesting that the day could be used to consider whether PDWs were ethical practice or not, and whether we were doing the right thing by calling such trips 'service learning'. Through having had discussions as a TCM group where we problematised service learning, critically examined ourselves and our privilege and thought about implications for our practice (cycles 2 and 3; chapter five) the TCM girls had begun to consider the extent to which our PDW trips were in fact ethical practice. The girls' own research projects had also given them insights into the fact that fundraising was too much of an issue and that we needed to think beyond only this in our concept of 'service'. PDWs were a highly emotive issue within our school, and they were something that the school leadership was proud of. In posing critical questions about these trips to the whole of grade 10 and 11 therefore, we were engaging in a form of critical, experimental pedagogy that was certainly not without its risks. We were daring to uncover 'unwelcome and uncomfortable news' (Kinsler, 2010) about our practice.

In planning the event, the TCM girls did of course feel a huge sense of responsibility towards their peers, particularly in grade 11, and this was understandable, as they were in effect taking away free time from them. However, they were keen to see how other teachers would feel and what the day would look like, so, whilst the whole event was a risk, the levels of planning and negotiation that went on were fairly intense. The girls wanted the opportunity to take a leading role, but they also wanted to make sure that it would be something worthwhile and meaningful to their peers as much as possible. I also needed to be able to get some of my colleagues on board and negotiate some power relationships of my own.

One reason that data surrounding this particular forum event has been selected for inclusion in this thesis is that it is an example of student participation that can be labelled as 'truly' participatory (Hart, 1992). Figure 32 shows the comparative degree of participation here in comparison to chapter five, where the pyramid diagram was also used to depict the level of student participation in those particular cycles of inquiry. The PDW forum event that this chapter centres on was initiated by students, and teachers were brought in to help them design and implement it. In this way, they had much more agency within the whole process. In speaking in front of their peers about the topic of service learning, the Team Change Maker students were acting as *informed* role-models who had been able to take ownership of their learning and that of their peers. The student researchers' participation in the inquiry project over the year made them 'experts' in front of others, and they had the knowledge and insight that made them an appropriate choice for representing student views. In this way, this could not be considered to be merely 'token' participation (Hart, 1992), as the students were acting in their role as knowledgeable and in turn respected members of their school community. Having

TCM represent student views should have seemed legitimate and less of a 'sham' (Hart, 1992) to their peers as it was made clear (if students were not already aware) that they had been involved in researching service learning over the year. Had other students elected them to speak on their behalf, this process would have been more democratic, it is true, however students would not necessarily have known which other students could accurately represent their views. The group decision therefore to involve Team Change Makers in what this day could look like was a conscious way of adding credibility to our collaboration over the year, and it was a chance for the girls to demonstrate their learning, as some of the comments on the fortune line diagram (Figure 30) showed.

I am aware that the TCM students' participation in the PDW event may well be critiqued as having been the result of the wielding of my power in my teacher role as service learning and CAS coordinator, however I do not see it as having been this way. I suggested the day as potential time available to them without any expectations of participation, and allowed them the freedom to declare it as a bad idea and opt out. I also left their commitment open until after they had had more meetings with other teachers, and this meant that they could ultimately decide for themselves whether it was going to work or not. All girls took part in all of the planning and the event itself, and once momentum was gained in the planning process, they all felt invested and wanted to play a lead role. As it became sure that the day was going to go ahead, and as the topic and structure were worked out, the TCM girls would not have enjoyed taking a back seat in the student audience whilst their TCM peers were having such a platform to be heard; this would have been hard for them and they would have felt left out. I did sense some slight disdain amongst the other girls at Snow White's positioning as moderator, but this had been pushed more by the teachers planning with them; they had

suggested that she try it out as she was interested in being part of a group of students who may lead a 'Youth Forum' event that they had in mind for the following academic year. The 'Youth Forum' would involve students being able to debate issues, and for these teachers, this day also suited their purposes of 'practising' a debate-style event. The girls accepted the decision for Snow White, but it had not been done in a very democratic way at all; this was one example of a moment of struggle for me too.

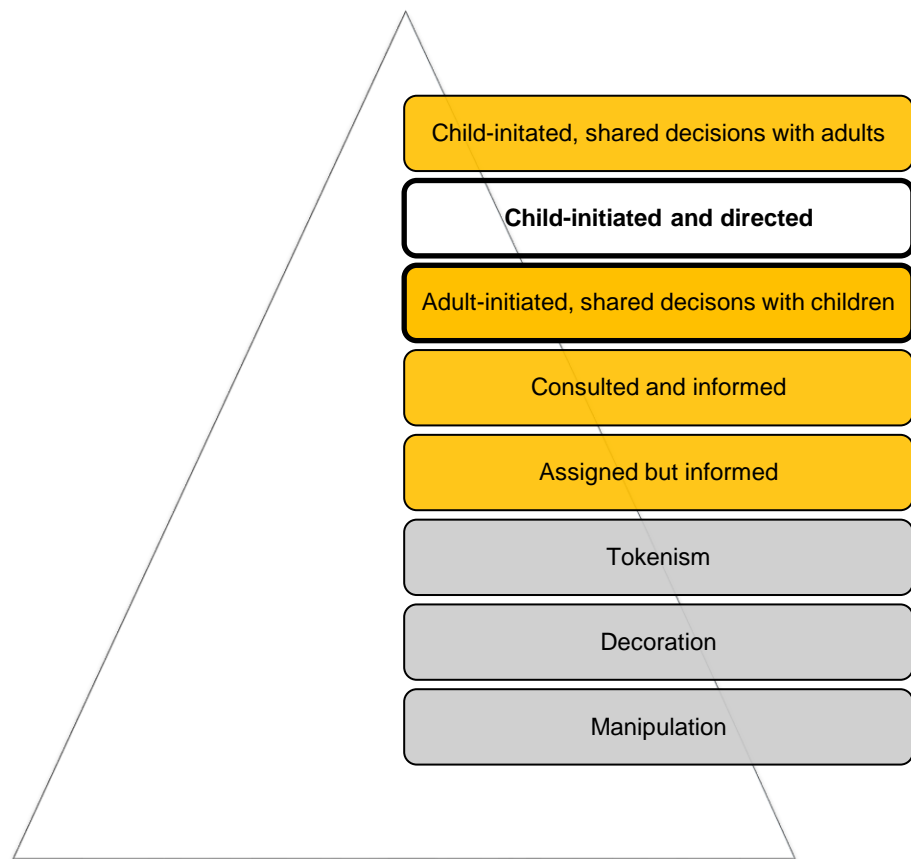


Figure 32: Degree of student participation for the 'PDW forum' event

The themes that emerged in relation to this event and this stage of our inquiry came from data items that were collected on the day itself. Table 10 shows the different data types from which the data is drawn as well as the codes that I used for them.

It should be noted here that the end of project individual interviews

<b>Data code</b>	<b>Data item description</b>
L1WRPPDW	Written reflection, prompted, PDW forum
L1GD16	Group discussion 16 (immediately after panel event)
L1GVFLGD	Fortune Line group discussion
L1AVPDW	Video of PDW forum
CI	CI (TCM pseudonym added to the end of an item, Cinderella in this example)

*Table 10: Data codes used in chapter 7*

with the students (L1INT2) that have been used in chapters five and six as a data source, happened approximately one week before this forum event happened; this explains their omission here. The reflective data that is presented in this chapter came from the students in the form of a written reflection straight after the event, and then in a group discussion that I facilitated after the girls had captured their immediate thoughts first in writing. A reason for the event having been such a 'high point' on the fortune line diagram (Figure 30) could have well been due to the fact that this fortune line activity was then the last thing that we did together as a group, after we had had this discussion. The students were feeling energetic, enthused and empowered at this point, and therefore these immediate feelings fed into their overall evaluation of the event and could have meant that the other stages that we had gone through over the year were less dominant in their minds, resulting in less positive reflections for those stages. The 'high point' depicted on the fortune line (Figure 30) therefore needs to be seen in its immediate context. That said, I witnessed what went on at the student forum event myself, and from my perspective, it was certainly something powerful and potentially transformational in terms of our school culture and it left not only the students with a feeling of hope.

The way that the themes are presented in this chapter is different to what has come before so far in this thesis. In the first section of

chapter five (5.1) and in chapter six, the themes have been presented as collective student reflections, in order to capture their feelings as a group and to allow for student voices to emerge. In the second section of chapter five (5.2), the themes are in the form of questions, so that the process of critical questioning could be emphasised. In this chapter however, the themes are written as if they are a call to action, as in a manifesto. The reason for this is that the narrative of this chapter aims to position the TCM students as radical agents of change (Fielding, 2001), and the intentional imperative nature of the headings is intended to capture this momentum towards change and student empowerment. The data presents the kind of risky, radical pedagogy that I had been waiting for and now, months after the event, it still continues to spur me on in my dreams of alternative forms of education driven by ethical principles of social justice and democratic participation. The student 'manifesto' is to be read as if it comes from the TCM girls and it is aimed at the leadership of our school. Maybe, in its existing (or most likely adapted) form, it might just land upon some of those intended ears. The students would have to have a say in this though of course so that, in speaking for them, I am capturing what they felt at the time and representing them in a way that is ethical.

### **7.1 Let students talk!**

This title expresses a sentiment that was twofold. Firstly, the student research team TCM felt that the rest of their peers were happy that they had finally been given the opportunity to discuss service learning, and the PDW trips in particular. Secondly, the TCM girls were also excited at having been able to have a dialogue with their peers that positioned them as knowledgeable and informed leaders as a result of research. Aurora talked about her fortune line at the time of drawing it, and she explained the reason behind her 'high point';



*I had a really high point now, currently with the panels, because everything seems to be coming together and it's so interesting, and it's so important that we're finally getting our message out to the student body... I think that's one of the best things that we can do this year (L1GVFLGDAU)*

I was lucky enough to capture her thoughts on an audio recording with my tablet; I had intended to record all TCM girls doing this, but due to technical difficulties and the lack of time we had in order to solve them, I was only left with Aurora's reflections. What she did say is an important addition to the data, as it expresses in words the common feeling amongst the girls, reflected in the fortune line itself (Figure 30), that the PDW forum had been a particular highlight of our collaborative inquiry over the year. Aurora's main sentiment and reason for excitement was that TCM had the chance to 'finally' engage with their peers, and also from a relative position of power given the freedom that the situation afforded them. I have therefore used the verb 'talk' rather than 'speak' in this title, as this indicates more of an engaged action of mutual listening and response; something much more powerful than simply having the opportunity to open one's mouth.

In the TCM students' view, the discussion had been a long time coming and when the opportunity arose, the student body rose to the challenge with enthusiasm and active participation. The 'demand' as the title of this and subsequent sections is therefore meant to include all students in grades 10 and 11 and not just the Team Change Maker girls. The first section of a conversation (L1GD16) that we had during our post-forum group discussion shows how the students were positively surprised at the reactions of their peers;

BE: *I mean, so many people raised their hands!*  
AL: *Yeah, I saw that as well*  
PO: *Yeah and we've like never had that before!*

AU: *No, like our school's terrible with things like that*  
SW: *Yeah it's normally like "are there any questions?"*  
*and no one puts up their hand*  
AL: *No there were loads yeah*  
BE: *And then it's like a snowball*

I was part of this conversation (AL) and my interjections have been included here to add to the flow of the discussion and to also show my own surprise and confirmation that I was also feeling as the students were. The girls commented that they had never before witnessed a time in our school where students, in a whole-grade meeting like this, had been so eager to offer answers. Whether this was a true account of past events is of course impossible to know, however, I can certainly vouch for the fact that this event had indeed been unique on that front. When a grade or more of students usually came together in our school, it had always tended to be in order to listen to a presentation, followed then by a brief opportunity to ask questions. A student-led, critical debate in such a format as this had, as far as we knew, never happened before, and the effect it had on the students was something new to all of us. In her written reflection just after the forum event, before we spoke together, Pocahontas had already expressed her surprise about her peers' engagement;

*What I was most surprised about was the way the rest of the student body got engaged. This was really cool to see as I think this had never happened in our school*  
(L1WRPPDWPO)

She enjoyed having experienced it, as it was something out of the ordinary for our school in her opinion. She continued;

*The time had to be cut short as well which embodies the fact that the students have wanted a voice on this issue for a long time* (L1WRPPDWPO)

Pocahontas knew that the debate could have gone on much longer; there were still students contributing and it had become

quite 'controversial' as it had to be brought to an end. A whole 45 minutes of student-led critical thinking seems to speak for the fact that students did indeed want to talk and to be heard and it adds further strength to the idea that it was a success. Teachers involved in the planning had hoped for perhaps 15 minutes, but as the debate became lively and interesting, we knew to let it run and see where it went, bringing it to a close when practicalities such as teachers needing to move on to other lessons became a necessity. In commenting as she did, Pocahontas saw that there had been a need within the school for dialogue, honesty and being critical and open about our PDW trips and their worth. It is noteworthy that she mentioned the word 'voice' here; this word increasingly became something that was common in the Team Change Makers' vocabulary. Data included in chapter six (6.3;6.4) shows students using it in their reflections, and for me it was a sign that they were gradually becoming more confident in their understanding of what it might mean and look like within our context. In her written reflection on the event, Belle also mentioned the idea of student voice, and the fact that having such an event where this voice can emerge is something that the school needed and that the students wanted;

*This demo panel clearly shows that our school could definitely benefit from an activity like this as it shows that students all have a voice and an opinion which they would like to be heard and these panel discussions might be the perfect opportunity for this (L1WRPPDWBE)*

The 'panel discussion' event had shown her that it could be an appropriate method that could allow for this student voice to happen. Students wanted to be 'heard', and such a discussion could mean a possible way for dialogic practice to become the norm.

I return briefly here to Pocahontas' comment above about the time having to have been cut short in the forum debate, as I agree indeed that it was an indicator of student engagement and their desire to be heard. As teachers who had facilitated the time and space for this forum to happen, we had been unsure as to how long the debate would last, as it was all dependent on the students' engagement and the ability of the TCM student panellists on the stage and the main moderator (Snow White) to be able to keep the discussion going. The TCM girls had some rough questions that they had noted, and they had our TCM inquiry questions (Table 10) in the backs of their minds, however they were experimenting and taking a risk in seeing what happened. The plan had always been that when the discussion died down, the teachers supporting, including myself, were ready to jump in and move everyone into smaller groups of students based on the PDW trips that they would be going on the following September. The plan was that the TCM would moderate these smaller sessions, where students would research and justify their own trips and how viable, or ethical, they actually were. This part of the day did happen in fact, after the debate was finally over, but it was in the afternoon after all of my data was collected for that day. Having expected the TCM girls to stay behind at the end of the day to reflect on that second experience would have been unrealistic and unfair, considering that it was the penultimate school day of the year. The hope of additional data was not worth the jeopardy of a successful day and the mutually respectful relationship that our TCM had built up over the year. A final comment from Pocahontas brings us back to the idea of student engagement as a measure of the event's success;

*Honestly I don't think it could have gone any better than it had and I was pleased to see so many people engaged (L1WRPPDWPO)*

Her perceived high level of peer engagement made her feel that the event went well, and she could not have imagined how things could have been improved upon. There had been a link between student voice and student engagement through this event (Bron, Bovill, van Vliet, & Veugelers, 2016; Bron & Veugelers, 2014).

I and the other teachers involved in the planning of the forum together with the TCM girls had wanted it to feel student-led, and trusting in Snow White to be the moderator was an intentional move towards creating this sense of student ownership. Perhaps it was the fact that it felt student-led that gave other students the courage or motivation to contribute. I do partly wish that I had spoken to other students after the event in order to gauge their feelings too, however the fact that the day moved on at such a fast pace and that I needed to concentrate on fitting in a reflection with TCM made this an impossible task.

In allowing students to talk, the school needed to create conditions such as this forum that made it possible to do so in the first place. In our group discussion post-event, Cinderella reflected;

*even though there were some questions that I think that we couldn't really answer, the fact that these questions were put out there, kind of benefitted the whole situation I think (L1GD16C1)*

She felt that what had been important was the fact that certain questions had been aired, not that they were not necessarily answered. The space that had been facilitated allowed the questioning to happen, and that process was more important than the outcome. The role of teachers as pedagogical role models and critical partners also played a part. There were two male teachers sitting on stage as part of the panel and there was a group of three teachers, including me, who had introduced the event and were sitting or standing amongst the students. In the debate, it

was the TCM girls who were the ones in charge of steering the questioning and the teachers were simply part of what they were leading. The two teachers had been invited to be there to also represent a teacher voice and to allow themselves to be critiqued; it would have been less powerful or meaningful to the students if teachers had been seen to be absent from this discussion. Having teachers also playing the part of a panel *together* with students somehow made the students braver; they could see that teachers, at least those ones in the room, were actively listening to them. Aurora remarked on the fact that the environment of the forum itself, and the role of the teachers allowed honest and straightforward questions to be posed;

*Everyone felt comfortable to say what they felt and we tried to answer as many questions as we could (or would be allowed to) with the support of the members of staff (L1GD16AU)*

Aurora saw the teachers involved as playing an important role in being able to guide, validate and be part of the experiences. Having been able to engage in dialogue with teachers themselves seemed more empowering to the students than if the students had just been given the chance to simply rant and rave in order to impress their peers. If the object of one's criticism is open to engaging in a responsible dialogue, then the subject tends to consider the content of what is said in a manner that is more thought-out and respectful. Aurora's comment speaks for the fact that if students feel that the teachers are behind them and that they care, then they also feel more confident and empowered to act in a way that is responsible and, ultimately, ethical. Why should students care if their teachers don't?

Whether it was due to the teacher's involvement, the student leadership or the nature of the event as an open forum for critique of school practice, there was an element of respect on the part of

the grade 10 and 11 students that the TCM girls picked up on. Belle reflected on the type of students' questioning as she noted her thoughts after the event;

*I was surprised about how many students in the audience participated in the discussions we had and responded with well thought out questions that were relevant to the topics (L1WRPPDWBE)*

This comment shows that she had perhaps not expected the questioning from her peers to have been so considered. In having viewed the questions as 'well thought out' and 'relevant' she recognised that her peers, and not just TCM, were also able to contribute effectively to a discussion on service learning. The way that they did it in this open forum was also, in her view, respectful; the questions were not simply posed just for the sake of being able to be heard, but there had been an element of consideration on her peers' part as to the value that the questions could bring to the discussion. As this section has dealt with who should get to talk, the next one considers *with whom* this should be happening. There is not much point in talking if the right people are not listening.

## **7.2 Bring on the bigwigs!**

This section centres on a segment of our discussion after the panel event (L1GD16) that captured a significant moment of critical thinking and a call to action. The conversation began as a reflection on a point in the forum debate where Belle had taken a significant risk; I had found this to be exciting at the time and I (AL) remembered it as we had begun discussing together;

AL: *The fact that we are asking these questions as a school in front of, you know, Belle was like "Oh, let's get the governors here, you know, that would be good"*

BE: *Yeah the Board*

RZ: *That would be so cool!*

- BE: *Nobody knows who these people are like, the people in charge of all the money and doing the PR of our school*
- AU: *I know, I was like, "you are so brave for saying that"!*

As the girls had been sitting on stage, Belle had considered the fact that the people that needed to be listening to what students were saying were the very people who, in her mind, had the most power over decisions that were made. The 'governors' or the 'board' are a group of businessmen whom students know exist, but who rarely, if at all, have anything to do with the students, or with the teachers for that fact. Belle had wondered why these important stakeholders, or, in my phrasing, the 'bigwigs' were not present at the student forum, as they were the ones whose decisions ultimately affected those very same students. There were certainly people in the school community listening to TCM and the other students' ideas, but what Belle wondered was whether that was enough if the *right* people were not there. She had voiced this thought on stage and Aurora, as can be seen from her last comment in the conversation above, had considered that as having been a 'brave' move. Rapunzel also thought this idea to be a potentially exciting one, as expressed by her reaction to the suggestion as being 'so cool'. In the post-forum excitement of the moment, and in their immediate sense of empowerment through having successfully led their peers in a heated and dynamic way, the girls ran with the idea that what was important was to be listened to by the people 'at the top'. By calling on the 'board' and the 'PR' people to make themselves visible and engaging in conversation to the students, they were envisioning a school that had open channels of communication between those at the 'top' and the students themselves. Through her comment on Belle's bravery, Aurora clearly admired her peer Belle and, in this discussion, there was a hint of respect, camaraderie and solidarity amongst the girls in their thinking as a team who consisted of



people trying to achieve the same goals. This kind of talk, together with the moment during the panel discussion that Belle was in fact very brave, felt to me like there was something in the air, some movement or shift, or a door that was somehow opening up. What happened could almost definitely be described as my definition of something *radical* (1.1.); a dreaming of democratic alternatives within education.

### **7.3 Make learning the motive!**

The debate helped the student researchers to think about the school as a place of education. They felt that what the student body really needed was to engage in trips that were primarily *learning* experiences, and that their educative purpose should be what drove them. In her leading role as moderator, Snow White threw a question to her fellow student and teacher panellists twelve minutes into the debate. The question had been on a list of questions to ask that the girls had put together, and Snow White seemed to find the right amount of courage to pose it. She asked;

*Now I'm going to ask a question that I hope will trigger some thoughts; "To what extent are we a charity or a school?"* (L1AVPDWSW)

As she saw her co-panellists thinking this over, she continued;

*"Where do we draw the line? What's the difference?"* (L1AVPDWSW)

Realising that this question might need some thinking time, and seeing the slightly anxious faces of the girls and teachers, an English teacher event facilitator stepped in and gave the student audience the chance to think about it before it would be opened up for debate. Whilst this is not the right place to give a detailed account of what kind of student engagement happened after Snow White's question had been posed, I use this incident as a lead-in

to TCM reflections on the role of learning and education in our service learning practice. Snow White had challenged the thinking of her peers and her teachers in that moment, and the TCM girls came back to this idea in our group discussion. Belle began this train of thought;

*I want to say something about this like charity in school aspect (L1GD16BE)*

After having talked about how we needed to bring in the ‘bigwigs’ to listen to student voice, she had gained some momentum to her critical thinking about school practice, and she felt that as a group we needed to address it. She firstly apologised for steering the conversation her way, and then carried on with her idea;

*sorry, it's maybe off topic, but people were talking about how the school advertises with our PDWs to get people to come to our school. I feel like our school, is it an education centre? Is it a charity? Or is it a business? (L1GD16BE)*

Belle’s doubts about the motives of school practice having been solely educative show that she was aware of other forces that were perhaps stronger than a real commitment to learning. In her written reflection, Rapunzel also addressed the fact that students in the audience were being critical about the ‘real’ possible reasons behind the PDW trips;

*Clearly a lot of students have strong opinions about what goes on regarding service, and whether PDWs are a PR stunt or not (L1GD16RZ)*

From what she experienced in the forum, students, including TCM, were uncovering some real power relations at play, namely the hold that the school’s reputation, and, ultimately, students’ parents’ money had over practice. Students at this age (16 -18) are capable of being aware of underlying forces at play and

understanding how they are part of this system. Whilst not being able to formulate it in such terms, they can indeed become aware of the neoliberalist agenda of education as a commodity, and they can also challenge it if they are given the freedom to do so. After Belle's introduction to the topic in our group discussion (L1GD16), the conversation continued within the same vein;

CI: *But it's a non-profit organisation so it's not really a business*

BE: *But the school's board for example, like none of these people know who these people are, they're the ones...*

AU: *The director's like, they run it like a business though, that's their job*

Cinderella was trying to challenge the idea that the school could be seen as a business, as it was, as she was aware, termed a 'non-profit' organisation. Even though this might have meant that directors or members of the board were not pocketing any profits that the school made, the school still only existed due to the income that the school fees brought in. Whether this can be seen as a business or not is questionable, but it is interesting that Cinderella perceived it this way. What really seemed to make the school more 'business-like' for Belle was the distant and 'functional', rather than 'personal' relationship (Fielding & Moss, 2011) of the members of the 'board' with the students. Aurora's comment indeed sums up the nature of the 'functional' nature of the job of the people at the top. The whole school director, the biggest man at the top, was also an 'absent' figure within everyday school practice, and, to her, that is what the nature of his job was. Within this framework, perhaps there was simply not much hope for practice to be based entirely on learning as its motive. If the conditions were right though, and the student 'calls to action' as laid out in this chapter were taken into account, then there may have just been a glimmer of change peering around the corner at us. I know that if I have anything to do with it, these ideas will not

simply die out, and that glimmer of change might eventually show itself in all its sparkling glory. I can only hope.

My concluding thoughts in this chapter are inspired by a moment from the student forum itself. This moment tells me something about how the school community might just have been beginning to think about more democratic ways of working. One of the teacher panellists on stage reminded the students that in the current system, the teachers decided which trips were offered and which ones would run. He decided in that moment to ask all students in the room to raise their hands if they would rather see a student committee deciding on the trips. As the video camera recording the event was aimed at the stage, it is difficult to say how many students did raise their hands, however those students on stage and in the front row all did; this is visible on the footage.

More important however than whether the students did agree with this suggestion, is the fact that this teacher asked the question. I was surprised that he was thinking this way. This teacher was a PDW trip leader and was aware that Team Change Makers existed. He had not been part of the teacher PLC meetings as outlined in chapter six. Now, however, this teacher was sitting on a panel with some students, in front of the whole of grades 10 and 11, and he was throwing out the idea of a student PDW committee. For me, a teacher that was thinking this way, and thinking out loud in front of the students too, gave me signs that the school community was beginning to think about student voice, leadership and student choice. Without realising what he was doing in that moment, he was thinking about a more democratic way of working within the school. His involvement in events like this and seeing students being active, engaged and having a voice had triggered a thought and this speaks volumes to me. Managing to engage and involve other *teachers* in a collaborative, inquiring community is what enables the students to be

empowered. Yet student involvement is the trigger for this kind of teacher thinking. If teachers can see what democratic participation and student voice looks like, and can feel the change that can be brought about by this, then they can begin to question the status quo in which they find themselves. Ultimately, teachers are usually the ones with the keys to open doors within a school, but the reason to turn the key can most definitely come from the students. I will elaborate on these ideas further in my concluding chapter when I bring together the principles of inquiry. For now, they serve well as a lead in to a discussion about change and transformation that the next chapter brings. Firstly, however, I summarise the key messages from this chapter.

#### **7.4 Key messages**

This chapter makes the point that if we as practitioners are prepared to be *experimental* through bringing our inquiry into a more 'public' or community space, then this can lead to an increasing sense of momentum and change within our schools. If students are given the opportunity to engage with each other in a respectful, yet critical space, and to feel like they are being listened to and supported by teachers who are also open to dialogue, this can be an empowering process. As in the previous two chapters, it is this sense of being listened to that is a key aspect of creating this momentum, but if students see that a community of teachers are also opening themselves and their practice up to critique, students will respond in a respectful, considered and *responsible* manner when it comes to raising their voices. Students want to be listened to, but, ultimately, the right people need to be listening, and to be seen to be engaging with, and acting on what they hear. This action may not necessarily result in outcomes that students would demand, but an authentic and open chance to engage in dialogue is what students, and teachers, ultimately respect and appreciate. If we are

*experimental* yet *responsible* with our practice, and are *active* in fostering *consciousness*, or critical reflection, then students can also learn the value of these attributes and begin to embody them as learners.

## **8 Chapter 8: Meaningful involvement in inquiry: change to school practice**

*To educate is to both develop a pedagogic practice that respects the dignity of the other and also engages in the act of hope by opening the possibility of change. Authentic education is about the mutual process of becoming.*  
(Stevenson, 2012, p. 148)

The TCM students were interested in their research having been *meaningful*; they felt excited by the prospect of change and having a potential impact on their school community. What inspired me to include a chapter on this theme was a small amount of data collected after the ‘official’ process of data collection over one academic year, as I was working on the written presentation of this thesis. It is not the only data that forms the body of this chapter, however, as it was the last body of evidence that I collected, I would like the student researchers to have this final say in a more current moment. Staying true to the nature of student voice and collaboration in this inquiry, I would like the voices of the student researchers to remain with you in combination with my own.

Bridging the gap between the previous and current chapters, I begin however with two student reflections post PDW forum that I feel are particularly relevant. They both focus on the TCM students’ desire for change in our school and the recognition of the need to take action on issues that are important. In her post-forum written reflection, Rapunzel emphasised the fact that there needed to be more of a collaborative effort in order to drive this change;

*I think we as a whole need to also start stepping up in order to make what we think is right happen. I think that is has to be a combined effort (L1GCWRRZ)*

Reflecting on the forum event, the 'we' that she was referring to was the students; she was thinking beyond smaller research groups like our TCM and about the student body as a whole. Her call for the 'stepping up' of the students in a 'combined effort' was a call to action and student agency. For her, it was not enough to have small pockets of students working in isolation on a topic that involved everyone. Pocahontas summed up her peers' desire to talk and be heard in the forum as reason enough that such whole-school dialogue was something that needed to be cultivated within our school;

*I think the fact that so many people had things to say means that we need to do this more often, cos they really wanted to (L1GD16PO)*

She too was calling for change, for a move towards a school community that would see 'groups of people engaged in collective learning around a shared purpose' (Mirra, Garcia, & Morrell, 2016, p. 37) and an increased level of student participation in this shared cultural practice.

This chapter, I must say, was conceptualised very late on in the writing process, as the themes did not really emerge until the rest of the data sat in place in chapters five, six and seven. What I found was that the process of writing moved me in a full circle; my data took me back to the things that I believe in and, as a result of having been through the writing process, I feel like, at this time of writing, I am in a position to hope and dream even more, as I see how the students and others in my school community might also have begun to care. My data has energised and inspired me to continue believing and caring. In terms of the students beginning to care, it was driven by the impact that they felt they had begun to have on our school practice, and, as they hoped for further action that could lead to change, they began some 'alternative' thinking that could be seen as 'radical'. There are of course ethical



considerations to be taken into account with the fact that the students were stirred up by our project and then the reality of grade 12 and new school management brought them back down to earth again. By having created this sense of team identity as well as recognition from other peers and teachers, the TCM had become somewhat of a 'cult', and their sense of empowerment had energised them. Having the chance to have had an impact on school life was therefore all the more important for the girls.

I need to stress that the connection between meaningful collaborative inquiry and change is not a new idea in this research project; I had indeed always had this link in the back of my mind at the stage of research design. Returning to my initial research questions, this connection is clear to see;

*RQ: How does meaningful student and teacher involvement as collaborative inquirers into service learning model a pedagogy for service learning?*

- *What does meaningful teacher and student involvement in inquiry look like?*
- *How can I model meaningful involvement through my practice?*
- *How can my practice act as a catalyst for change?*

As mentioned in my introduction, I did not know what kind of change would be brought about as a result of this research inquiry, and what role it would play, but I was sure that some kind of change would happen. Through reflection on what made the research meaningful for the students, it was however the potential change to the school community that became an important factor for them. This chapter therefore focuses on the idea that change to school practice was what made our inquiry ultimately

*meaningful* for the student researchers, and, as an implication, this change continued to give me hope as a practitioner.

The themes in this chapter are presented under headings that are intended to represent a collective TCM voice in the present tense. There is no longer a reflection on what was, as in headings in other chapters, rather, here it is about looking forward to what could become. Whilst the narrative is in the past tense, referring to what the students said, the headings merge these reflections with the current moment, to make for a more urgent, currently relevant message about what is needed at our school. The students' thoughts merge with my own as I reflect on what it was that made our inquiry meaningful as a collaborative group and what implications this has for our school at the time of writing.

### **8.1 The impact on our community makes our research meaningful**

As a starting point, I take you back to a point in time at the end of the data collection process, when I was conducting individual interviews with the TCM girls. I was interested in how the girls felt about our project as the year was coming to a close. What emerged as a theme from all of the interviews was a sense of excitement and hope for changes that might happen within school as a result of our research. In her second interview at the end of the year, Pocahontas expressed her excitement about where she felt our research had taken her;

*Because I think it's really exciting what we're doing you know we have the opportunity to actually change you know not just do the research and then talk about it and just let it go (L1INT2PO)*

When asked what her hope for our research would be, she continued;

*I hope to see a change based on what we've done  
(L1INT2PO)*

For Pocahontas, what would make our inquiry meaningful was if it were to contribute to change within the school. Rapunzel expressed a similar sentiment;

*I think I want to know that what we did was worth something, just like know that what we did has a use, if that makes sense (L1INT2RZ)*

For Rapunzel, the inquiry would be valuable and meaningful to her if it were to be 'useful', in other words, if someone else beyond our group was actually interested in what we did and if it helped to contribute to a new way of thinking or working in the school. For Belle, speaking in her interview at the end of the year, there were already visible effects of our method of collaborative inquiry on school culture, as a new initiative had been introduced in her grade;

*shortly after we did this research team, there was also this 'PSHE task force', (L1INT2BE)*

The grade 11 leader, as a colleague in the teacher PLC on service learning, and as a leader of a service learning trip, had initiated a 'task force' of interested grade 11 students who were designing some PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) lessons for their grade, to be tried out before the end of the summer semester. This had never happened in our school before. Belle made the link between that initiative and our TCM inquiry, seeing them both as potential platforms for student voice and change. She continued with the hope that such actions would become something embedded in our school culture for the long-term;

*I feel like if this could be continued, like if we're done with school, that another group of students from the upcoming grades have a group like this, and have a group for those PSHE lessons (L1INT2BE)*

The change-maker idea was, in her opinion, taking hold and our inquiry was giving us a sense of allegiance with both successive cohorts of students and with colleagues (Lofthouse, 2014; Lofthouse et al., 2012).

As this data shows, change was something that would make our inquiry seem meaningful to the student researchers and they hoped for it. At the time of these end of year interviews, I felt very aware of the fact that I would be leaving the school for the following academic year, and therefore would not be there to witness any changes that may have happened with regards to service learning. If there were to be any changes, then these may have been due to some aspects of our inquiry over the year. However, without me there to follow up and physically be around, and with a new incoming headmaster that did not know the TCM girls and had not witnessed any of our involvement with other teachers and students, I was doubtful that anything would happen. At the time of the interviews however, it did occur to me that it would be interesting to follow up with the girls at the end of their grade 12, and to ask them how they felt looking back. In the final interview with Pocahontas, I stated this intention;

*So it will be good to reflect back at the end of grade 12 and see, yeah, "has what I have done had an influence on anything?" (L1INT2AL)*

Whilst reading the transcripts during the data analysis process, I noted and remembered that I had had this thought and desire, and, staying true to it, and considering it worth a try, I wrote an email (L1EM) to the TCM girls in March of their grade 12 year, just before they were about to leave the school on study leave for their final IB Diploma exams. The intention of the email had been to thank them once again for their participation in our inquiry and to let them know that I was almost there with writing about what we

did together, and secondly, I was curious about how they felt now about our project on reflection. I posed a very open question, not knowing what would come out of it and certainly not intending to use what they said in my thesis. I thought I had everything that I had wanted to say by this point, but, as I have already mentioned above, this chapter came into being very late on in the writing process. I asked the girls in my email;

*How do you feel about our project at this point in time now, looking back? Any comments are welcome!*  
(L1EMAL)

I did not talk about change intentionally, as I did not want to influence their thinking; the question was completely open. All seven girls replied to the email (five on the same day), and five out of seven mentioned the impact on and changes within the school community in relation to our inquiry. Those that did not talk about this aspect (Belle and Cinderella) mentioned how they had learnt the value of research as being part of CAS. What interested me though was how the theme of 'change' stood out.

Firstly, Rapunzel talked about the project having been 'worth it' due to what she has experienced in school since we worked together;

*Looking back I'm quite proud of what we achieved. I was talking to some teachers and the idea we worked on with shifting PDWs down to other grades has been implemented! I was quite surprised to hear it happened so soon but it's really nice to know that we were part of something that has now officially been put into action within the school community. Because of that I also feel like the project was really worth it, and hopefully it will help achieve our aim of improving service learning in the school* (L1EMRZ)

She was not claiming that it was her research that resulted in the changes that have subsequently been made to the PDW trips in school, however she felt that she *contributed* to this thinking. The

shift in practice showed her that processes of inquiry can lead to change. Mulan was also proud that TCM changes seemed to have been taken into account within school;

*I've heard from my brother who is in 10th grade now that the PDW system has changed dramatically... I'm happy to hear this as this was the proposal that our change maker team came up with (L1EMMU)*

Both girls knew that teachers were also working on service learning as they had been part of some of the PLC team meetings, but they also knew that they had collaborated with them and in that way had had their voices heard in some way. Pocahontas firstly filled me in on some changes that had been happening in school;

*I am not sure if you are aware of all the changes that have been made regarding CAS and PDWs but for example, they are now moving away from putting grade 12s on PDWs as we had suggested (L1EMPO)*

I was vaguely aware of some of the changes that she was referring to, as colleagues as friends had talked to me, but I thought that it was interesting that this was the first thing that she mentioned, and that she was comfortable in telling me as an 'insider' what had been going on. As a team, the TCM girls had talked about moving the PDW trips down into grades 10 and 11 and allowing the grade 12s the option to go, rather than making it compulsory for them. In grade 12 there was not enough time to invest in researching and building up a project in connection with the international service learning organisation, and this is what the TCM girls concluded after their own research projects and having talked to teachers during the PLCs. During the PDW Forum event as portrayed in chapter seven, this issue had been brought up as a possible option for wider discussion with their peers in grades 10 and 11. Pocahontas went on to express how these changes gave our inquiry some meaning for her;

*Honestly it is very fulfilling to see that what we researched and the meetings we participated in with teachers on Friday mornings have shaped and changed the way the school is now (L1EMPO)*

As with Rapunzel, her perception was that her own involvement as a student researcher had an impact on changed school practice. Whether it was the students' own personal involvement or not that did contribute to that change, her sense that she played a part in it does give value to the research that she was involved in. Her use of the word 'honestly' at the start of this comment indicates to me that she is trying to tell me that she really does feel this way, and is not just telling me what I might want to hear. I know that the 'Beyond the Bake Sale' teacher PLC continued in the academic year following our inquiry, and, whilst the TCM students themselves were not consulted any further, their proposals from their own research were part of the working material that the teachers had access to in their own PLC Google classroom space. It would be a huge claim to suggest that the changes in school would not have been made without the existence of TCM, as the seeds of doubt about PDWs and service learning practice had been sown prior to our year of collaborative inquiry, however, I cannot underestimate my own involvement in having sown those seeds. My practitioner role as a driving force for change did have an impact, and an important part of that force was having included students in the conversations. Chapters six and seven have presented evidence of this.

Snow White also mentioned this link between value and meaning of the research and the impact that she felt it had on the school;

*I still believe that the project we carried out was meaningful not only in terms of helpful skills that I have learned as part of my personal development, but also in terms of the impact it had on our community (L1EMSW)*

The fact that she said that she 'still' believed this, shows that these feelings had not changed after our project came to an end. Looking back from this stage of grade 12, the feeling of being *listened to* reoccurs as an important theme in Snow White's email;

*It was great to hear that teachers at the school listened to and reviewed our findings from our research and ultimately took the decision of making changes to the PDW system (L1EMSW)*

As I have argued already ethical practice in schools is when there is a culture of listening. This is not to say that whatever is voiced is always going to lead to change, however, the act of listening and acknowledging others' contributions is what leads to engagement and continued motivation and belief in what one is a part of. I argue in the concluding chapters for a relational pedagogy that stems from the willingness to listen and to act on what is heard, and the principles of *consciousness, action, responsibility and experimentation* are interconnected by the concept of dialogue; of active, reciprocal listening guided by a stance of caring. As the writing of this thesis has progressed, the act of listening has become something increasingly central to my stance of caring, and I see the link between the two as being fundamental to a framework for a 'Pedagogy of CARE'.

Continuing with Snow White's reflective comment above, she went on to clearly state her feelings about the importance of inquiry that involves students as researchers;

*I believe this shows how important it is to conduct such studies with some regularity whenever there is a need as the results might really reflect the way students feel about certain topics (L1EMSW)*

For her, our inquiry and the perceived impact that it had was enough to convince her that consulting students is something that



should happen within schools. Student voice projects can allow change to happen in her opinion, and our TCM collaboration and its connection to school practice have made her see that. Aurora felt a similar way; she linked the changes that have been made in school to a sense of our inquiry having been valuable to her. She commented;

*Knowing the amount of work that went into those changes and having been a part of the many discussions between students and teachers makes it all the more significant for me (L1EMAU)*

She had been part of a ‘behind-the-scenes’ development of changes to PDWs and her own personal involvement in discussions made her feel that she had been a valuable part of the changes that had been made;

*It really did show me that at our school, if students really speak up and try to have a voice (especially in regards to service learning), change is definitely possible (L1EMAU)*

Aurora talked about student voice and the link that this could have with regards to creating change. I could of course be fantastical about this comment as evidence that student voice can lead to change, but this would be generalising from a project that was so small in the grand scheme of education. However, as you know, I am not one to give up on hoping and imagining alternatives. Knowing as I do that this inquiry is a practice-based, highly subjective study of complex, multi-faceted human beings, I still find myself being ‘seduced’ by this student comment. I did not direct or influence what she said here, and this is what she feels on reflection, almost one year after the highs of having just been a moderator for the PDW Forum (chapter seven) or after having conducted interviews with her peers in her own independent research project. Whilst this quote may only be considered insignificant, it tells me something. It tells me that there can be

hope for student voice as a democratic practice that can lead to change. This inquiry is within my own context, but it should be valued for being so, as this is what the field of practitioner inquiry needs; beyond our schools and universities, we need to create a community of inquirers who are able to make that connection between theory and practice, and the more we share these ‘small triumphs’, the more we can hope for a radical alternative to the kind of neoliberal, market-driven approaches to education that we see happening all around us.

One final point needs to be made before I move on to the next chapter and link my data to my ‘Pedagogy of CARE’ and discuss further implications of my inquiry. In her final interview during the data collection process at the end of grade 11, Snow White made a comment that seems like an appropriate end to this chapter and a fitting lead into the ‘CARE’ framework that I subsequently propose. We had been talking about potential change within the school, and I asked Snow White what she thought it would take. She remarked;

*I think if some if any significant changes were to be made, perhaps like a bit more substantial research would have to be done? (L1INT2SW)*

Her thought had been posed as a question as if she was unsure of herself. However, she had, for me, hit the nail on the head. Rather than changes being made simply as a result of our TCM inquiry and what the TCM students had found out from their interviews and focus groups with some of their peers, Snow White was suggesting that what was needed was continued inquiry. Research made change credible and gave those making the changes something to back up their decisions. In Snow White’s mind, our research had been a start, but was not sufficient to warrant rash changes being made. This was an insightful observation. What our research had been, however, was a

significant part of the mechanism of change; we had given momentum to the turning of the cog wheels within a more powerful machine, and that was what had made it meaningful. Whilst having an impact on our school community was what made our research meaningful, for meaningful practice to happen, there needed to be research there in the first place. This is how meaningful practice is linked to the process of inquiry; my pedagogical principles and personal attributes in the framework *are* what meaningful, ethical inquiry looks like in my mind.

## **8.2 Key messages**

This chapter shows that for the students, what made our inquiry meaningful for them was that they felt that they had contributed to some kind of change within our school. Does this mean that when practitioner inquiry does not lead to some kind of change that it cannot be considered to be meaningful? Can the process itself be as meaningful as the outcome? For the TCM girls, it was the feeling that they had somehow ‘made a difference’ that counted. They had felt empowered through having been listened to, and what mattered to them in the end was that they felt as though they may have had some kind of a legacy. So is it the legacy or the change itself that counts, or the intent and the process? Is there a difference between what we as teachers and researchers value and what our students value? If we care about the learning process, should we expect our students to do the same? Does that matter? I think that it does. The more that we can show our students what caring *looks* like, the more they will learn to believe in what they read and see in policies, documents, curricula and the media. If students learn to value the efforts, the hopes, and the ethical actions, underpinned by values, within their own learning communities, then the more they will learn that a small act within a small community can be much more meaningful than an empty, detached act aimed at saving the world. Change is slow, but when

we feel a sense of momentum, that is what gives us power to continue to hope and dream. In the next two chapters I bring all of these thoughts together, returning firstly to my 'Pedagogy of CARE' as a pedagogical framework, then discussing further implications specific to practitioner inquiry and international education. I leave you then with my concluding thoughts in my own 'educational manifesto' in the final chapter.

## 9 Chapter 9: Implications: Re-imagining ethical practice

*Re-imagining relationships in education, for us, has to do with how one's understanding is framed, how it can be expanded and why one tends not to listen for or see that which has not yet come into existence. This way of listening would entail listening for the initiative, for intentionality. If a person's actions are motivated by (active) love she will try to listen for this intentionality, for the other whom she loves' (Hoveid & Finne, 2015, p. 85)*

This inquiry has undoubtedly been a journey, and this thesis has been its manifestation. I started out with my beliefs and was open to where they would take me, knowing however that it was my stance of caring that ultimately influenced my act of caring. As I approach the end of this particular journey, my learning, dreaming, questioning and hopes for social justice have not ended; rather, they have taken on a new significance that my inquiry has given them, and I feel that I now have more of an 'informed voice' (Wall, 2018) that allows me to consider and discuss implications for educational practice. Having begun this thesis with my convictions about what ethical educational practice for social justice and democratic participation could look like it now draws towards a conclusion through a discussion of the principles and attributes within my 'Pedagogy of CARE' (chapter four) in light of my data. The framework for a 'Pedagogy of CARE' aims to bring together the processes of questioning and acting that I have come to understand as being fundamental to practitioner inquiry that is collaborative and ethical in its nature. Without questioning, acting becomes unethical, and without acting, questioning remains unethical. In turn, without values, practice is unethical and without practice, values remain static.

The framework, as discussed in chapter four, is my own contribution to the fields of practitioner inquiry, student voice

research and service learning within an IB setting. It should be regarded as something that can guide the formation of schools' or individual practitioners' own values, missions and practice, as what others care about may well be worlds apart from what I care about. However, its intentions to guide democratic, social-justice oriented education are evident in its principles and attributes, and they cannot be ignored if the framework is to prove useful. The framework should also not be seen as a set of principles that should be imposed upon teachers, as this would go against the authentic, situation-bound and specific process-informed nature in which it was conceived. Rather, I hope that the framework can be seen as way of conceptualising what I have found out through this inquiry, and can serve as the basis for an argument for a type of teaching and learning that is driven by and practised through caring.

Through my framework, I am not making any claims to having any concrete answers or solutions; rather I am humbly suggesting that, in a 'historical present that cries out for emancipatory visions' (Denzin, 2017, p. 8) educators working with young adults should base their practice on ethical principles of collaboration. In a time of 'audit cultures of neoliberalism' (Denzin, 2017, p. 8), it is paramount that we search for new modes of inquiry that address inequalities in education and beyond; inquiry that 'embraces the global cry for peace and justice' (Denzin, 2017, p. 8).

I feel that I need to emphasise that is not only within schools and education 'in practice' that I see my framework being valuable, but also within the educational research community. Such qualitative, context-bound, practitioner-led inquiries should be accepted as examples of rigorous and valuable contributions of research that have been driven by fundamental ethical principles, and that have been brave enough to embrace the complexity of multidisciplinary research and throw off the straightjackets of the paradigms that

seek to confine them. Qualitative researchers-as-bricoleurs, as mentioned in chapter three (3.3.6), are those that invent or piece together new tools or techniques (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011); in this way they are both *experimental* and *active*. Additionally, whilst being *critical* in their intentions and approach, the critical bricoleur reconfigures the power relations of those involved in the inquiry (Canella & Lincoln, 2011), being both *conscious* and *responsible* in their ethical, participatory intentions. I would argue therefore that classroom practitioners and the research world have something to learn from each other, and that the principles and attributes of my 'Pedagogy of CARE' are clear guidelines for the kinds of inquirers who are intentionally and fundamentally ethical within the world of educational research and practice.

### **9.1 Principles and attributes: values in action**

Just as caring is 'both a practice and a disposition' (Tronto, 1993), so are the elements of this framework. The principles and personal attributes of *consciousness/ conscious, action /active, responsibility/ responsible and experimentation / experimental* underpin a 'Pedagogy of CARE' as an ethical educational practice that is understood in the sense of *praxis*; an interweaving of dialogue and problem-posing (Freire, 1970), a bringing together of questioning and acting, a sense of 'knowing what one is doing *in the doing of it*' (Kemmis, 2010; Marx, 1845); a form of 'conscious, self-aware action' (Kemmis, 2010; Aristotle, 2003). As teachers, as human beings, we can all have principles, but they are not enough; we need to *do* something with them, embody them and bring them alive through our collaboration with others. Caring, at its most general level (Tronto, 1993) is 'some kind of engagement', a 'reaching out to something other than the self' (p. 102). The principles and attributes outlined in this framework embody this idea for me, and, in its values-driven approach,

linking social justice intentions with democratic participation, it is a practice that is fundamentally ethical.

The pyramid model as introduced in chapter four (4.1) is shown here once again (Figure 33). As already mentioned, it is the interrelationship of the pedagogical principles and personal attributes that is important to understanding what my inquiry has been about, and it is this interrelationship that I hope has been demonstrated through my data in the four previous chapters.

As I 're-imagine' collaborative inquiry through the lens of these principles and attributes in this chapter, I hope to further emphasise their interdependent nature, making the point that ethical pedagogical practice is where values influence action and action influences values. My principles (*consciousness, action, responsibility and experimentation*) are my values of inquiry, and my attributes (*conscious, active, responsible and experimental*) are these values in action, embodied by the inquirer. They are all intentionally underpinned by the stance and the act of caring.

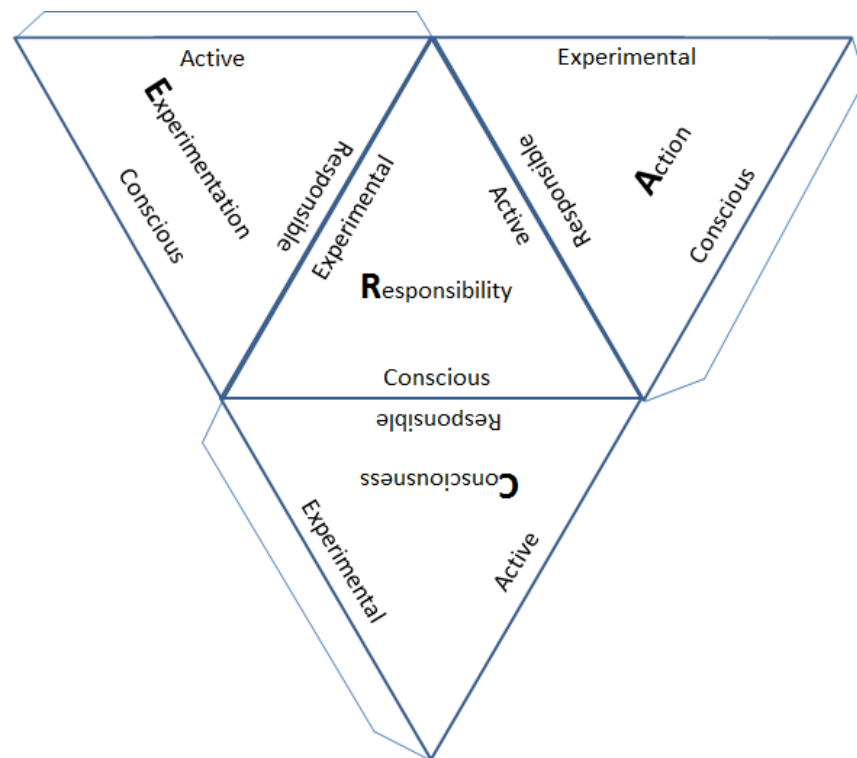


Figure 33: Pyramid Model for a Pedagogy of CARE



## **9.2 A pedagogy of CARE: A practice of consciousness, action, responsibility and experimentation by conscious, active, responsible and experimental inquirers**

Before considering the implications of the principles and attributes that underpin my pedagogical framework, I provide a brief overview of how I understand them, and relate them back to my TCM inquiry as presented through the data in chapters five to eight.

### **9.2.1 Consciousness / being conscious**

The principle of *consciousness* is about being critical and being aware of the values that inform actions. As a *conscious* practitioner, I was a key member of TCM, being open about and adhering to ethical principles of research and creating the core momentum that initiated and kept the different collaborative spaces going. Throughout the inquiry, students became increasingly *conscious* about the hierarchical structures around them and the way that they responded to them. Through being engaged in an ongoing process of critical reflection, exploring our positionalities and questioning the status quo, we were a group of *conscious* inquirers, involving ourselves in different collaborative, dialogic spaces. Through our partnership, the students developed an increasing sense of *consciousness* about student voice and the power that collaboration with teachers could have, and they also came to understand that service learning practice could move beyond the idea of 'charity' to one based on mutual understanding and reciprocity. Through problematising our own position as international students and the way that we engaged with other communities in our service learning relationships, students became more *conscious* and therefore more empowered and motivated to act towards change within our school. This brings me onto the principle of *action*.

### **9.2.2 Action / being active**

The principle of *action* is about exercising agency with critical intent. As we acted as TCM, we were exploring and becoming aware of our values and we acted with intentionality towards change and transformation in service learning practice and dialogue between students and teachers at our school. We were *active* inquirers, engaging in an evolving process of collaborative research, with ever-increasing momentum directed towards changed practice. As an *active* practitioner, I was guided by my beliefs and the importance of caring, and translated these values into my own behaviours. Believing in democratic participation, I created the spaces for student voice and took the lead in demonstrating what student-teacher collaboration could look like in front of other teaching colleagues and students. As the inquiry progressed and the TCM girls understood more about service learning and what other students felt about it, as a result of their own research projects, they felt more empowered to exercise their own agency and to contribute towards a changed practice within school. Rather than simply accepting changes to PDW trips that teachers would make, the TCM students, along with their peers ultimately, felt the impact that their voices could have, and became less satisfied with being passive objects of teacher decisions.

### **9.2.3 Responsibility / being responsible**

The principle of *responsibility* is about engaging in a respectful, reciprocal relationship that is grounded in a process of active, intentional listening. It is about creating opportunities for dialogue where the participants in the exchange acknowledge one another in their alterity and voice is a fundamental value. The TCM inquiry was, in every phase or 'cog wheel', based on listening to others and acknowledging different perspectives. As a *responsible*

practitioner, I ensured that the students were aware of my own positionality as a teacher undertaking research for an academic award, and that I had democratic intentions of participation that I aimed to address and fulfil. I did not push the students into situations that were beyond the practicalities of everyday school life, and I was open with them about this, and respectful of their further commitments. Working as a small group, establishing our identity with 'Disney Princess' pseudonyms, modelling a practice of patient, active listening, I was aiming to show the students what *responsibility* looked like. Working towards a service learning practice that was more critical, I engaged students in dialogue about what more reciprocal service learning could look like, and, together with the democratic nature of their participation, this social justice intent gave our practice a further element of *responsibility*.

#### **9.2.4 Experimentation / being experimental**

The principle of *experimentation* is about thinking differently, being brave and not being afraid of exposure to critique. For the momentum to set in within the community of inquirers at our school, I was being an *experimental* practitioner through opening up further spaces beyond our small group TCM and through seeking dialogue with others. The method of our collaborative inquiry was open and evolving, not bound by particular tools or methods, but responding to practicalities of working life within school. The 'methodological bricolage' (Kincheloe, McClaren & Steinberg, 2011, p. 168) that characterised our inquiry (3.3.6) reflected the need to be experimental, and not to be bound by a single method (Kincheloe, 2001). The TCM students were also *experimental* in that they were willing to try out the idea of TCM in the first place, open themselves up to me and each other, and then to step into new relationships with other teachers and their peers, sharing their knowledge in a potentially 'risky' way.

Experimentation as a principle was balanced by *responsibility* so that students knew that they would come to no harm in their new endeavours.

What is important to stress once again, as was the case in chapter four, and why I have conceived of the pyramid model to represent this framework, is that it is the interrelation and interdependency of these principles and attributes that makes them ethical practice. If being *conscious* or *experimental* were to be critiqued as potentially harmful or dangerous, then it should not be forgotten that they are co-dependent on the principles of *responsibility* and *action*. If it could be said that *action* involves any kind of practice, then the fact that it is interrelated with consciousness and critical intent would be being overlooked. It is the way that these principles and attributes work together in a number of different collaborative spaces within schools that makes them the basis for a practice that is ethical.

I am aware that my framework reflects my own biases and that it was conceived within my own context of an international 'high school' and an inquiry that had student research participants who were 16-18 years old. In my mind therefore it seems most appropriate for 'young adults' at high school or upper secondary school age, although I am not suggesting that it could not be applied to younger or older learners. Teachers know the context of their schools and their learners better than anyone else, so they would be best placed to decide how it would be appropriate and applicable in their own settings. Indeed, questions of 'justice, power and praxis that haunt us' (Kincheloe, 2012, p. 154) need to be asked time and again by teachers within their 'different historical times and diverse pedagogical locales' (Kincheloe, 2012, p. 155). Within secondary international education however, there has been surprisingly little research undertaken on student voice and participatory approaches to practitioner inquiry, so I feel that

this framework is a contribution to that field in particular. Through my recent and ongoing involvement in an IB curriculum review team for CAS (Creativity, Activity, Service), I am aware that there is a lot of thinking going on currently about the IB educational philosophy and the nature and aims of CAS, so I hope that the principles outlined in this framework will also prove useful in those discussions. I intend to play an active role in contributing to a reconceptualisation of CAS and service learning within the IB, and, with the lack of research undertaken within IB education that focuses on a critical approach to service learning, I hope to have an impact within that field.

The rest of this chapter considers these principles and attributes in light of practitioner inquiry and international education, and I suggest some ways forward based on what I have come to understand them to mean and imply. I end with implications for me as a professional learner before moving onto my final concluding thoughts in chapter ten, where I aim to end with a powerful message about what I believe as a result of this inquiry.

### **9.3 Being critical and facing the political**

The first implication that I suggest if educational practice is to be ethical is that there is a commitment to being critical and being open about the political nature of our teaching and our research. Through doing so, all principles and attributes of my framework are adhered to.

A commitment to a social justice stance within practitioner inquiry is necessary in my mind, and this comes with a critical and political approach. Such a commitment is influenced by the idea that education is for transforming society, not for reproducing it (Siraj-Blatchford, 1994). It is also informed by critical pedagogy in which education has a political foundation, and is 'not viewed as a

neutral enterprise, but rather as a contested terrain' (Darder, Mayo, & Paraskeva, 2012, p. 1). An important element of being *critical* is questioning power relationships within educational institutions and the wider world. In turn, the *action*, or active position (Stephenson & Ennion, 2012) is then about striving to address what one uncovers. I would therefore suggest that in order for practitioner inquiry to meet its emancipatory (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) and ethical (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2007) intentions, more practitioner research needs to be carried out that is bold, brave and risky; this means adhering to the principles and attributes of my framework.

Such a practice involves teachers having the courage to see themselves as educators engaged in a 'deeply political act that joins together the possibility of a more just future without betraying the idealism that is necessary to the purpose of education in a democratic social order' (Stevenson, 2012, p. 148). The stories that teachers tell do not need to be highly performative (Judah & Richardson, 2006), telling the public what they want to hear; rather, the interests of practitioners and consequential stakeholders are what are more important in terms of the 'broader critical project' (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2007, p. 202). Practitioners need to admit that schools are cultural and political sites (Giroux, 1988) and develop a discourse that 'combines the language of critique with the language of possibility' (Giroux, 1988, introduction).

Within IB education, teachers and school leadership teams need to recognise and not be afraid of the political dimension of education, becoming *active* rather than passive as we fight against unjust practices. In order to nurture and promote *responsible*, caring practitioners, schools need to 'take seriously the political context, and the inherent power relationships, within moral theories and situations' (Tronto, 1993, p. 5). Schools need

to realise that moral arguments have a political context and that denying this would be at their own peril (Tronto, 1993, p.3). As Wright (2012) points out, the usual critique of a *critical* pedagogy that does recognise the political dimension is that it is a 'form of soapbox propaganda for various leftisms' (p. 62). However, such a critique misunderstands the *process* involved, which is one of 'ceaseless questioning rather than of reinforcing dogmatisms' (Wright, 2012, p. 62). Wright goes on to say that humanist Marxism certainly does influence critical pedagogy, but it is the praxis of critique and listening that is important, and not a reliance or focus on class struggle.

I am aware that bringing the political nature of our subjectivity into our classrooms may cause upset or, in some international school settings, be an impossible task, due to existing power structures that benefit from keeping the status quo exactly as it is. Those who dominate and gain from this mainly private, 'Western-style' education that international schools offer are not interested in challenging hegemonies; their style of education is to 'domesticate' rather than 'liberate' (Darder, Mayo & Paraskeva, 2016, p.1). An example would be families who hold political power in certain countries benefitting from the international 'connections' and prestige that sending their children to international schools brings with it. In this way, the 'international' lives out its symbolic power (Basaran & Olsson, 2018). Indeed, within some international school settings, international school students may be in a 'unique position to bring about social change' due to 'inherited positions of power and influence' (Dunne & Edwards, 2010, p. 24) and a strong identification with the host country. However, if their attendance at an international school is in fact a conscious move towards maintaining and reproducing existing socio-economic privilege (Cambridge, 2003; Pearce, 2007), then the hope of instilling a sense of social responsibility within such students becomes much more challenging. Any educator representing

values of an international education who does not embody these is not interested in education as a liberating force, and should not be welcome. If a school simply prefers to preserve more dominating pedagogies to accept reality as 'all there is' and as all there can be (Garland, 2017) and to give in to neoliberalist attempts to 'convert education into forms of technical training' (Stevenson, 2012, p. 148), then, along with Freire (2007) I condemn it and remain hopeful that it is the teachers, as intellectuals in their fields of practice, who can challenge this and bring about change.

#### **9.4 Re-thinking 'dominant' language**

The context of my inquiry was indeed service learning, and my initial research question and title of this thesis reflects this. I therefore want to include a brief implication for service learning practice that is relevant to the principles and attributes of my framework, as this is ultimately an important field within which I work and in which I hope to have some influence. Whilst my inquiry was a first step towards an eventual practice of engaging in *critical* service learning in my school, as outlined in chapter two (2.4), we were not engaging in critical service learning per se. Whilst I would recommend my participatory approach to service learning practice (Wasner, 2016), and my framework can be applied, it is also relevant to any other topics, subjects or contexts within schools.

My recommendation for a way forward for service learning is that international schools consider the language that is used and the discourse that is constructed. Thinking from a critical perspective, 'linguistic descriptions are not simply about the world but serve to construct it' (Kincheloe, 2012, p. 163), therefore the word 'service' and the phrase 'making a difference' need to be used with caution.



These terms both suggest a discourse of domination and a stark sense of self and other; doing something *for* someone rather than *with*. I suggest that international education, and specifically the pedagogy of service learning, needs a language of *solidarity* rather than one of domination in order to meet the needs of *conscious* and *responsible* practice. The idea of being *interdependent* of one-another is something that does appear with the IB Learner Profile, within the attribute of 'balanced'; 'we recognise our interdependence with other people and the world in which we live' (IBO, 2015). However, if international schools, regardless of location, only recognise that they have something to give others from a privileged standpoint of being from a 'Western' educational system, this means that there is no sense of 'listening carefully to marginalized groups' (Kincheloe, 2012, p. 156) and what they can offer. Such attention to 'indigenous knowledge' (Kincheloe, 2012) and reciprocity in our relationships with others is something that is needed for an evolving pedagogy with a critical intent. The fields of global citizenship education, intercultural communication or critical pedagogy could offer hope for a language that is more liberating than the concept of 'helping' or 'making a difference'.

Interestingly, in explaining how 'international mindedness' can be encouraged and how power and privilege can be critically considered, the IBO adds an explicit statement about *service* as a means to achieving this; 'International -mindedness is also encouraged through global engagement and meaningful service with the community' (IBO, 2017, p.2). In this latest paper by the IBO in which its educational philosophy is outlined (IBO, 2017) there is specific reference to service *learning*, but with the link between a critical consideration of power and privilege and service with the community, the hope is that *critical* service learning, as outlined in chapter two, may just be a way forward.

## 9.5 A commitment to voice

Through a commitment to voice, there is a commitment to all of the principles and attributes outlined in my framework. An authentic commitment would be driven by authentic needs and by *conscious, active, responsible* and *experimental* practitioners with 'quite different starting points and quite different dispositions and intentions' (Fielding, 2001, p. 124) than 'capitalist-friendly' (McClaren, 2005) student voice, simply fitting into today's neoliberalist, economy-driven culture (Gandin & Apple, 2002; Giroux, 2014; Jordan & Kapoor, 2016). Student voice, or anything that becomes 'mainstream' or part of the dominant discourse, becomes 'stifling rather than empowering' (Fielding, 2001, p. 123) when not driven from a genuine stance of caring.

Student voice is 'not something you switch on and off' (Wall, 2018b), rather it is a commitment to democratic principles of participation and the idea of pedagogical relationships within a *personalist* rather than functionalist approach to education (Fielding & Moss, 2011). A kind of pedagogy with such a commitment is one of solidarity that challenges the kind of 'market-driven values and social relations' and the 'virtues of unbridled individualism' (Giroux, 2014, p. 2) that are part of the neoliberalist ideology that has gripped our world (Fielding, 2014; Fielding & Moss, 2011). There needs to be an investment in the kinds of relationships that are not only there to serve one's own individual interests (Giroux, 2014), but ones that value listening and dialogue. We need to remember that 'we matter in an existential sense as persons, not just as citizens' (Fielding, 2014, pp. 517-518) and that we are interdependent of each other in our struggle to make the world a better place. As Giroux (2014) points out, neoliberal ideology has 'construed as pathological any notion that in a healthy society people depend on one another in multiple, complex, direct, and indirect ways' (Giroux, 2014, p. 7);there

needs to be an alternative approach to pedagogy that counters this ideology.

In relating democratic participation to the principles and attributes laid out in my framework, I focus here on the act of *listening*. I have learnt something about the value of listening and how this relates to the stance of caring. There is a difference between listening that is simply part of a job, that is void and empty of intentions, and listening that is open, intentional and responsive. Empty listening is pretence or an obligation, an expectation, involving a reaction to content that is heard, but not a response. Such listening is 'functionalist' rather than 'personalist' (Fielding & Moss, 2011) as mentioned above in terms of relationships. Listening is certainly a prerequisite for voices to be heard, but it is also not enough. The intent of subsequent action, the willingness to engage in dialogue and in a process of understanding rather than simply 'hearing', is what makes a *responsible* listening process. I do not want to enter into a meeting with someone where I know that I am wasting my time. I want to know that this person is open to what is said and that the act of listening is not the end-point. My listener needs to be able to offer me hope that what I say is valued, and, whether or not it is in line with what that person agrees, I want to feel that my voice matters. Such listening is based on a sense of what Fielding (2014; 2016) calls 'democratic fellowship'; an 'insistence on the necessity of human significance' (Fielding, 2014) that 'at once presumes and transcends the necessary and proper requirements of rights' (Fielding, 2014, p. 517). If practitioners are *conscious* and *experimental* enough to engage in *action* that commits to listening, then practice also becomes *responsible*.

Within schools, decisions are all too often made that are based on practical issues; practice is guided by practicalities, with no room left anymore for vision. International schools in particular, with the

capacity to choose to move away from a culture of performativity enslaved by league tables and national curricula, should have no excuse to make decisions based firstly on ideology. Thinking back to the quote at the start of this thesis (Lofthouse, 2014), I would like to add to it based on what this research journey has taught me. I would like to be able to 'imagine an education system in which *all members of the school community* had the *opportunity and* disposition to act truly and justly according to their values and moral stance' (Lofthouse, 2014, p.17 my additions in italics). Just as listening is a prerequisite for voice, so is opportunity a prerequisite for acting on dispositions. Just as listening is not enough, neither is a disposition that cannot be acted upon. Without teacher voice, there can be no student voice. Without democratic practice, there can be no belief in or teaching about democracy. Without questioning, acting is empty. Without acting, listening is empty. Without learning, teaching is empty. Without caring, being human is empty. If practitioners are *conscious, active, responsible* and *experimental*, then there is hope and that is ultimately what allows me to continue dreaming and caring.

## **9.6 Teachers as role models**

*Adults who know that they will serve as models.... have a special responsibility. They show what it means to care by caring. However, their role as model should not overwhelm their actual caring. We do not 'care in order to model caring; we model care by caring* (Noddings, 2010, p. 147)

This final implication is what I see to be the most important outcome of my inquiry and it is where I see the how the principles and attributes of my framework interrelate with each other the most.

As a teacher, I am ultimately a role model for my students. Whether I like it or not, I am positioned to be able to exert a significant amount of influence over my students. So what does

this mean for my pedagogy and what could it mean for other teachers? How should teachers respond to the powerful position that they are in? The answer, in my view, is that firstly, we should act according to our beliefs, and secondly, we should be open to forming new beliefs through acting. Teaching and learning is ultimately ethical practice, driven by moral convictions within an ethics of care (Noddings, 1987; 1988). Teachers show what they believe in and care about by modelling these beliefs and values .If we believe in democracy, we act according to democratic principles. If we believe in social justice, we act with justice aims in mind. If we care, we show this through caring.

One aspect of teachers being role models is through their fundamentally important role as collaborative partners in student group projects or inquiries within school. In order for a culture of collaborative inquiry to take hold in a school, and in order for the cog wheels to keep on turning, the 'core' momentum, the 'team' of inquirers who drive the rest of the machine, needs to consist of a cross-grade group of students together with at least one teacher. My 'Team Change Makers' group was the initial core momentum needed to set other collaborative spaces into motion, however it would have been even more effective in terms of school change if students could have carried on the momentum after the girls made it into grade 12 when other school demands made it difficult for them to keep going. Even if a co-collaborator in the form of a teacher did happen to leave, as I did for the year following our inquiry, having students from different grades still there would have allowed for that 'core' cog wheel to keep on turning. As my data has shown, I would of course argue that having a teacher in that 'core' team is essential, regardless of the amount of facilitation or involvement that that teacher may have. In terms of 'true' participation with regards to Hart's (1992) ladder, an ideal participatory scenario would see the tables turned and students initiating the inquiry and involving adults in their project; however,

the reality of the way that most schools function does limit this. A school culture that promoted student-led inquiry and change initiatives as part of its regular way of working however would allow for this to happen more naturally.

As Freire (1970) phrases it; ‘To say one thing and do another – to take one’s own word lightly – cannot inspire trust’ (p. 72). This is what my framework is about; it is about acting and learning as moral agents and pedagogical role-models in a practice based on consciousness, action, responsibility and experimentation. As teachers and researchers, there may well be a profound difference between what we value and what our students value, as our education and experience have taken us beyond the developmental stage of adolescence, and we belong to our own ‘communities of practice’ (Wenger, 1998) that have certain criteria for determining what is valuable or ‘useful’ (Paetcher, 2003). However, the hope is that we can help our students to learn what it looks like to participate in a world where adults have the courage, conviction and, importantly, the opportunity, to act according to our beliefs. Through being *conscious*, *active*, *responsible* and *experimental* practitioners in collaboration with our students, we can teach them that we care about and show them what this caring looks like. This is, for me, what I have come to understand ethical practice to mean.

### **9.7 What about me?**

Now, I am not going to forget myself in all of this. This thesis began with me and it should end that way too. It is *my* voice and not that of my student researchers, that should ultimately resonate with you, as this thesis, as the academic manifestation of my own transformation as a professional learner, is something that I claim as my own. Call that a blatant exercise of power if you will, but in the end, the buck stops with me with this writing, and I am

unashamedly claiming that power, just for a while, as the teacher - researcher on whose practice this thesis is based.

Reflecting on where I was five years ago compared to where I am now, I can say with certainty that I have changed profoundly. Just as my students felt that the act of inquiry had empowered them, and that they were beginning to have a voice within their community, I feel that my own journey as a practitioner-researcher has also given me a voice, and that I am beginning to be acknowledged by communities that I would never have felt that I belonged to before. As a service learning and CAS coordinator, I feel that my voice is being heard within the IB community. I am able to speak with increasing confidence about ethical ways forward for service learning and CAS practice, and presentations, papers and being part of an IB CAS curriculum review team have enabled me to feel like I may be having an impact. Since beginning my doctoral studies, in my school I have moved from being a German teacher to taking on the CAS and service learning leadership roles, training teachers in the high school on service learning and an inquiry-led, participatory approach to local and global issues in the curriculum, and mentored students and teachers on developing student-initiated collaborative projects. Having been away from my school for one year in order to write this thesis has been both a lonely and at the same time energising process. What has given me the confidence to see myself as a 'researcher' or as an emerging 'academic' has been networking with other colleagues from both within and beyond the discipline of education, presenting to them and, in one instance, also collaborating on a contribution to a paper (Mayes et al, 2017). I have realised that there is a need to transcend the dualistic idea of 'practice' and 'research' and that being a practitioner engaged in inquiry is a powerful act of transformation.

So the big question is whether I can return to my roles as teacher and coordinator within my school and not be disappointed or 'lonely' in my new-found sense of becoming an 'academic' and what I feel that I have learnt through my research. I know that the day-to-day life of being a full-time teacher will take its toll on me, and that I will not have the same opportunities to travel around networking, presenting and feeling a sense of achievement and acknowledgement. I know that my dreams of democratic participation within school may have to be put on the back burner if I cannot find my voice with the new school leadership, who do not know me or what I have built up in my role. I wonder whether it is in fact unethical for a teacher like me to be able to learn 'beyond' my educational setting and then to return to it feeling a sense of loss for the time and opportunity I had to engage in reading and thinking. For the majority of this journey I was, however, undertaking this doctorate in a full-time teaching position, and I made time for the learning. I saw a practical application to what I was learning and, whether or not my colleagues cared about my research, I was able to act as an *informed* professional. There have been moments along the way where I have begun to critique the rather undemocratic ways of decision-making and processes in our school, and where I have questioned the system of education in which I find myself. However, through having become used to analysing my own actions through an ethical lens, and through having become a critically reflective practitioner of the kind that I was most certainly not in my earlier years of teaching prior to embarking upon this inquiry, I have managed to negotiate my way through many different professional relationships.

Taking all this into account, what I do know is that this doctoral journey has given me the foundation that I need to keep on believing, dreaming and hoping in education as a transformative force. In fact, moving beyond it, I can look back on this thesis with



a sense of wonder that I managed it, and enjoy the freedom that I will have to continue to read, write and work towards what I care about. As an 'unfinished being' (Freire, 1970), I will never stop questioning, and, as a dreamer, I will never stop caring.

## 10 Chapter 10: My educational manifesto

In the presentation of my arguments in this concluding section of my thesis, I take my lead from the style of a manifesto or Dewey's 'Pedagogic Creed' (Dewey, 2013), where my writing is seen as a call to action. The 'Children's Manifesto' (2001), the result of a competition 'The School I'd Like' by The Guardian newspaper in 2001, also caught my attention and made me think of how to present my thoughts. This manifesto from 2001 (Birkett, 2001) is written as though the children are speaking, and it is clear and concise to the reader. When comparing the 2001 entries to the first competition that had been run in 1967 by The Guardian's sister newspaper the Observer, it is noteworthy that the one plea that 'united' both competitions was 'being heard' (Birkett, 2001). Birkett then goes on to say that this plea was also unfortunately 'the one that has largely been ignored' (Birkett, 2001).

For me, being heard and listening are vital to an education system that I dream of. Ultimately, when one cares about something, one wants to speak. When one cares about the person speaking, one listens. What follows is therefore my own manifesto for education. It is written from my own perspective as a teacher-researcher in an international school, calling upon others in the same situation to join me in my thinking. It is my voice, but, as I belong to a community of teachers, it is written to express what 'I feel 'we' as a community need. It is not written in order to influence a political election campaign, but to interest anyone concerned with what an alternative education system could look like. You don't have to be a dreamer like me to consider it worthy, but, having read the rest of this thesis, you can hopefully understand where it comes from.

## **10.1 Caring about education: An international high school teacher's manifesto**

### **10.1.1 The Teacher**

**We need to listen to our students.** We can all achieve things for ourselves, but if nobody is listening to us, there can seem no point. It is our job as teachers to listen to the students and to give them the opportunity to be heard. This does not mean that we simply 'appear' to be listening, but we act on what we hear, and show the students what happens to their opinions.

**We need to listen to each other.** A school is not a playground where different cliques play off against one another. It is a place where our colleagues are valued for the contribution that they can make. We may not always agree with what others care about or are trying to achieve, but we respect each other in the process, and allow voices to be heard. We do not see each other as competitors, but as fellow humans with values similar or different to our own. We all have a shared goal of believing in the power of education and we all play our part in our community in our own way.

**We need to see ourselves as learners.** We should not pretend that we are owners of knowledge and that we have something 'finished' or 'complete' to deliver. We should be open and honest about ourselves as inquirers and we should present ourselves in this way to our students and colleagues. There is no room for ego. We are not in the teaching profession so that we can wield our power over others and speak the loudest, drowning out others' voices.

**We need to see ourselves as mentors.** We are not deliverers of knowledge or merely facilitators of learning. As teachers, we are

mentors, role models and guides for our students. We are guardians of learning, able to recognise the potential of our students and to draw on what they are capable of.

### **10.1.2 The School**

**We need a school that listens to us.** This means that those in power should not see themselves as untouchable, all-knowing individuals who are above others in the school community. There should be no holding on to power for fear of being exposed. Every person in the school community should feel that there is a way of contributing to a discussion or a decision, even if they are not the ones who speak the loudest or whose face fits.

**We need a school that listens to our students.** When individual teachers listen to our students, this is not enough; we need others in the school community to do the same. Leadership in a school should not be a 'top-down' approach, but rather one that commits to engaging with students in genuine, ongoing and trustworthy relationships. Decisions should not be made on the whims of people in power who sit hidden away in offices, but by informed professionals who have reached out to the student body to hear what they feel and want.

**We need a school that lives out its own values.** We need to believe in our school. We need to know and understand the values of the school we work in and see them as part of everyday school life. We need to see ourselves as part of a school community and not lone, isolated voices. If our school does not respect its own values, then we will not respect them, and in turn the students will not respect them either.

**We need a school that is not afraid of change.** Holding onto policies and guidelines just because time was invested in them is

not a successful way to work. Times change, people change, the world changes. A school is not an institution that is set in stone, but a moving, growing, ever-changing place of learning.

**We need a school that values inquiry.** High school teachers are so caught up in the demands of their subject area (s) that there is no time or opportunity for them to realise that teaching *is* a process of inquiry. Teachers should not inquire for the sake of it, as a result of someone else's agenda or fad, but they should be given the opportunity to plan for inquiry if this is what they desire. They may not know they desire it however if the school does not encourage and support it. As long as a school ultimately views teachers as being accountable for grades, and not for the learning processes that go on in and outside the classrooms, then there can be no hope for teachers in the role of inquirers.

### **10.1.3 The Community Partners**

**We need reciprocal relationships with local and international communities.** We have something to offer others and they have something to offer us. We need our school to be less of an island and see it as part of a local and global community. This means that we need to reach out to others and establish relationships with them. These relationships need to be built upon mutual understanding and respect, and not seen as a one – way learning opportunity.

**We need to understand the historical, situational and political nature of ourselves in relation to other communities.** We need to address the nature of ourselves in relation to others and consider the role that we may play in keeping the status quo. We must look beyond dehumanising discourses and allow authentic, indigenous voices to be heard.

#### **10.1.4 The Research Community**

**We need to listen to the research community.** We should not be afraid of research. It should not be put on a pedestal as something alien. There should not be a fear of ‘academic’ knowledge as something only accessible to those working in universities. We should open ourselves up to educational research and welcome and encourage it. ‘Theory’ is not an ugly word. ‘Academics’ should be invited to work with teachers on their professional development, and should be seen as learning partners for teachers. Our schools should support access to literature and give us time to engage in discussions informed by it.

**We need a research community that listens to us.** We should be respected as professionals with experience in our field, and as people that are willing to learn. Our practice as teachers, our in-situ experiences, and our capacities as learners should be acknowledged and celebrated. We have knowledge of education that people who are not teachers do not possess. We should be made to feel empowered by this knowledge and welcomed as professionals. The educational research community should work with us on *our* agenda and not only theirs.

#### **10.1.5 The Student**

**We need active, questioning students.** We do not want our schools to churn out students who will simply succumb to being part of the capitalist economy. We want students to question the structures that they are part of and make those in power accountable for what they do. Rather than students expecting to be told what to do, they should be given the opportunity to figure out for themselves what should be done.

**We need students who are informed.** We are all entitled to our own opinions, but they are most effective when backed up by knowledge. Students need to know how they can support their opinions by evidence. This means that they learn how to consult or involve others through the process of inquiry. Bringing this kind of knowledge to the table strengthens their voice and helps them to develop informed perspectives and opinions.

**We need students who feel empowered.** We want students to believe in the strength and weight of their voices. School should provide students with the capability to contribute to society and make changes.

**We need students who are not afraid to fail.** Taking risks is an exciting part of life. We want students to feel their own hearts beating in trepidation and adrenalin as they embark on something new. A risk is such because success is not always guaranteed. If success is seen in the risk-taking itself, then one does not set oneself up to fail. Life is about ups and downs, and students need to recognise and accept this.

**We need students who are allowed to dream.** The future is never certain for anyone, but we want to feel that we are able to dream of one for ourselves and others. If our students are not encouraged to imagine what might be possible, then their creativity is cut short. Imagination is part of living, and it is something that keeps us going in the face of adversity. If we let students dream, possibilities are opened up, and hope emerges in place of fear and anxiety. Students should not be afraid of pursuing their dreams, and we should support and encourage them in finding out what they are and how they could be achieved.

These principles are, in my opinion, how I imagine education to be; they are the manifestation of my educational imaginings and

what I have come to learn through this inquiry. Such an education system is where one is *listened* to, whether as a teacher or as a student. What one cares about is respected and validated by others. It is a system where being professional is about being informed, and being informed is what makes us professional. It is a system where hierarchies are dissolved and relationships are at the forefront. It is a system that both starts and ends with caring.



## Appendix A: TCM Recruitment Presentation Slide

### Team Change-Makers

#### Benefits for you – you will have the chance to:

- \* find out the perspectives of others
- \* make a difference to how service learning (including PDWs) works at the high school
- \* have your voice heard within school (staff meeting, influencing policies and approaches) and beyond school (contributing to academic journals)
- \* learn research methods that are valuable for further study
- \* do something completely different and unique as a CAS project
- \* stand out from the crowd in university applications

## **Appendix B: Student research projects**

### **Student-designed information sheet and consent form (Grade 9/10 TCM group)**

#### **Student researchers project: critical service learning as a means of bringing about change**

##### **Participant Information Sheet**

We are 7 IB students and Ms Wasner, working on a research project on service learning in the ISZL community for the duration of our 11th grade, the aim is to develop a solid improved structure for what service learning could look like in the future at the ISZL high school.

The data collected will be used for a doctoral thesis. Due to the ethical guidelines, you will never be identified and all the information will be kept confidential and the access to the information will be limited to the researchers and the supervisor (Ms. Wasner). Copies of any reports or publications from the project will be provided to you if you wish to see them.

The focus groups will be mediated by (Mulan), (Pocahontas) and (Cinderella). We are all part of the research group 'Change makers' and our aim is to develop the service learning program and experiences in the ISZL community. Specifically we are working on making the grade 9 and 10 services hours more effective and meaningful and we are starting to conduct focus groups to get more in depth and qualitative research.

##### **CONSENT FORM : PARTICIPANTS**

(to be filled in if you would like to take part in the research)

- I have read the Research Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree that my own personal responses and actions throughout this project will be documented by the researcher and may be used as part of a doctoral thesis.
- I understand the purpose of this research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage and that this will not affect my status now or in

the future.

- I understand that while information gained during the study may be written as part of a doctoral thesis, I will not be identified and personal results will remain confidential.
- I understand that if any of the data were to be published or publicly acknowledged, I will have the right to be identified with the project if I wish.
- I understand that I will be provided with any copies of reports or publications arising from participation in the research, should this be desired.
- I understand that hard and electronic copies of all data will be stored by the researcher and that access will be limited to the researcher and the thesis supervisors.
- I understand that I may contact the researchers or project coordinator (Ms Wasner) if I require further information about the research.

**I have read the information sheet and the consent form above, and I agree to participate in this research project, and to the data being used as outlined above.**

**Signature** (student participant)

.....

**Print name** ..... **Date**

.....

**Guardian signature**

.....

**Print name** ..... **Date**

.....

**Contact details:**

Researchers:

Project Coordinator: Victoria Wasner

### **PDW Group: Interview Summaries**

**GRADE 12: - DONE**

**(Aurora/Am):**

- Went to Ghana
  - Hadn't worked with the PDW group before joining the group, but friends had definitely heard of it.
- Continues to work for the organisation to raise money to fund the cistern (still are doing that to this day).
  - The work with the organisation kind of faded out because people became more stressed.

- Majority of the fundraising should have been done in 11th grade in the run-up to the trip rather than after it. **START EARLIER.**
- 11th grade wasn't as much service based (went to Bosnia). Start the service aspect earlier on in the high school, so they have earned it more when they go on the far trips.
  - Tell the 11th and 12th graders earlier on where they're going to go to so they can build a connection with the organisation
- Not mixing grades ensures that everyone has a chance to go on the long-haul trips.
  - Mixing grades can put together people that wouldn't normally every interact with each other (12th grade AP & 11th grade IB)
  - If grades are mixed, then you should be able to go on the further trips during either 11th OR 12th grade and not in both, this would mean that everyone would have the opportunity of going.
- One grade will miss out. You've earned it in your final year, way to close it off. **HOWEVER**, the seniors don't really get a trip together so a chilled trip could be beneficial in the sense.
- How much of an impact can be made in a small amount of time was the biggest take-away. Little things make big chances.
- Thing to change: you should be able to earn the PDW's a bit more, because some people think they're entitled to go on a far trip once they're a senior and don't do much in regards to service.
  - E.g. everyone needs to raise a certain amount to go on a particular trip. More connection, incentivises people going on the trip.

### **(Rapunzel /M) Interview Results**

Went to Nepal. Has not previously worked with her PDW (did work on NAG run and worked with group before PDW trip). She worked with the organisation after the trip a little but because of workload she didn't do a whole lot. It was stressful after the trip. She wouldn't change the time line (longer than a week is good). She would do it earlier in the school year. They should probably be in 11th grade (can be Europe or the far trips). PDWs should not be mixed grades - you make new friends in your grade and this is important. It depends on who you are if you want the far trip in 12th or not - you can already choose if you want to stay in Europe or not. Biggest takeaway was the relationship she built with people she met there. Biggest improvement should be the choice you have or where you wanna go, but not having a big choice pushes you out of your comfort zone. Time was a great barrier (assessments, IAs etc.) to investment in PDW. More time would definitely lead to greater investment.

### **M Interview Results - Belle**

- Went to Tanzania
- Worked in schools and also had a cultural experience by getting an insight what it was like to be part of a tribe in Tanzania. (The biggest tribe in east Africa). They also went on a road trip and went into a big natural reserve where they learnt about the wildlife in Tanzania
- They did not really working together with an organisation more with individual people
  - Mr Huber had connections with people in the tribe and therefore could go visit the tribe
- Their goal was to each raise 500CHF per person

- Through selling calendars or hosting dinners
- Did not do many bake sales as they wanted to be unconventional
- After they came back from the trip they kept working with the PDW as they then had the pictures for the calendars they were going to create
- In his opinion at ISZL we are encouraged to keep in touch with the PDWs we went on
- He would have liked to have made the PDW trips longer (to make actual expedition longer than a week)
- He would include 11th graders to come with them on the PDWs as he feels like the lessons they learnt on the trip would be important for them to learn as well giving them an opportunity to learn about these different cultures earlier
- He thinks that most of the grade probably answered that they did not want mixed grades from the survey because they wanted it to be 'exclusive for their senior year'
- In his previous PDW he worked more with the environment and in Tanzania was more people based he thought this contrast was very interesting and important
- Does not think a more 'relaxed' PDW would be a good idea to do in Grade 12 as he was so fascinated by the experience
  - He still feels connected to the people there which he feels is important
- He believes some people would be open to having a 'free choice' PDW week
  - Although he does not think that it would be a very great benefit as nothing done in this one week could relieve them of all their stress
  - He also thought it was important that the students get this week of, especially during this time, to realise that there are more things out there and different experiences to gather. To get people to stop only thinking about numbers and grades and opening their minds further
- He would improve:
  - That the school would give the option of going on some of these trips during the summer holidays. Possibly with a few teachers. To visit these places again. So that students have the ability to continue their connection.
  - PDWs in Europe can be improved by making them more service based..? Less sightseeing. More work/physical work like in the Iceland PDW

#### **Interview S – Snow White**

- Went to India
  - Did a lot of work before the trip, and to some extent after.
  - Doing the IB > less time to invest time in PDWs
- Change time of them
  - Slightly earlier in 12th grade
  - Right after summer so you have time to adjust as soon as you come back
- There are too many PDWs
- Sounds like a good idea to have big trip in 11th grade but you need run the idea by many people > some might not be happy about that

- PDWs help you to be spontaneous
- More time needed to be fully invested
- Good idea to have preferential impact if you worked with the organization before.

### **GRADE 11: - DONE**

#### **C Interview - Belle**

- He went on the Iceland PDW and will be returning there for his next PDW
- He thinks that it would not matter too much in what grades what PDWs would go on
- In Iceland there is a lot of manual labor which can be seen as work experience
  - Doing this work experience through the school motivates more people to possibly actually do this
- Would not want the 10th Graders to go on the trip because his grade could not go on the trips then
  - Going on the long distance trips would be affirming their maturity which is questionable at times
- PDWs could be mixed grades however this may result in very large groups of people
  - Grade 12s have the option to go back on the trips if they really want to go on them again (which would be mixed then)
- Everyone in the group seemed to understand that they had to work hard for their PDW

#### **M Interview - Belle**

- He went on the Iceland PDW
- Is going to go to Ghana
- Worked in school for the organisation and did not continue work for the Iceland PDW after it was done
  - He did not continue to work for it as he saw it as an event that was completed and the was just done and over.
- He applied for Ghana because he liked doing more labour jobs (which he will be doing in Ghana)
- He thinks it might be more beneficial to have the PDW times for work experience (probably more in 11th) as it would give people an opportunity to experience things and get an idea of what they may want to do later in their life
- He likes to have a whole grade PDWs (not mixed) because he enjoys the 'whole group bonding thing'
- He would like to have PDWs have more of an impact on people and be less of a one time thing
  - He thinks this is because you do all the work before hand and then you go on the trip and then it is over.
  - Maybe having more time during the school week would increase the probability that people would be more invested in the PDWs

#### **Interview L – Snow White**

- Going to South Africa
  - Genesis group
  - Seemed a bit overwhelmed when I asked her to explain the aim of the group

- Never worked with this charity before
- A lot of work- especially fundraising- has to be done before
- Sharing such experiences will bring people together
  - Many people who went on the trip before, are still involved
  - She wants to raise awareness of Genesis once she comes back, but this depends on amount of work
- Did not enjoy 9th grade, from food to activities
  - She acknowledges that since she was new, she was not yet feeling comfortable.
- For new people - in 9th and 10th - it is hard to go on PDWs at the beginning.
- She personally did not feel ready to go on big trips on 11th grade.
  - It is nice how there is a jump between 10th and 11th, so that you start to have different experiences that prepare you for the most significant ones (12th)
- She believes she could definitely be more invested
  - Some in her group already went last year to SA so she feels like they forget that some people might not have enough. ]
- Mixed grade pdw would help to improve interaction between grades
  - No mix of 9th and 12th grade because of maturity gap.

#### **M Interview - Belle**

- She went to Albania (11th) and is going to Nepal (12th)
- She had never worked together with the Albania PDW before going on it
  - When she applied was the first time she heard about it
- She is more invested in Nepal because she knows more about it and has been involved with it for many years before
- She cycled for Albania afterwards...other than that they did not do anything extra after the PDW
- She applied for Nepal and Albania
  - She applied to Albania because it was a very social orientated PDW which sparked her interest as she plans to study medicine and it would be a helpful experience
- 12th Grade it is nice to have the furthest PDW as it is the final year and it is a way of enjoying
  - In terms of the charities and organisations it would be more beneficial to have these furthest trips earlier on so people can invest themselves in these charities
  - You would have the opportunity to go to a place twice and see the development and become more aware of what you did your fundraising for
- PDWs should not be mixed grades
  - It is nice to have only 12th grade
  - For us (as a grade and a school) it is nicer to have each individual grade/not mixed grades but for the benefits of the charities mixed grades would maybe be more beneficial
- A work experience week instead may be beneficial but having a furthest trip in 12th grade is one of the rarest opportunities in people's lives to go visit these places/organisations so many people would choose to rather go on a PDW

- The time placement of the PDWs could be changed instead of having the trip really early in the year the trip should be at the end of a year so people would be more invested and remember it more
- Greatest barrier: academics/work for school. Requirements for school.

## **GRADE 10: - DONE**

### **Interview T (Aurora)**

- Mainly 10th grade PDW was beneficial on the boat
  - situations with people who he wouldn't normally be with
  - There weren't specific activities but the fact that they had to be very independent (sailing and food) was beneficial
- Seville PDW
  - Heard about the organisation from previous group that went
  - Has not worked with them before but knows what it's about
- Doesn't see why 12th graders are more adept to go on a far trip, other grades can do it too if they show the dedication and maturity
  - University visits and work experience could be very beneficial instead of the far trips
- Grades at ISZL mainly stay together, so it could be hard to find someone to get along with. There should be a balance of people per grade; not too many 11th graders and then 1 9th grader.
- Remove the 9th grade PDW to make something more interesting and doesn't really benefit you as much if you've done it before in 8th grade.

### **Interview E (Aurora):**

- 10th grade PDW was Beneficial because they had a lot of independence. Didn't think 9th grade PDW was very beneficial.
  - General experience was beneficial. No particular activity.
- Going to Seville on the 11th grade PDW
  - Not previously worked with Pepi's refuge
- The 12th grade PDW's should be made available to 11th AND 12th grade.
  - Get a chill PDW in 12th grade
- PDW's should not be mixed grades due to the timing of when the trips are: new people get to meet who they will be spending the year with.
- All of the PDW's should revolve around being independent (not in terms of organising the trip, but looking after yourself and activities), as it was really effective and enjoyable during the 10th grade trip.
- Time is definitely a restriction to helping the PDW more, despite the fact that various social media forms have been set up to communicate.

### **Interview A – (Rapunzel)**

- Feels the PDWs were beneficial for him because he was able to get to know new students in each grade level and the activities got them closer to each other.
- The best activities on PDWs are the team challenges. Competition helps to develop a sense of teamwork.
- Chose to go to Albania (student leader) and he chose to do that one because helping the school is enjoyable.
- Has not previously worked with the Albania group.
- The location of PDWs don't matter - you develop either way
  - The locations in 12th grade allow you to develop more because they touch you more. Doing this earlier would be beneficial.



- Going on a far PDW would be better in a different grade because you have a lot of stuff due. 10th grade would be better - not doing IB.
- Week in 12th grade that would be free should be for classes.
- PDWs should not be mixed grades because those are the people you interact with in class. Need to have contact with those people.
- PDWs in 9th and 10th aren't service based but that's good because you get to know your classmates better before working with them to help others.

#### **Interview N – (Rapunzel)**

- 9th grade PDW was definitely good for development - was new being in high school and getting used to the new jump was good in PDW because you got to know everyone.
- 10th grade PDW could be improved but it was a good idea because of the team work which provided a good basis for the year.
- The cooking activity and household work was really good for development for a lot of people and the activities which tested your limits were also good.
- Chose to go to Seville and got this PDW.
- Has not previously worked with the Pepis Refuge.
- Having the 12th grade trips where they are is good because it is an amazing experience you look forward to and you are mature and you are ready - 9th graders are very young.
- For 9th and 10th its good that the PDWs aren't mixed to get a good bond within the grade but for 11th and 12th it would be good if 12th graders could stay in europe if they wanted to.
- PDWs shouldn't be changed - we are very lucky.
- Has a lot of out of school activities stop from investing a lot in the PDW but will try their best to do it anyways.
- The service hour on thursday should be used for PDWs.

#### **GRADE 9: - Done**

#### **G Interview – Snow White**

- PDWs are fun as they allow you to get out of your comfort zone
  - Particularly liked caving
- She expect the 11th and 12th grade PDWs to be very emotional
- Very smooth transition between 8th and 9th grade PDW as only the location really changed
  - Activities stayed the same
- However, there is a big change between 10th and 11th grade PDWs > change could be smoother.
- Thinks that the way the PDWs are laid out is good
  - Sometimes lower grades do not realize how the behave and what they say > this would not be good when dealing with certain environments
- She is keen on the mixed grades PDW and believes that many people feel awkward with kids that are younger or older.

#### **U Interview- Belle**

- He thinks that PDWs are useful as outside of the classroom people have time to learn things outside of school
  - Social abilities
  - Challenging the students physically

- Via Ferrata - people developed their knowledge by being aware of the people around them but also being independent and self awareness
- PDWs are important
- Grade 11 and 12 PDWs (he thinks) will be less 'crazy' and more social orientated
- Transition from middle school to high school of PDW's was good. The PDWs are better in high school (more challenging?)
- Furthest trip in 12 grade is a good idea and it should only be 12th grade
- Not mixed grades. You have to get to know the people in your own grade
- He wouldn't change anything about PDWs (not necessarily)

#### **L – Snow White**

- Did not remember where he went on PDW this year > probably not a memorable experience
- Good way to get to know people
- Did not have a similar experience in his previous school
- Land and water based activities
  - Development depends on the person, but you are forced to do all the activities
  - For some people this does not work
- Thinks PDWs have a value
- Expects other PDWs to be more valuable in terms of personal development.
- Perfect timing as it makes you look forward to the beginning of the school.
- Thinks there is sufficient planning time for the longest trips as you plan them the year before.
- More important and easier to have PDWs only bound to one grade.
- He personally likes the physical part of PDWs as it allows him to easily make new friends.

#### **M Interview - Belle**

- PDWs are good and fun
- A week to bond with your friends
- At the beginning so it's a good time to solidify friendships
- Canoeing and Kayaking enabled teamwork (in terms of development)
- She thinks that they sound really cool (12th grade PDWs) as they are more service based
- 8th and 9th grade PDWs were very similar (basically the same)
- Having the furthest trips in 12th grade are beneficial as the destinations are often very different to Switzerland
- Moving these trips to 11th grade could be good however not 10th grade as that is a time where you are still early in highschool and are still starting to feel comfortable
- PDWs should not be fixed grades. It is a time for you to bond with people in your grade
- She would change the fact that the groups are very strict with who you are with
  - You do not really have time to meet other people when you are always stuck in the same group.



## **Appendix C: Materials and guides to help students as researchers**

### **Guide to Interviewing in Qualitative Research**

Characteristics of qualitative interviews:

- Interviews in qualitative research are usually either an **unstructured interview** or a **semi-structured interview**
- The focus is on interviewee's perspectives and their point of view, rather than feeding the interviewee with your own ideas and concerns – don't 'pigeon-hole' the response of your interviewees!
- Going off at a tangent is okay – this is where you might get the most useful insights
- You should have a guide to the interview e.g. guiding questions, but you can depart from this schedule – you should react with follow-up questions
- The interview tends to be flexible – the interviewer responds to the direction that the interviewee wants to take!
- You want rich, detailed answers rather than short and superficial ones

#### **Unstructured interview**

- You prepare a brief set of prompts to help you deal with a certain topic or range of topics
- You may even have only one question planned and then you just see where the interviewee takes the conversation
- The interviewer responds to points that seem like they are worthy of a follow-up
- The interview runs almost like a conversation

#### **Semi-structured interview**

- The researcher has an interview guide: this is a list of questions or fairly specific topics to be covered
- The interviewee has a lot of freedom in how he/she responds to your questions
- Generally, all planned questions are asked, but not necessarily in the right order
- Further questions can be posed as the interviewer responds to what is said

#### **Preparing an interview guide**

Before you decide on a type of interview, or write your interview guide, ask yourselves the following questions:

- **'What do I need to know in order to answer my research question(s)?'**
- **'Just what is it about PDWs/the service learning programme at our school that is puzzling me?'**

- **‘How can my questions cover the areas that I need, but allow for the perspective of my interviewees’?**

Elements to think about in the preparation of your interview guide:

- Have some kind of order to your questions, so that the interview would flow well, but be prepared for the order to be changed if necessary
- Make sure your questions are worded in a way that allows you to answer your research question
- Use language that is appropriate to your interviewees
- Do not ask leading questions!
- Make sure that you have general information to hand about your interviewee e.g. grade, age, how long at school – this is useful for contextualising people’s answers

### **Kinds of interview questions**

Kvale (1996) has suggested that there are nine types of questions:

1. *Introducing questions*: ‘Have you ever....?’ ‘Please tell me about....’
2. *Follow-up questions* - asking for further elaboration: ‘What do you mean by that?’ or repeating certain words
3. *Probing questions*: ‘Could you say more about....?’ ‘You said earlier that....’
4. *Specifying questions*: ‘What did you do then?’ ‘What effect did ... have on you?’
5. *Direct questions* (could be left until later on so as not to steer the interview too much): ‘Why do you feel that grade 12s should have work experience rather than a PDW trip?’
6. *Indirect questions*: ‘Do you also feel that service learning is not very meaningful?’ ‘How do you think that most people in your grade feel about their service learning programme?’
7. *Structuring questions*: ‘I would now like to talk about something else with you’
8. *Silence*: You make it clear that you are giving the interviewee time to think and articulate their answer
9. *Interpreting questions*: ‘Do you mean that...?’ ‘Am I right in thinking that you are saying....?’

### **Tips for being a successful IB student interviewer!**

**Inquirer** – you test out your skills as a researcher i.e. trying out your own questions!

**Knowledgeable** – you know the focus of the interview well and what you want to achieve / your interviewee feels confident in you

**Thinker** – you respond appropriately to what is said and you react in a way that is intentionally ethical

**Communicator** – you listen carefully and are active and alert during the interview

**Principled** – you do not put on pressure and you make the interviewee feel comfortable

**Open-minded** – you are flexible and gauge what is important to the interviewee

**Caring** – you give people time to think, show them respect and you are empathetic

**Risk-taker** – you adapt your plan according to what happens!

**Balanced** – you talk just the right amount – not too much, not too little!

**Reflective** – you are aware of your own behaviour during the interview and adapt it if necessary

### **Guide to Focus Groups in qualitative research**

Characteristics of focus groups:

- The focus group is a form of group interview – it is a focused interview rather than a group interview if the interviewees selected have all been involved in a particular situation
- There are usually at least four people involved in a focus group
- The **interaction** within the group is of interest, and how individuals discuss an issue as members of a group, rather than as individuals
- Everyone in the group constructs meaning on a particular defined topic – individuals respond to others and a view is built up as a result of these interactions
- Within qualitative research traditions, the researcher is interested in the participants' views of a particular issue

### **Questioning and the role of the 'moderator'**

- As a researcher, you play the role of a 'moderator' or a facilitator within the focus group – you should not be too intrusive or structured, as you are interested in drawing out perspectives
- Prepare some questions of a general nature to guide the session
- Allow a fairly free rein to the discussion, as this might reveal what individuals do see as important or interesting, however....
- Try not to lose complete control – too much irrelevant discussion might not end up being very productive
- Find a balance between allowing discussions to take their own direction, and asserting control over the situation by intervening when appropriate
- Respond to any interesting points as appropriate – either in the moment, or write them down and come back to them

- Remind participants to talk one at a time – if they don't, this will be difficult when listening to and/or transcribing the discussion

### **Beginning and finishing**

- Open with a brief introduction: thank people for their participation, outline the goals of the research
- Briefly present some guidelines for the discussion e.g.
  - only one person talking at once
  - everyone's views are important
  - all data will be anonymised and treated confidentially
  - the session will be open and interaction encouraged
  - say how long it will roughly last

## **TCM Ethics Application Form (adapted from SAR 'Toolkit')**

### **Research Ethics Application Process**

Now that you have designed your research, you need to ensure that you will behave in an ethical way as a researcher!

The application process involves four steps:

1. Using what you have learned about research ethics, please complete the following Research Ethics Application Form, providing as much information about all the steps you and the members of your group will take to conduct research in an ethical way. Once you finish completing this form, submit it to the project coordinator (Mrs. Wasner). You will also need to fill out the necessary sections of the Consent Form for Research Participants and attach the form to this application.
2. The project coordinator and a member of the school admin team will review your form in order to make sure that your proposed steps meet required ethical guidelines for conducting research. You will receive feedback before you are able to proceed with your research.
3. Your group should meet to discuss the feedback and to make any additional changes needed.
4. The project coordinator and a member of the school admin team will review your response to your feedback, and then give their approval for you to start your research.

## Research Ethics Application Form

Date of application \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Your research team:</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>			
<b>Title of your research:</b>  Improving Service Learning at ISZL in 9th and 10th Grade			
<b>Your research goals:</b> Write down your research question, a few sentences about why your team chose this topic/why it is important, what you plan to do with your findings, and what questions you are going to ask participants.  Research Question: How can we make the service learning in grades 9 and 10 more cohesive?  We've decided to carry out the research with the aim to improving service learning at ISZL in 9th and 10th grade When we were exploring potential topics that we could carry out we came across the problem that the priority of service learning/CAS, especially for grade 9s and 10s, is not as high as the teachers are expecting to be. Therefore, we decided to research service learning, focusing on 9th and 10th grade, at ISZL, so that students and teachers alike can take away more from their chosen service groups and the service hours that are provided. We are also trying to improve service learning to make students to feel more involved in it, not feeling forced take part in any of the service groups. Ultimately this is part of the bigger goal of making all experiential learning including service learning from middle school to then end of high school more cohesive.			
<b>Data collection method(s) and study participants:</b> Beside each data collection method your team plans to use, document the kind of interaction it will involve, and who you are going to interview. Provide gender, grade and other background information. If you are using secondary data, indicate in the "Other" section the source and content of the data.			
<b>Data collection method</b>	<b>Type of interaction</b> (face-to-face (indicate location), self-administered, by telephone, online)	<b>Duration</b> (hours/minutes per activity, e.g. 20-minute survey, 1-hour interview)	<b>Number/background of participants</b> (grade or age, gender, etc., e.g. 10 male and 10 female students, from grades 7 and 8, from single-parent families)
Survey	Online	5 Minutes	187
Focus group	Face to face location to be determined	30 minutes - 1 hour	Grade 9 - 2 groups of 6 students  Grade 10 - one group of 6 students Grade 11 - one group of 7 students (mix of IB/AP)
Observation			
<b>Recruitment:</b> List all the ways you are going to recruit participants for your research (e.g. recruitment flyer, word of mouth, VLE, Whats App...). Talk about the pros and cons of your chosen method (s) and provide a justification for your method within your context. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• we sent out an anonymous survey where people could write down their email address if they wanted to be part of the focus group</li> <li>• The downside of this is that not everyone filled out the survey so not everyone who would have wanted to participate can participate</li> <li>• All the participants of the research project will be present for all the focus groups as it will be easier to discuss and analyse the results we got out of the groups.</li> </ul>			



**Informed consent:** Document all the steps you will take to ensure that participants take part in your research voluntarily, feel safe and comfortable participating, and know that they can refuse to answer questions. Note that you will require each participant (and their parents if student is under 16 years) to sign the Consent Form for Research Participants before they can take part in your study.

- Send out and ask the participants to sign the Consent Form for Research Participants

**Confidentiality:** Document how you are going to protect the identity of research participants and any people to whom they refer. This involves removing personal names or identifiers from the data. Document the steps to ensure safe storage, use, and access of the data collected (e.g. team-member only access by password).

- Tell them not to call out each other's by their real name during the discussion (e.g. assign a code name)

**Minimizing harm:** Document steps to ensure that research participants or others involved in the project are kept safe from harm (physical or emotional) during or as a result of the research.

- Tell them before the discussion start that all the answers and opinions that came up in the meeting will be kept secret by the research team and will be remain anonymous

**Signatures of group members:**

## Appendix D: Overview of data collection process

Date / length	Purpose	Methods	Data available	Resources used	People involved	Location	Notes/questions/wr ite-up
June 21st 2016  ½ day	To recruit a group of changemakers and connect it to service learning - make students see the connection between CAS / service learning and making change  To introduce the idea of change-making and service learning to grade 10	Email written to some targeted students a few days before, then a small meeting with those who responded, with an information sheet  Presented to the whole grade in the gym (am -	Powerpoint  My reflective notes about student recruitment  Email to students	Powerpoint - have it - mine as well as EF	Whole grade 10	Gym	

		with EF) pm - students went to 2 sessions to get ideas from speakers for projects					
Jul 28th 2016	To find out what students think about what being a responsible global citizen is  To test using google classroom as a shared area  To remind TCM of having signed up for the project and to get them used to the idea for after summer holidays!	VW posted a question onto the classroom space - 100-150 words was specified / deadline Aug 17th	TCM all wrote a comment each (31st Jul - 19th Aug)	Google classroom space			
Aug. 19. 16 (Fri)	<a href="#">Plan of day:</a> To introduce the students to being a researcher /	Sessions with EF	Established ethical framework -	<a href="#">EF powerpoint (single</a>	VW, EF, TCM	Library	These resources are in a separate 19th Aug shared folder

	<p>outline the TCM project</p> <p>Establish a set of values and behaviours for the team (ethics framework)</p> <p>Go through exercises that they will co-facilitate on 22nd August</p>		<p><a href="#">google doc - 'rules of engagement for conducting research'</a></p> <p><a href="#">My reflective notes - google doc</a></p>	<p><a href="#">deck</a>) - the same one she used on 22nd with whole grade - only used some of it with the girls</p> <p>Agenda for the day from EF</p> <p><a href="#">Emergency shelter slide</a></p> <p><a href="#">Change-maker job description</a></p> <p><a href="#">Skills reflection</a></p>			<p>with EF</p> <p>Students came in especially on that day. Otherwise it was an intro day for new students (one or two of them were student ambassadors as well and had to go out and be involved in that at times)</p> <p>Any TCM reflections from that day?</p> <p><a href="#">Write-up</a></p>
Aug 22.16 (Mon)	To introduce grade 11s to change-making / service learning		<a href="#">Images of G11 posters about emergency</a>	<a href="#">EF powerpoint (single deck) /</a>	Whole grade 11 / EF / VW / TCM	Gym	<a href="#">These resources are in a separate shared 22nd Aug shared folder with EF</a>

	To give TCM the opportunity to facilitate activities and act as observers		<a href="#">shelters</a>  <a href="#">Focus group audio</a> (from 23rd)  TCM reflections (Romane - managebac - 27th Sep - also saved in word folder)	mind map charts			Did I ask for consent from all g11s to use their stuff? I think not - EF wanted them to be able to take them home with them and they are personal  Do I have any TCM reflections from that day? YES!
a. Aug 23rd	a.Students wanted to briefly introduce the idea of their group to the whole school in assembly			<a href="#">Simple powerpoint slide with their group names and own names</a>		Theatre	
b. Aug 23rd	VW wanted to find out how the students felt as facilitators	Focus group - structured by VW with a particular focus	FG1 <a href="#">Focus group audio recording on google drive</a>	Recorded with VW tablet in the middle of the table / uploaded to google	VW / TCM	Library	Transcribe this? Is this possible? Look into focus group analysis

				drive			
Date / length	Purpose	Methods	Data available	Resources used	People involved	Location	Notes/questions/write-up
Fri Aug 26. (30 mins)	<p>To share the newly created PDW learner outcomes with TCM and to ask for their thoughts/input.</p> <p>To then encourage students to use these where possible with their PDW groups and to reflect on them / record their thoughts if possible</p>	<p>Group discussion</p> <p>Analysing a document together</p>	<p>Audio recording - <a href="#">my reflections</a></p> <p>Original PDW learner outcomes with student additions</p> <p>Some students reflected on having used them in their PDW meetings - reflections on google classroom (<a href="#">RZ</a>, <a href="#">AU</a>, <a href="#">SW</a>, <a href="#">BE</a>, <a href="#">MU</a>)</p>	<a href="#">PDW Learner outcomes sheet</a>	VW / TCM	VW office - round table	<p>Outcome - <a href="#">their ideas were added to the document</a> and this was shared with teachers</p> <p>Some students were PDW leaders, others not (find out who from audio/transcript on 14th Sep)</p> <p><a href="#">Write-up</a></p>

14th Sep (30 mins)	<p>1.VW to go through the consent form and information sheet and hand it out - to get students to understand all of the ethical considerations it takes to conduct research/re=emphasis e the <a href="#">agreements we came to at the beginning</a></p> <p>2.VW to share PDW guiding questions with them and to get them to try to be in the role of 'observer' on their trips</p> <p>3.The first step of the design thinking process is empathy - this is important in our relationships with communities - they should think about that</p>		<a href="#">My reflective notes</a>	<p>1.<a href="#">Consent form / info sheet</a></p> <p>2. <a href="#">My ethics application form for Durham</a></p> <p>2.<a href="#">PDW questions</a></p> <p>3. <a href="#">Design thinking model</a></p>		VW office	<p>No audio recording of the discussion, just my notes on the session. Was not felt to be needed at the time for this discussion.</p> <p>The data wanted was after the trip (14th Oct) - I have this recording - where??</p>

12th Oct (1 hour)	<p>To reflect on PDWs and find out whether students felt that they were able to be observers / researchers during the PDW</p> <p>To find out whether they learnt anything about the relationships between people as a result of the PDW</p>	<a href="#">Focus group-</a> recorded with tablet	Audio recording (18 mins 28)	<p><a href="#">Guiding questions</a> (I had them written on a google doc in advance)</p> <p>Reading about service learning given (see google folder)</p>		Library	<p>PDWs came back on 23rd Sep, so this was 2 weeks after having had returned <a href="#">These readings</a> were given for over the October half-term break, and I told them that I would come back to them at some point to discuss (group discussion 4th Nov)</p>
26th Oct (1 hour - Weds)	<p>VW aim - to explore how we see ourselves in relation to different communities</p> <p>Idea of self/other (start of this cycle)</p>	Students drew individual posters / diagrams and then we discussed them (notes made by me at the time)	<p><a href="#">My notes taken during the discussion</a> as students explained their posters</p> <p>The posters - take photos</p>			Library	<p>Maybe I should have recorded this - it would have given me more in-depth knowledge - but then that is the question - does another form of data have to accompany a visual?</p> <p>A summary was sent out to students on</p>



			of them				google classroom and they commented on whether it accurately reflected what we talked about - good ethical triangulation / validity / participation  <a href="#">Write- up</a>
Fri 4th Nov (30 mins)	VW aim - to find out what students understand about service learning from the <a href="#">materials</a> I gave them  Then, to find out from students what we understand service learning to mean	Group discussion  <a href="#">Analysis of texts / documents</a> as a group  Analysis of google classroom reflections (questions were posed on 28th Oct)	<a href="#">Audio recording</a>  <a href="#">GC reflections on materials</a>  <a href="#">TCM GC summaries of the discussion after having listened to the audio file</a>  <a href="#">My summary</a>			Library	I then uploaded (4th Nov) <a href="#">the audio of this discussion</a> and asked the students to listen to it and summarise what they thought were the main ideas on GC (due 11th Nov)  <a href="#">My notes on recording</a>
	Aim - to explore the		<a href="#">Us/them</a>				

	idea of self/other		<a href="#">diagram</a>  <a href="#">Some student reflections from PDW 2015</a>  <a href="#">GC comments</a> (given on 24.Nov)				
Weds 30th Nov (1 hour)	Aim - to brainstorm and explore the idea of privilege in our own context and how this might have an effect on our service learning relationships	Group discussion  Analysis of my findings from a previous cycle  Analysis of other students'	<a href="#">Audio recording</a> - students talk about their diagrams  <a href="#">Student brainstorms of privilege</a>  <a href="#">My reflective notes</a>	<a href="#">Transcript and notes of focus group discussion</a>  <a href="#">Guiding questions</a> (google doc)		Library	<a href="#">Uploaded resources on 24th Nov</a> to GC and asked for student comments (due 30th Nov)  2015 PDW reflections were from people I did CAS interviews with and got consent from

		PDW reflections					<a href="#">Write-up</a>
7th Dec	Handed out <a href="#">students as researchers toolkit</a>		<a href="#">Session outline</a>				This planned group session did not happen so students came to pick up booklet from me individually either on this day or this week
<b>END OF FIRST 'INVESTIGATION' STAGE BEGINNING OF 'PLANNING' STAGE</b>							
8th / 9th Jan 17 1	VW aim - to capture student feelings about having been part of TCM so far	Semi-structured, individual interviews	<a href="#">Audio recordings</a>	Recorded on VW computer	One-to-one VW/each student	VW office	
20.Jan 17	Aim - go over steps of research design	Group discussion (not recorded)	<a href="#">My notes on session</a>	<a href="#">ice-cream model of designing questions</a>  <a href="#">Presentation ice cream model</a>  <a href="#">Speak Up</a>			

				<a href="#">Students as Researchers Toolkit</a>			
27. Jan 17	<a href="#">PLC - Beyond the Bake Sale</a> . Take a risk and see what the students could contribute and how this works	Group discussion / brainstorming between staff (12) / students	<a href="#">Posters of brainstorms</a> of experiences students have at high school (folder PLCs)  <a href="#">Student reflections from google classroom</a> (also as google doc in PLC folder)			Faculty lounge	<p>Spontaneous decision to ask TCM to come along, but asked the teachers involved via email before to let me know if any of them minded the students being there</p> <p>Note my thoughts about power dynamics and student responses to staff (male) in this meeting</p>
Feb 1st 17	VW aim - to help students design research questions	Ice Cream Cone Model	<a href="#">Student reflections</a> from posted question on google classroom				<a href="#">Write-up</a>

Feb 17th 17	VW aim - to see what their thoughts are on their research designs / to help them with guidance on how to do this/ to find out where they are going to start, now that they have their research questions	Group discussion (not recorded)	<a href="#">My notes from session</a> / <a href="#">students' designs on google docs</a>	<a href="#">Speakup resource</a>		VW office	The Ice-Cream Cone Model session had helped them to decide to split into 2 groups and what their RQ were going to be - <a href="#">PDW</a> / <a href="#">MYP years</a>  Both groups decided on a survey initially to gather some info and to see which students would be happy to participate further
<b>END OF 'PLANNING' STAGE BEGINNING OF 'ACTION' STAGE</b>							
March 10th 17	TCM aim - to inform the school community about the group and to let them know the context of the surveys that will be coming	Mention in whole-school assembly	Surveys: <a href="#">PDW group</a> / <a href="#">MYP group</a>			Theatre - assembly	
March 13th 17	Aim - to get student surveys done and to		<a href="#">My notes on meeting</a>				This was a deadline to get the surveys

	monitor these before they got sent out						done by. At this point students start to get panicky, stressed and confused - there are lots of people to talk to and negotiate with / hurdles e.g. time, teachers not responding, knowing who tutors / GLL are
March 17th 17 (15 mins)	Aim - to talk to students about how they felt about the process of creating and sending out the surveys						This meeting was only brief. They were stressed that they did not have all of the survey data, so we agreed that I would step in and help them - I asked teachers at staff meeting on 24th to do it in homeroom time if not done already.  <a href="#">See my notes about log of events and things happened -</a>

							there were huge issues with the way that the survey information went out and got done - it came across as my work and not the students', so this was something that is very much worth reflecting on
Mar 28. 17	<a href="#">Analysis of survey data</a>		Survey data: <a href="#">PDW group</a> / <a href="#">MYP group</a>				Students analysed data themselves and wrote a summary at the time: <a href="#">PDW group</a> / <a href="#">MYP group</a>
Mar 31 17	Second PLC meeting	Group discussion between teachers / students	<a href="#">Audio recording of meeting 1 - 9min 55</a>  <a href="#">Audio recording of meeting 2 - 22 min 55</a>  <a href="#">Student</a>		Teachers in Beyond the Bake Sale PLC + all TCM	Faculty lounge	<a href="#">Note my thoughts about the interactions at the time</a> - reflective notes e.g. power dynamics  The decision to include students in this was not a light one - I was aware

			<a href="#">written reflections from google classroom</a>				that they were stressed about their own research designs and their progress, so I gave them the choice of coming to it or using the hour to work on the next steps of their research, but they all chose to come in for the PLC meeting instead - something to consider - the value that the PLCs ended up having for the students (see their comments)
April 3rd 17 (Mon)	VW aim - to help students how to conduct interviews/focus groups and to get them to think about the ethics of their research	Group discussion (separate meetings with each group)	<a href="#">Guide to interviewing in qual research</a>  <a href="#">Ethics application form</a> (adapted			VW office	One group met in block 1 CAS hour - PDW group. Group 2 met at lunchtime.  I talked through and handed out the ethics application process form to them



			<p>from speakup)</p> <p>Student reflections about conducting interviews - google classroom: <a href="#">1 - 9th, 12th, 21st April</a></p> <p>2-26th April, 6th/9th May</p>		2- all 3 reflections		<p>to fill in</p> <p><a href="#">I posted on google classroom on 5th April to find out how it was to conduct their first interview</a> (due 9th) / did the same for 9/10 group on 26th (due 27th)</p>
April 19th 17	VW aim - to find out whether the idea of 'Going Beyond the Bake Sale' fits into their research	<a href="#">Posted question on google classroom</a> (due date 28th April posted)	Student reflections on google classroom		Everyone's reflections apart from Belle		
April 19th 17	VW aim - to find out how this research might have contributed to some kind of personal development	<a href="#">Posted question on google classroom</a>	Student reflections on google classroom				I decided to do this as I was thinking about the idea of transformation and the fact that we had

	for TCM		<a href="#">My own reflective notes</a> - 22nd April				been talking about personal development in PLCs - this links into PDWs and the whole 'PD' programme - what this should look like
April 24th 17 (Mon)	VW aim - to help students set up their focus groups / interviews	Group discussion (only met with 9/10 group, PDW group met separately in block 1, CAS time)	No hard data for this as it was a practical meeting only			VW office	Time is lost so much at this stage - no PSHE time available, Fridays taken by PDW meetings  In the next period of time, students are trying to find time to conduct their focus groups and interviews (find out these from a separate document if possible)
26th April 17	9/10 group doing their focus group		<a href="#">My reflective notes</a> about how I felt with them				

			doing this! - 26th April				
May 17th 17 (20 mins)	VW aim - to catch up with where students were at (as I had not seen them for a long time and had no idea how many interviews and focus groups they had done or if they had started to think about analysing them!	Group discussion / coaching, advice by me	No hard data from this meeting as it was only to advise them in their projects		Everyone except Marie came	VW office	<a href="#">See my notes on this!!!</a> I wanted to cry and felt so frustrated at not having any time to see where students were up to! Students came for some time in the end despite college counsellor stuff in PSHE time!!
June 6th	VW aim - admin meeting to arrange interviews / skype with Eddie / how to finish the year in an effective way		<a href="#">My notes on what was discussed and arranged</a>				
June 8th/9th 17	VW aim - to capture how students feel about having conducted research and their feelings about the process as a whole	Individual, semi- structured interviews	<a href="#">Audio recordings</a>  <a href="#">Transcripts</a>				

June 9th 17	VW aim - to brief students on the pre-PDW forum and to bring other key members of staff together with TCM - they should see that it is something whole-school and there are other key players - they are important	Group discussion	<a href="#">Audio recording</a>  <a href="#">My reflective notes on the session</a>			Lan 6	<p>My agenda was very much to have other key players explain what they wanted, so that students saw the bigger picture, beyond me and our small group</p> <p>Note the group dynamics in this <a href="#">and my notes on this meeting</a> (JD power / m/f roles - through a feminine lens?)</p>
June 16th 17	Students presented their project and work to incoming headmaster via skype		Student reflections on this on google classroom				I decided at the last minute to ask the students whether they wanted me to be there or not - it was the staff appreciation lunch at the time! Students asked me if I 'needed' the data or not, and when I said

							no, they were happy to do it without me - interesting...
June 19th 17	<p>Pre-PDW Forum (g10/g11)</p> <p>Students were on a demo panel (3 speakers / 3 note-takers) - they were there to demonstrate their knowledge of the topic of service learning and to have some prominence / recognition from their peers</p>		<p><a href="#">My own audio reflection on the morning before it started</a> LOA1 <a href="#">Transcription</a></p> <p><a href="#">My own audio reflection just after the panel</a> LOA2 <a href="#">Transcription</a></p> <p><a href="#">Managebac reflections - done in the break between am/pm</a> (Simona's</p>			<p>Library</p> <p>Forum - theatre / Pavs</p>	<p>I need to look at, analyse and present this day somehow as an interchange between my own thoughts and the students' - great that I have my own audio reflections before and after</p> <p>I specifically asked them to complete this reflection then and there - drawbacks to this, but it was in order to capture feelings directly in the moment - it was done in silence in the library</p>

	Students were also moderators for smaller groups		<p>missing)</p> <p><a href="#">Video of the panel demonstration</a></p> <p><a href="#">Audio recording of discussion after the panel discussion</a> (this was done before we did the fortune line activity)</p> <p><a href="#">Transcript of the above</a></p> <p><a href="#">Staff feedback on moderator roles</a></p> <p>My own observation</p>			<p>My notes on first watching the panel discussion video</p> <p>This discussion was amazing! The students are so worked up and come up with some great opinions - <b>really being critical about the school context</b></p> <p><a href="#">Write-up</a></p>
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			notes from moderation sessions				
June 19th 17	VW aim - to capture student feelings over time - to have them visualise their thinking over time	<a href="#">Fortune line activity</a>	Poster  Audio recording of each student drawing and explaining their lines			Library	Interesting that I have the audio/video to accompany the diagram - do visuals always need some kind of extra method to accompany them?

## **Appendix E: Information Sheet and Consent Form**

### **Student researchers project: critical service learning as a means of bringing about change**

#### **Participant Information Sheet**

I am writing in order to inform you about my research project as part of my Doctorate in Education at Durham University in the U.K., and to request your participation as one of my student researchers.

My research is in the field of service learning, and I am interested in the notion that it can be something that brings about a certain degree of transformation within young people. I am also interested in how involving students as researchers during the research process can help to bring about a particular personal transformation. The main research question of my doctoral study is: *How does meaningful teacher and student involvement as collaborative inquirers into service learning model a pedagogy for service learning?*

The aim of this student researchers project is to work with a group of 5-8 IB grade 11 students, for the duration of grade 11, with the aim of endeavouring to establish what critical service learning could look like in our school context. The research team will meet on a regular basis in lieu of either timetabled CAS blocks or Personal Development (pastoral) time, and many of our discussions will be in focus groups, facilitated by the main researcher (Mrs. Wasner). The recommendation is that this project will be a collaborative CAS project for you, which does of course however not rule out further CAS projects that you wish to undertake.

As a member of the student researchers team, named 'Team Change-Makers' you will work alongside me in my role as Experiential Learning Coordinator (CAS and Service Learning), and you will be considered as research partners who are facilitating student voice within the school. You will be considered as 'creative leaders' within the high school, and there may also be opportunities for you to contribute to some forums or online journals concerning student voice.

As a member of 'Team Change-Makers', you will learn about, evaluate and try out various data collection tools with other students in grade 11, as well as with some faculty members and the leadership team. These methods will include conducting semi-structured interviews, focus groups and observations, however



the group will decide which are the most appropriate and well-suited to the project. The group will also try out different ways of analysing, interpreting and presenting data, and, depending on time, practicalities and interest, shared decisions will be made about what information will be used in the writing up of the project in the doctoral thesis.

As you can imagine, the demands of school life will mean that we will need to remain flexible and to respond to challenges as they arise, adapting the way that we work to fit in with them.

If you are willing to take part in this research project as one of the student researchers team, I kindly ask you to read through the consent form attached, and to return it to me as soon as possible. If you change your mind later and wish to withdraw from the project you are able to do so by contacting me using the details on this form.

Data collected during this project will be used to write up a doctoral thesis. According to ethical guidelines, you will never be identified in any report and your information will be kept confidential. If, however, you wish to be associated with the project by name, you also have this option, and you should contact me if this is the case. The data collected in this project will be kept securely with access limited to the researcher and her supervisors. Elaine France, who you have already met, is working with me on a high school 'Change-Makers' approach, and she may also at times have access to some anonymous data. Copies of any reports or publications from the project will be provided to you if you wish to see them.

### **CONSENT FORM : PARTICIPANTS**

(to be filled in if you would like to take part in the research)

- I have read the Research Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree that my own personal responses and actions throughout this project will be documented by the researcher and may be used as part of a doctoral thesis.
- I understand the purpose of this research project and my involvement in it.

- I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage and that this will not affect my status now or in the future.
- I understand that while information gained during the study may be written as part of a doctoral thesis, I will not be identified and personal results will remain confidential.
- I understand that if any of the data were to be published or publicly acknowledged, I will have the right to be identified with the project if I wish.
- I understand that I will be provided with any copies of reports or publications arising from participation in the research, should this be desired.
- I understand that hard and electronic copies of all data will be stored by the researcher and that access will be limited to the researcher, the thesis supervisors and Elaine France.
- I understand that I may contact the researcher or thesis supervisors if I require further information about the research, and that I may contact the Research Ethics Coordinator of the School of Education, University of Durham, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.

**I have read the information sheet and the consent form above, and I agree to participate in this research project, and to the data being used as outlined above.**

**Signed**.....(student participant)

**Print name** ..... **Date**

.....

**Contact details:**

Researcher: Victoria Wasner

Doctoral Supervisors : Professor Kate Wall

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